

## Project EIR reveals ancient campground

An ancient Ohlone Indian campground may be the major obstacle to construction of a 150-unit condominium project in Capitola.

An archaeologist's report included in an environmental impact report for the proposed Wharf Road Village project indicates that the bluff top next to the freeway overlooking Soquel Creek was once used by the prehistoric Indians and remnants of their civilization have been found there recently.

The Capitola Planning Commission last Thursday night accepted the EIR on the project, but delayed action on a proposal to change the general plan designation on the 9.5 acre parcel from commercial to high density residential.

But the developer, James Sims of Irish Properties, will be required to do further archaeological work on the site before construction can begin on the site, City Planning Director Richard Steele said following last week's meeting.

Sims told the Planning Commission that it is unlikely that the area was a burial site for the Indians who, he added, migrated there each year from the Santa Clara Valley.

But the report submitted to the Planning Commission that evening by Robert Cartier of Archaeological Resource Management, doesn't address that issue.

Cartier said the site has been previously mapped by archaeologists and originally extended across the freeway to the north side of the freeway.

A site survey of the area, Cartier's report said, turned up a pestle fragment, a metate, and rocks.

He is recommending, and Sims told the Planning Commission that he is willing to hire Cartier to do an exploration program consisting of six hand-excavated units and some mechanically-dug trenches on the site.

The pits and trenches will allow Cartier to plot the extent of the site, and recommend what protective measures Sims and the city should employ when designing the project.

The three members of the planning commission present at last week's meeting — Alvin Wilder, Dennis Norton and Howard Dysle — approved the EIR as adequately addressing the environmental issues.

But they decided to wait until the other commissioners — Jerry White and Craig Rowell — were present before deciding if the general plan change should be approved and sent to the City Council for final action.

The EIR reviewed the impacts for a wide range of uses, including all commercial, various mixes of commercial and residential, and residential.

Steele pointed out that the economic analysis shows that the city will derive more revenue from the commercial use than residential, but added that the city would probably be required to spend more money to solve resulting problems, including traffic.

There would be five times as much traffic added to the already

congested 41st Avenue with a commercial development than with residential.

Sims also favors residential — but he wants some of the highest density approved in the city in the last decade.

Sims, who has developed industrial and commercial land in the Santa Clara Valley for the last decade, said he doesn't believe the Wharf Road Village parcel is suited to that use.

The best use, he believes, is high density residential. He said he would settle for a ceiling of 17 dwelling units per acre, and plans to build 150 units on the property, with prices ranging from \$70,000 to \$125,000, and ranging in size from studio apartments and junior one bedroom, to two bedroom townhouse units.

He told the planning commissioners that he wants to use high quality, low maintenance construction — plaster instead of 3/8-inch siding, and trim that does not have to be painted frequently.

"All of these features are related to keeping a place looking good for a long period of time," Sims told the commissioners.

Now is not the time for any developer to start building condominiums, he said, referring to the depressed real estate market, but he is hopeful conditions will change this year. "We are looking for a high density residential project. We do not mind if it is 17 units per acre."