

REFERENCE APTOS HISTORY S.C. SENTINEL 10/10/72

# The Minority Report On Aptos Plan

A minority report on the Aptos Village area has been filed with Aptos Supervisor Ralph Sanson after the report was rejected by the Aptos General Plan Review Committee.

Committee member Mrs. Harrison Smith, who drafted the minority view, said, "It is a philosophy of a generation when property rights meant something and was formed before most of the committee members were born."

Mrs. Smith served notice at the first public hearing on the committee report that a strong current of contrary opinion had run against the general committee grain throughout the group deliberations. The dissidents, she said, had found the committee proper too adamantly anti-development in its views.

The minority report, she added, is a plan designed to make Aptos Village "a livable small town available to all."

Neither the 1967 plan by the engineering firm of Livingston and Blaney nor the area's general plan have been adhered to, the report notes, "with the result that the whole concept of the plan needs revising."

Since the 1967 plan, the report continues, the post office, library and fire department have been removed from the village, making it "pointless" to

try to have a community center as indicated in the plan.

A 13-acre apple orchard at the edge of the village was designated in the general plan as a park. "Now, believe it or not," Mrs. Smith comments in her report, "this lovely spot was permitted to become a mobile park, and this resulted in a complete change in property usage, calling for higher density in contiguous areas."

It also brought about a traffic volume too great for the village's streets and roads, Mrs. Smith declared.

When the planning for the Aptos bypass was abandoned, she noted, a new traffic plan was promised. One was worked out with the planning staff which, with one minor exception, makes use of already existing county rights-of-way and calls for the widening of the bridge under the railroad trestle.

Thus far, however, nothing has been done to implement the plan.

"No place else in the county is there such heavy usage on such poorly planned roads with such inadequate controls," Mrs. Smith charges.

She pointed out that few people realize the number of successful businesses in operation in the village. They are prospering, she contends, because "people find Aptos charming,

quaint and an easy, pleasant place to shop."

A principal advantage of the village, Mrs. Smith points out, is that it is situated on one of the few level areas in the entire sector — with only a small percentage of that desirable land in development.

"From the standpoint of ecology," she maintains, "we must use this gentle sloping land. There are no hillsides to be cut, no trees to be destroyed, nor is it necessary to disurb the natural contour of the land. If the area which is presently zoned commercial were to be put to that use and some business and professional offices (located) on the outer fringes, it would be a boon to senior citizens and one-car families who could live within walking distance, if some multiple zoning were provided.

"This plan seems practical, inexpensive to put into operation and an answer to many people, young and old, who are not able to drive. What could be better than a high-density periphery to the village where these people the proposed village park along bike trails or riding trails?"

"This would add enormously to the atmosphere we are trying to preserve. It would bring back our little village which is the nucleus for the greater spreading area we call Aptos.

"With gas lights and a gazebo for a band concert now and

then, we could really preserve the tradition of this lovely little village."

Mrs. Smith noted the main body of the review committee recommends large building sites for the Aptos vicinity as a means of holding down density.

But she argues, "It is a fallacy that lower density necessarily deflates land values." There are always wealthy persons willing to pay for the privilege of having a summer or weekend home on large acreage in a desirable area, she contends.

"By down zoning the back country," she maintains, "we are making this most desirable land available to a favored few and keeping out the senior citizens and young families who could manage a smaller site."

The committee plan, she said, would serve only to preserve the prime Aptos countryside for "a country club - type development."

"In the Aptos area — the village and environs — the terrain encourages commercial, high and medium density zoning. We must be realistic. People are going to come to this area . . .

"If we have a reasonable plan now, it will be workable for a long time. If not, it will be subject to variances and hodgepodge developments in the future."