

Library land offer moves ahead

By Laurie Slothower

The county Board of Supervisors took steps last week to officially accept a businessman's gift of one acre of land in Boulder Creek for a future library.

By a unanimous vote supervisors approved four resolutions concerning the parcel on West Park Drive and Highway 9 owned by Robert Kuerzel.

Most significant of these is a proposal directing the Planning Commission to introduce a general plan amendment on the land so that Kuerzel can construct an office building on the corner of the lot.

Having the Planning Commission initiate the change would save Kuerzel the \$1,000 fee usually required for general plan amendments.

The lot is now designated suburban residential, one acre minimum, and splitting off land for the library would leave Kuerzel with a piece of property

that is unbuildable, according to Planning Director Kris Schenk.

Schenk recommended changing it to a "professional-administrative offices" designation.

Kuerzel offered the land to the county 10 months ago under the conditions the county would use it within a given time and that it be used solely for a library.

Since then he has asked that the library and the proposed office building use a shared parking area, that a library be built within five years and that he be informed of any legitimate uses of the remainder of the parcel.

Supervisor Pat Liberty lambasted as "erroneous" statements made by member of the City-County Library Board that the county has been "dragging its feet" on the proposed gift.

Noting that the "tenor and the tone of Mr. Kuerzel's letters have become more and more hostile," Liberty said the county had done everything it could but that Kuerzel would not sign a deed dedicating the land.

Kuerzel wants the county to stipulate an acceptable use for the remainder of the lot, but that can't be done without a general plan amendment, said Liberty.

The parcel has an extremely high water table and Liberty said she did not want to create a potentially illegal quarter-acre lot.

Kuerzel could not develop the lot as anything but a single family residence because of the water problems, she added.

"I'm not willing to approve a location that . . . will have continuing problems and headaches" until it is reviewed by the county, said Liberty.

The only change supervisors made to the staff recommendation was one minor change in wording. Instead of saying the Boulder Creek site was "the" top priority for construction, the board changed it to read the Boulder Creek site was "a" top priority for construction.

The other steps approved included a directive to the Department of Public Works to survey the property and to develop the necessary documents for the dedication.

Supervisors also directed county counsel to assist other departments in the acquisition of the lot and asked the county administrative office to find funding.

The board acted so quickly that Realtor Jim Lee—a member of the library board and an active lobbyist for the library—did not have a chance to

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The emphasis is on the family

"communicate to the children that 'they can be developing a relationship with God,'" Dosker said. "An effort is made to help kids stay kids as long as possible."

Though emphasizing the Christian message, the directors of both camps said it is not forced upon their visitors.

Said Hayes, "Sometimes there are unhappy connections with the church. Here it isn't stuffed down their throat.

A lot of people have their guard up

50 of Mount Hermon's programs year-round. Many of them are for special interest Christian groups, such as writers, musicians and singles.

"We like to think of Mount Hermon as a pioneer in developing creative and motivating types of conferences,"

the property is deeded outright while other parts are rented.

Many of the homes, serving only as summer weekend cabins up until a few years ago, are now resided in year-round. Homeowners pay fees to the association, which administers water services and maintains 17 miles of

And if the suspected air paths aren't enough bad news, the analysis of air quality trends also shows "a definite and significant increase in ozone concentration in each month of the year," based on data from Santa Cruz and Aptos over a ten year period.

Ozone is the pollutant that forms in the atmosphere when hydrocarbons, organic compounds (such as gas vapors) and nitrogen oxide—in the presence of certain temperatures and sunlight—react together.

Ozone data from Monterey, on the

other hand, indicates definite improvement, with eight of the 12 months studied showing long term decreases, the report said.

"If we knew where (the ozone pollution) was coming from, we'd do something about it," said Abercrombie. "It is something that causes us concern."

There is some good news in the report. "Limited data suggest a trend of decreasing suspended particulates in Salinas, Santa Cruz-Aptos and the Hollister area," the report concludes.

Library site

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express his frustration at what he felt were unnecessary delays.

"I was simply going to make an urgent appeal that they listen to the bureaucracy below them and give them what they needed," Lee said. "I am just afraid we are going to lose it."

"It seems to me we should have decided by now that we want the land or we don't want it," said Lee.

Ultimately, the buck stops with the Board of Supervisors, he said.

"It's just a judgment of management. The Board of Supervisors are the ultimate managers here," said Lee.

Liberty emphasized that she had done everything within her power to move the proposal along but that Kuerzel had never given her the go-ahead to officially request a general plan amendment for him.

He did not want to ask for the general plan request because he was afraid it would become controversial and he'd have to take on the entire community, said Liberty.

The board ultimately made the request for the general plan amendment because the matter was stuck at that crossroads, said Liberty.