

Community excited about Town Center Project

By Jon Chown

OF THE PRESS-BANNER

But some concern still remains

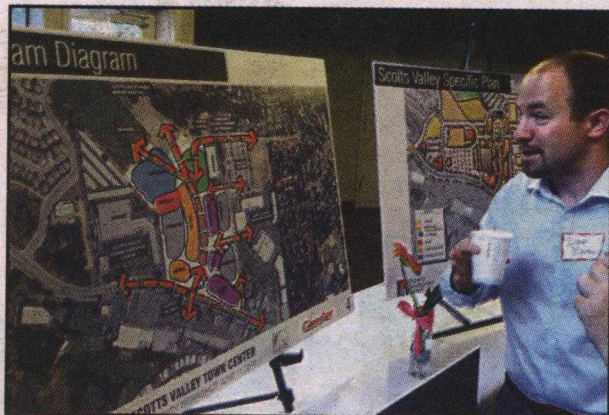
SCOTTS VALLEY — Residents filled the Scotts Valley Community Center Wednesday evening to find out more about the proposed Scotts Valley Town Center and everyone seemed excited about it — but still a little hesitant.

"I can't wait for them to build it," said Jim Wasserman, a 16-year resident. "I just don't want it to be a sell out to corporate interests. I want it to have charm. This is a great stopping point on the way to the coast. Scotts Valley needs a hub."

As envisioned by developer Property Development Centers LLC, Scotts Valley Town Center is to be "a vibrant, mixed-use destination, intended to create an easy walk experience through downtown by combining commercial retail and office space, supported by residential dwelling units within the project."

Maps and drawings of the proposed 15-acre town center showed tree-lined streets, wide walkways and greenery everywhere. A half dozen PDC employees were wandering through the crowd and talking to residents, others were stationed at displays that were set up to answer specific questions about the project.

Deb Karbo, vice president of development at PDC, said much of the "heavy lifting" for the project was already done, but there was no timetable yet. An environmental impact report and specific



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Dave Dauphin looks at the plan for the new town center on Wednesday.

plan have been in place for years as the project has struggled to get going under past developers. Now, she said, PDC is working with the community to develop the plan it wants and more events were planned so they could hear from as many people in the community as possible.

"This is grad week, and a lot of people are busy right now, so we'll have another meeting soon," she said.

According to its website, PDC was formed in 2008 to develop retail shopping centers with Safeway as the anchor — and specializes in overcoming barriers to build them. One of its projects is the controversial 59,000-square-foot super Safeway being constructed in Aptos. A similar-sized Safeway would anchor the Town Center project.

Around 10 parcels of land make up the proposed development and PDC is in negotiations with the city of Scotts Valley for

dents Rob and Shannon Campbell said a lot of their questions were answered, but many remained. However, for the most part, they were excited about the project.

"I'm glad to see the project moving forward," said Rob Campbell.

"I like that they're asking people what they want. They're even taking retail suggestions," said Shannon Campbell.

But the husband and wife were a little concerned about the proposed super Safeway store, which would require the grocer to leave its current site.

"Which makes me wonder what would happen to the existing Safeway? So that's a problem, what to do with that space? Will it be used appropriately?" said Ron.

"Or for a big box store?" said Shannon.