

Operation Wilder Asks Cost Study, Vote

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An Operation Wilder spokesman called Monday for both a cost - benefits analysis and a vote by the residents of the City of Santa Cruz before the north coast is annexed to the city or a proposed Wilder Ranch and Beaches development is allowed.

In a low - key speech to the Community Council of Northern Santa Cruz County, Al DiLudivico contended that the city has performed no studies to determine if the annexation would be worthwhile or if the cost of the proposed development to the city in terms of schools, roads, fire protection, and other services would put the city behind the financial eight - ball, so to speak.

"Operation Wilder has consistently asked the city council for a cost - benefits analysis," DiLudivico told an audience of some 60 persons, told that now is not the time. What we are concerned about is that we will not have the study until after the development is up, when urban sprawl is here."

DiLudivico several times stressed that Operation Wilder recognizes that in time north coast annexation and some development will occur. But after he had stated his Operation Wilder belief that this growth should be normal natural, DiLudivico said:

"We do believe that when the proper time comes to consider this, the people should be allowed to vote on annexation and a cost - benefits analysis of any development should be made."

A rebuttal to DiLudivico's presentation has been scheduled for presentation by

Wilder Ranch and Beaches at the community council's luncheon meeting April 30 in the same place - Adolph's Restaurant, according to Ilse Michaelson, the council's program chairman.

Before DiLudivico spoke, the council president, Thomas Karwin, noted that both parties in the north coast hassle were being heard in order to provide insight into the various questions the proposed annexation and development have raised.

DiLudivico asserted that last year he and others heard rumors of a large north coast development being planned and that they then became aware of a city plan to annex the area.

"But as we inquired into specifics," DiLudivico announced, "it became increasingly difficult to know what was going on. We heard of over 4000 acres being included in a development and that there apparently were plans to put 10,000 dwelling units on these. There was a smokescreen so thick, though, that we had difficulty getting through to find out what was really going on."

The upshot of the confusion, DiLudivico said, was that 11 concerned persons formed a group called Ombudsman and hired a trained community worker and organizer named Shirley Zimmerman to get at the facts in the case.

"All of us had fulltime jobs," DiLudivico said, "and we could not take time to dig into the facts ourselves."

In this connection DiLudivico noted that government today is so complex it is extremely difficult for anyone not trained thoroughly to get all the facts he may want or need concerning a



particular action or even development.

DiLudivico claimed that investigation of the proposed development showed that only about 167 acres involved are owned locally, that the rest is owned by the Moroto Investment Co., a subsidiary of Corporate Properties Ltd, and the Hollywood Turf Club.

He noted there have been criticisms that Operation Wilder is composed of outsiders but he stressed that the Ombudsman group that hired Ms. Zimmerman was composed of county residents, whereas the Wilder Ranch and Beaches group includes two outside corporations.

DiLudivico said that after information had been dug out and some of it discussed openly the Operation Wilder group was hit by what he called "the largest environmental lawsuit in history, a \$121 million dollar lawsuit, which for me is more than a year's pay."

DiLudivico scored the lawsuit, stating the scope of it indicated "the immense profits the developers expect to make," and asserting that the lawsuit purpose "is to intimidate people."

To put the lawsuit in proper perspective, DiLudivico noted that Shell Oil Co. had only been sued for a million dollars when

oil spillage polluted San Francisco Bay.

DiLudivico noted that his group's response to the suit will be heard Wednesday in Superior Court, and he raised the possibility there may be a counter suit. He did not go into particulars other than to question that developers have the right to intimidate the public.

Another point made by DiLudivico was that a recent city survey of vacant land inside present city limits, as reported by the Sentinel, indicates 22,000 more persons can be accommodated without north coast annexation and development.

"This means that if they build out there it won't be for normal city growth but that they will advertise for people to come to Santa Cruz. We do not feel this development is tied in to normal growth."

DiLudivico asserted that two fairly recent cost-benefit made by cities in similar positions regarding annexation and development of adjacent area (Palo Alto and Milpitas) proved had it was more costly to annex than to leave the land in open space.

DiLudivico said that Operation Wilder is investigating ways to preserve the north coast. He said that his

group is now getting "more and more support," and added: "The Sierra Club, SCOPE and others are coming up front."

DiLudivico said that despite the \$121 million lawsuit "and personal intimidation," Operation Wilder continues to ask that a cost - benefits analysis of the project be made and that the residents vote before any annexation is made by the city.

In a lengthy question and answer period many community council members exhibited a strong desire to get all the facts in the case. Many questions concerned the relative merits of allowing development or keeping the area in open space.

DiLudivico said this was why the group wanted a cost - benefits analysis, to get the answers to the same questions some council members were asking.

Ms. Zimmerman was questioned at length about her background. She stated she had gotten her master's degree at the University of Chicago in political sciences had taught at San Jose State and in the University of the Philippines, where she worked in the Peace Corps, and that she had attended the Saul Alinsky Training Institute in Chicago on a scholarship.

Ms. Zimmerman said that in Chicago she had been able to obtain a \$30 million tax rebate from the state legislature "that benefitted 300,000 senior citizens and the disabled."

Ms. Zimmerman several times said the question was not her past accomplishments or her personal background as a teacher or political scientist or organizer. She stressed the

question before the community is whether the proposed Wilder development is what the people want.

DiLudivico stated that he and the other 10 Ombudsman members had pledged \$100 a month each for Ms. Zimmerman's salary, and added:

"We have been criticized for bringing in an outsider. Ms. Zimmerman is all the way from Los Altos, by the way. Well, we had to bring in someone who is well qualified. We felt we were up against a highly organized company and we felt we did not have a chance without someone like Ms. Zimmerman."

Regional Field Day For 4-H

There will be a regional field day for 200 4 - H Club members from four counties at Harbor High School on May 5.

There also will be a regional talent contest in the gymnasium, beginning at noon.

Demonstration competition begins at 9:30 a.m. Participants compete against a standard, rather than against one another, for ribbon awards. There have been earlier elimination contests in each of the four counties, with only those 4 - H Club members who have won a regional award eligible to participate in the field day.

Food will be served on the grounds. Club members also may bring their lunches, if they prefer.

The talent contest gets under way in the gymnasium at noon. It will be followed by an awards presentation.

Club members, parents and leaders are invited to attend.