

# LOCAL

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## Critics lash out at Glenwood developers

Scotts Valley 1990  
Residents say the meadow is  
their last haven of open space

By DAN WHITE  
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SCOTTS VALLEY — Developers faced an avalanche of angry criticism, nature slides and poetry at the first public hearing for a proposed 156-home project on Glenwood meadow.

At the planning commission's hearing Thursday, over 110 people packed into the City Council chamber, violating fire codes and forcing city staff to direct some of the audience outside. Even so, it was standing room only.

Planning commission chairman Michael Shulman told the crowd that he knew of many people who supported the project and urged these people to speak up. But 20 speakers as of 10 p.m. all spoke out

against the project, which would include 146 acres of open space spread out across a 218-acre parcel across the street from Scotts Valley's planned high school.

Several people said the meadow was one of the last pieces of open space and pasture land, offering an escape from an increasingly cluttered suburban atmosphere.

Presentations directed at the Keenan Land Co. of Palo Alto reached such an emotional pitch that Shulman jokingly asked developer Chop Keenan, "Do you want to withdraw this project right now?"

Keenan shook his head.

Prior to the comments, Keenan argued that the project would bring Scotts Valley \$6.5 million in various services and taxes.

He also spoke with exasperation about the Ohlone tiger beetle, which is being considered for the endangered species list and has been seen at the site. Developers have set aside eight-tenths of an acre as a preserve. The beetle has been the subject of a U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife study.

"They are probably the most common bug in America," he said, shaking his head. "But you have to take to heart what you hear from the bug experts. This particular bug will have its own preserve."

One after the other, people stepped to the lectern and launched into speeches that often had to be curtailed with a beeping timer.

Resident Don DeVito said he didn't oppose a high school on Glenwood Drive because he "thought it would be either a high school or tract homes."

"Never in my wildest nightmare did I think it would be a high school and tract homes," he said.

Most people cheered every anti-Glenwood statement. But Scotts Valley resident Robert Charlton, who supports the project, said most people who shared his views slipped out of the meeting by 9:30 p.m.

"It's not easy to walk into a den of emotion," he said. Charlton was too far down the list to speak before the meeting ended.

While waiting his turn at the podium, he said that because the Glenwood project would contribute space to local Siltanen Park, set aside open space for the public, and provide income for many community services, it was worthwhile.

The project would include 50 acres of open space, but 32-year local resident Carole Kelly, who is a Cabrillo College biology instructor, said the project would still carve up "a unique and vulnerable area of biodiversity."

She said a developer's plan to have only pets on leashes in the

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— Don DeVito, resident

open space was laughable.

"How can a domestic or feral cat be restrained?" she said. "How will they be able to distinguish between native and non-native birds?"

No action was taken after the public hearing, as commissioners expect it to be the first in several sessions.

Another hearing will be scheduled some time within the next two weeks. If the hearings are wrapped up in time, the commission will make a recommendation to the City Council by September.