

Planners approve shopping center, housing projects

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A new shopping center and two residential projects expected to provide some 112 new homes were approved last night by the Watsonville Planning Commission.

Los Gatos developer Jay Paul won commission approval for a shopping center and restaurants on a six-acre site at Green Valley Road and Main Street, across Green Valley Road from the just-completed shopping complex that includes the Orchard Supply hardware store.

It is the third shopping center approved for that general area in the last three years, following the construction of Orchard Supply and the recently approved Crossroads project next to the Orchard Supply complex and across from the Watsonville Square shopping center on Main Street.

Several residents of the nearby Apple Hill condominiums, which are on a hill overlooking the area, told the commission last night that they were concerned about the noise and the truck traffic the project would bring to their neighborhood, Planning Director Bud Carney said.

One entrance to the newest shopping center would be on Green Meadow Drive, one of only two entrances to the condominium complex.

Residents were worried that

trucks would use the road to turn around or would drive up into the neighborhood. City planners proposed that deliveries not be allowed after 6 p.m.

The shopping center would have an entrance on Main Street, where a turning lane would be built. Several entrances would be on Green Valley Road, where the developer will be required to widen the street by one lane and build a sidewalk.

Main Street must also be widened eventually, but with money collected from the area's property owners through an assessment district, Carney said.

Also approved last night was an 86-unit townhouse project on an 11-acre parcel at Pennsylvania Drive and Green Valley Road, near the Jehovah's Witnesses church.

Commissioners also approved the division of a five-acre parcel on Brewington Avenue just north of Crestview Drive to accommodate the proposed construction of 26 houses. The project, called Brewington Terrace, would be constructed on Sunbird Drive.

Also approved last night was the expansion of the Animal Hospital of Watsonville. Dr. Donald Mayer was given permission to add a neighboring building to his 2,400-square-foot animal hospital on Pennsylvania Drive for use as a therapy and grooming facility.