

SV business park focus of special meeting

SCOTTS VALLEY — The City Council Wednesday decided to host a meeting between a local land developer and Citizens For Orderly Growth over a proposed business park.

By a 4-to-1 vote, a special council meeting was set for Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. to bring together developer Noor Billawala and members of CFOG. Councilwoman Barbara Leichter voted no.

The project is Orchard Business Park, formerly Cavalcade Research Park, located across Highway 17 from Santa's Village. The property is the former site of the Scotts Valley Cavalcade.

The research park, plus three other pending developments, were added to the city's General Plan by amendment prior to a lawsuit filed by CFOG over the general plan.

The development could proceed if released from the lawsuit.

Otherwise the project will have to wait until revision of the General Plan is completed, according to the state Office of Planning Research (OPR) in Sacramento.

The decision to hold the special meeting was made after a presentation by Billawala's attorney, Jeff Widman.

Widman told the council his client is losing several thousand dollars a day while the project is being shelved.

Widman asked the council to write a letter to OPR in Sacramento requesting an exemption for his client's project.

Ray Haight, city attorney, told the council the suggestion would not be successful.

Billawala told the council that the project involves four separate legal parcels and that he is in danger of losing two of them if the development is not allowed to proceed soon.

Widman told the council that his client is in a "predicament" during the General Plan revision period.

The city plans to have the revision completed by March, 1984, although the extension will be granted to Sept. 8, 1984, according to OPR.

Widman told the council that his client had applied for the conditional use permit Feb. 1, 1982 for the project stated as "light industrial." He said the CFOG lawsuit was not filed until April 15.

Billawala called the development "a chance for a good development, an asset to the city — not a mish-mash like some people say the rest of the city is." He repeated that he is "losing several thousand dollars a day" while the project is shelved.

Dave Brown, president of Orchard Properties in San Jose, the company employed by Billawala to build the research park, was also on hand with his attorney, Brad O'Brien.

Brown told the council that he has been interested in the \$50-million project for three years, but that "we cannot continue our involvement."

Widman said "the city has mishandled this use permit from the very beginning."

Councilwoman Barbara Leichter told the council that Huston Carlyle, OPR director, had told her that if the applicant (Billawala) would contact the litigants (CFOG) and if they would release the project, then OPR would agree.

She said the applicant had already contacted CFOG and they had said no.

Billawala told the council that he had contacted several members of CFOG and they had told him that they thought it was a very good project.

Chuck Hoover, former CFOG president, and the only CFOG member present at the council meeting, said, "While they feel it is a good project, they won't go along with it."

After the special council meeting was announced, Widman suggested that the matter might be better decided in a private meeting.

"Sometimes on sensitive matters it's better to talk in private rather than to have a public meeting."

The council decided a public meeting would suit their purpose and that all interested would be welcome to attend.

Leichter said she wanted it to appear in the record that she was opposed to the City Council participating in the meeting. "This would be more discretely handled between applicant and litigant," she said.

Hoover, the CFOG member, requested that Joe Miller and Roger Anderson, the two litigants whose names appear on the CFOG suit against the city, be "officially notified" of the special council meeting.