

Councilman Laird Says:

Sentinel - 4-19-82

Water
Supply

Water Study Not A 'Red Herring'

By **BILL NEUBAUER**

Sentinel Staff Writer

The North County Water Conference's proposed study of regional water needs "is not a red herring against moving ahead with the Zayante dam and reservoir project," Santa Cruz City Councilmember John Laird said this morning.

A charge the proposed study is indeed a red herring was made at a city Water Commission meeting this morning by Commissioner Don Haile who noted there is "no time frame in which the regional study is to be completed.

"Without this time frame it appears to me that this is a red herring to study the Zayante project to death, a red herring to study other people's reports instead of the Zayante project.

"There is nothing inconsistent in proceeding with the Zayante study while we wait for the

study. We are wasting more time and money. I do not see why the Zayante project isn't being done. It seems like you are making an effort to reeducate people new to the community after Zayante has been studied for 20 years."

Laird said the cooperative study venture with the county and other water purveyors to ascertain area needs is in no way a red herring against Zayante.

"But if we move ahead with Zayante at this time without an area study we will in effect be making a decision what kind of growth there will be," Laird said.

Laird said that in the past two City Council elections the voters had chosen candidates who wanted more information on area needs before proceeding with the long proposed and highly controversial Zayante project.

"We are trying to ascertain what kind of

decisions based upon that growth," Laird stressed.

He elaborated: "If we are going to have a one percent growth rate, then wells, an underground reservoir and conservation may meet our needs. Or, if we are going to continue our present growth rate for 30 to 40 years, then something like Zayante may be in order. But if you look at our water service area and a full buildout according to the city and county general plans, you will see we have enough water."

Haile said, "Zayante is needed irrespective of any growth, according to our reports."

Commissioner Jack Hinds looked at Laird and then said, "I don't like what I just heard. I agree with Don this is a red herring."

Commissioner