



Newsletter

APTOS BRANCH LIBRARY
7695 Soquel Drive
Aptos, California 95003

MAY 1985

NO. 11

"Promoting a stronger sense of community within and among the people and neighborhoods of the Aptos Area."

WINGSPREAD SURVEY RESULTS: ANA SAYS NO TO PLAN A

The Aptos Neighbors sponsored forum on the Porter-Sesnon property was held on March 14, 1985. During the next few following weeks, ANA conducted a phone-tree survey aimed at polling members on their opinions of Wingspread Proposal A, the smaller of the two development proposals. Each member was called four times to insure a fair chance for everyone to give their views.

Of the members contacted, 169 felt that they were familiar enough with the proposal to give an opinion. Sixteen additional people felt that they did not know enough about the proposal to give an opinion. Additionally, 20 business members in Aptos were contacted by letter and of those 2 responded. The results of that survey show 82% of the respondents disapprove of Wingspread Plan A. A listing of the survey questions and responses are given below.

1. DO YOU THINK THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS SHOULD APPROVE THIS PROPOSAL?
13 responded YES, 137 responded NO, and 19 had NO OPINION.
2. IF NO, WHY IN A FEW WORDS, DO YOU FEEL THIS WAY? (137 respondents)
Opinions varied and there were many reasons given. The majority of people felt that the traffic impact on the area had not been fully addressed, that the density was inappropriate for the area, that the proposal was not rewarding enough for Aptos to make it acceptable, and that the land was too valuable for that type of project.
3. IF YES, WHY IN A FEW WORDS, DO YOU FEEL THIS WAY? (13 respondents)
The answers favored bringing jobs and an economic boost to Aptos, housing for the future, and that it was unrealistic to expect the property to remain undeveloped so that a small development would be more appropriate. Some people answered that a conference center and playing fields were needed, but this applies only to Wingspread Proposal B.
4. IF YOU ANSWERED NO TO QUESTION 2, WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE BECOME OF THE PROPERTY? (137 respondents).
Again, there were many ideas, but the majority (87) of those answering this question recommended that a State Park was the answer. The next most voiced opinion was to leave the property as open land.

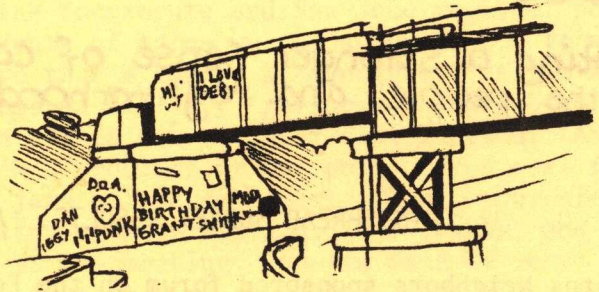
Two weeks after the survey, the County Planning Commission decided to table its advisory decision on Proposal A until September when it will be considered with Proposal B.

The results of our survey were sent to the press. If any member would like a detailed copy of this survey, please call Pat Shand 688-2931 (evenings).

SOLUTIONS TO APTOS GRAFFITI

Seeing spots before your eyes? Squiggles, swirls, letters, lightning bolts? Graffiti, like the wildflowers in spring, is back, confronting us all. What to do? We may not be able to erase all the graffiti covering Aptos these days, but Aptos Neighbors is committed to removing it in some of the major focal points of Aptos.

An Aptos Neighbors work party met on April 28th to clean up the beautiful mural on the railroad trestle on Soquel Drive, at the north end of the village. This very visible symbol of the caring of Aptos Neighbors had been getting gritty and spotted, but now it's like new. But we're not going to stop here.



If you are bursting with creative ideas for a NEW MURAL on the graffiti-covered trestle at the south end of the Village, near the Costume place, let Leah Parks know - call 688-9777. Graffiti-resistant paint will be used, of course. Ideas, suggestions - crazy, imaginative, dreamy, beautiful, far-out -- all will be considered. Get in on the ground floor, (or the ground wall) in creating a community art work. Haven't you always wanted to make a BIG statement? Here's your chance. Call Leah at 688-9777.

APTOS VILLAGE PLAN REVISIONS

In the past few months the county planning staff has been reviewing and revising the Aptos Village Plan. ANA members and village residents have followed this process closely and given many suggestions. On March 27th, planning staff had a public meeting in the Aptos library and presented their recommendations for scrutiny. Although their proposals were for an overall lowering of residential density, there was a public outcry for even further cuts, particularly on the La Mirada site (on Quail Run Road, behind the post office), where there is an application for a 50-unit development (of which 35 units are for low-income seniors).

Village merchants and residents were also concerned about the commercial core developments that are forthcoming and the traffic impact of both residential and commercial expansion. The staff listened to all the suggestions and over the next several weeks made some changes in their recommendations, which they presented to the planning commission on April 24th. This time they had changed their recommendation for the La Mirada site from medium density to low density as a result of "strong neighborhood opposition to higher density." However, four of the five commissioners felt that, regardless of the neighborhood concerns, there is an overriding need for low income and senior housing and Aptos has not provided its share. They were also concerned that they had previously approved the La Mirada project and the developer has already put some money into it. Consequently, on May 1st, the commission voted to lower the zoning density for the La Mirada site but "grandfather" in the proposed development. What this means is that since the project was already approved, they would like for it to be built but if, for some reason, the developer is not able to build it, no other proposal of this magnitude will be allowed. These recommendations will now go back to the Board of Supervisors for the final determination. For more information on this item, phone Joe Cook at 688-8126 (evenings).

POLO GROUNDS SHOULD BE FARMED

The last edition of the Newsletter summarized the 470 unit retirement development proposed for the 62-acre "Polo Grounds" at the end of Polo Avenue (near Piggy Market). Since the County's General Plan designates the land "Agriculture," the first stop for this proposal in the hearing process was the County Agricultural Policy Advisory Commission (APAC). In order to successfully proceed with their project, the developers needed to convince APAC that the land cannot be used profitably for farming. In February APAC deadlocked with a 2-2 vote (one member being absent), but agreed to rehear the matter again at the request of the applicants (Hunter Development, Ltd. of San Jose and Robert Barton of Rio Del Mar). The matter was heard again on April 24, 1985. This time APAC voted 4-1 that the property was good viable agricultural land. Planning staff had recommended that the land was viable for profitable agricultural use, especially if organic farming methods were used. This site contains some of the best farmland characteristics (soil, slope, water, climate, size, etc.) in the county. However, past farming had caused conflicts with nearby home dwellers when aerial chemical spraying was done as routine fumigation.

The applicants now have two choices: 1) hire a consultant to do a full-blown environmental impact report which must address all environmental impacts including the loss of agricultural land; return to APAC in a year or so and take their chances again, or 2) forget the proposal and return to farming the land. Aptos Neighbors did not take a position on this property.

NEW DRILLING PLANS OFF OUR COAST!



On March 21, 1985 the U.S. Department of Interior announced its new Five Year Plan proposal for leasing the nation's off-shore waters to petroleum corporations for oil and gas drilling. What does this have to do with us in the Aptos area? As a coastal area, the communities comprising Aptos have a lot at stake if off-shore drilling commenced in this region. Pristine beaches, like Seascape, would undoubtedly receive chronic oil contamination from the daily low-level pollution that occurs at oil drilling platform sites. This problem has been the experience at Santa Barbara and Long Beach. Secondly, a new demand on coastal or near-coast real estate would be created to accommodate on-shore support facilities. The multi-well oil platforms constructed today require an average of 25 on-shore acres for support facilities such as refineries, distribution plants and construction and maintenance yards. Existing zoning and land-use regulations now preclude these type of facilities throughout most of the Aptos area. However, the well financed energy corporations have been successful in changing land use restrictions to meet their needs in other coastal areas when it became business-wise to do so. The Department of Interior has specified the unspoiled Central California Coast as the #4 priority area for leasing in the nation!

The public has until May 20, 1985 to comment on Interior's proposed plan. The comments of the Governor are critical towards the outcome of the final version of the plan. At issue is a 5-year plan that calls for 5 off-shore drilling lease sales off California in 5 years beginning in 1986. When James Watt developed a plan for 5 lease sales in 5 years off our coast, congress responded with moratorium legislation preventing off-shore development from Morro Bay northward to the Oregon border. That moratorium legislation will expire on September 30, 1985. You can write Governor George Deukmejian, State Capitol, Sacramento, CA. 95814. For further information contact the local marine conservation group, Save Our Shores (S.O.S.) at 425-5211.

APTOS POST OFFICE -- ONE MORE TIME

Numerous complaints from ANA members and other Aptos residents have been voiced about problems at the Aptos Post Office since last summer. ANA has been working on this problem for several months. In February, two ANA members met with Leon Panetta. Representative Panetta stated at that meeting that he would schedule a meeting in April with one or two representatives from the U.S. Postal Department and local residents. That meeting was held on April 8, with Panetta as chair. Two representatives were present from the Sacramento and San Jose regional postal offices. Several ANA members and residents of Aptos were also present. It was stated by one post office representative that a change in management at the Aptos Post Office had resulted in some problems in delivery, personnel, and public relations, but that everything had been worked out to their satisfaction. ANA members made it quite clear, however, that problems at our post office were far from solved. Problems include traffic jams at the main post office, poor site selection for a sub-station, poor handling of bulk mailing, lost checks, and late mail delivery. At the conclusion of the meeting, Panetta made it very clear that he did not want to spend any further time on matters pertaining to the Aptos Post Office and that it was very definitely up to postal officials to see that the residents of Aptos received the type of service they wanted and deserved. It was agreed informally to grant a period of 90 days for reorganization without further complaint. The postal authorities promised that before that time everything would be running satisfactorily. If you know of continuing problems OR recently implemented working solutions at the post office, please inform Diane Klein at 688-1154.

NEWSLETTER HIGHLY COMMENDED

Apparently our Newsletter is getting around the County. UCSC's McHenry Library contacted our Board in March to request past and future ANA Newsletters for the Special Collections section of the library. According to Carol Champion, Director of Special Collections, "the Aptos Neighbors Association Newsletter is an excellent example of a regular publication of a voluntary community group and one of the best in the county." Copies of former Newsletters are now on file at the McHenry Library. UCSC will be receiving our bimonthly newsletter in the future.

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