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Sentinel

SC Council approves traffic islands

SANTA CRUZ — Approval of \$60,000 worth of street trees and traffic islands at Tuesday's council meeting brought forth the ghost of a street diverter past.

"An earlier diverter caused you problems and the people came out in droves. I hope the people will be out again," Councilman John Mahaney warned.

These are different, "they are not barriers," Councilman John Laird argued.

Mahaney's reference was to the California Street diverter that politically divided the city the first half of the year as it shut down the

flow of traffic past Santa Cruz High School's north border to one lane.

Public pressure grew unbearably on the liberal council members and when the city attorney's office said the traffic sign was illegal because it excluded cars, not bikes and mopeds, the council eagerly grasped the legal straw.

The diverter was removed on July 29.

The landscaped islands will go in at East Cliff Drive and Buena Vista Avenue, East Cliff Drive and Murray Street, Trescony Street, Walnut Avenue entryway (two islands), Grover Lane, and eight islands along Walnut Avenue.

Mahaney also complained the trees and islands will eliminate parking spaces and Public Works Director Larry Erwin confirmed that 13 spaces will be lost.

The number of trees are still being figured out. Some of them will go into the islands and others into sidewalk areas.

Councilman Joseph Ghio said the city has had so much problem with the Liquid Amber trees in the sidewalk around city hall that it should think again.

He said the city has spent a lot of money digging around the trees to contain the roots so they'd quite pop-

ping the sidewalk.

And after doing the, Ghio said, "The trees are dying."

Ghio also said that perhaps the neighborhoods could pay for the upkeep of the trees and Councilwoman Mardi Wormhoudt said it would be worth considering if all neighborhoods paid for their community parks.

Mayor Michael Rotkin said the islands and trees would act as "security to maintain the residential streets. trees."

Voting for the project were Wormhoudt, Laird, Rotkin and Bruce Van Allen. Opposed were Mahaney, Ghio and Spiro Mellis.