

Urban Renewal:

What's It All About?

(Earl Newkirk, executive director of the city redevelopment agency, discusses urban renewal and redevelopment in these columns three times weekly. Suggestions, comments and queries are welcomed by the agency, whose office is in the city hall annex, 322 Church street, GA 6-0460.)

By Earl Newkirk

Again we are devoting today's column primarily to residents of our San Lorenzo park project—to the second question we have been asked repeatedly and which we mentioned in our last column, "For how much is our property appraised?"

We discussed this a bit in an earlier column, June 29, I believe. We meant to get back to more details when time permitted, and this must be it.

First of all, we cannot tell you what the results of the first appraisal were for each individual parcel.

These appraisals were made for two primary purposes: one, to give your redevelopment agency an idea of total acquisition costs to us in figuring the total cost estimates and financing plans for our San Lorenzo park project and to help "balance" a second independent appraisal to be made after public hearings and adoption of the redevelopment plan by the city council.

By "balance," we mean both the first and second appraisals will be used to arrive at a figure (which, incidentally, must be concurred in by the federal government) to offer for each property to be acquired.

This figure must be what the law terms "fair market value," and the appraisers must be prepared to defend, in court, if necessary, the figure they set on any given parcel. "Fair market value," incidentally, means that valuation recognized in eminent domain proceedings in a court of law.

Secondly, we would like to point out yet another fact. You, as an individual interested in purchasing a given property, may hire an appraiser to give you an estimate of its fair market value before you make an offer to the owner, or before you decide his asking price is fair and reasonable.

This is exactly what it is your redevelopment agency is doing. Would you, as an individual, reveal to the prospective seller the price your appraiser has placed on the property? Hardly likely.

Likewise, your redevelopment agency will use these appraisals to protect itself from overpayment and you, the owner, from underpayment—to try to arrive at a fair market value to offer you for your property.

In no event do any of us wish to run the risk of running up the costs of a project by paying

over-inflated prices. You may be assured we are as anxious as you to work out a fair deal, but you can also be certain that does not include paying prices which reflect speculation in properties in the project area. Speculation does not enter into "fair market value" of any property in the area.

And the reason why we do not have a second appraisal until just before the time of acquisition. Those of you who have followed these columns have seen how many and how time-consuming are the steps we must follow in order to prepare a plan, hold public hearings, have the plan adopted, etc., before we can ever begin actual acquisition of properties.

Even if our proposed tentative time schedule goes through without a hitch, it will take until early next year to assure you and all concerned that we have taken every possible step to protect you and the city from being "taken," as some of my friends call it. This is the law, as each of us knows.

Here we are trying to do the most good for the most people in Santa Cruz. Democracy was never noted for cutting corners, and rightfully so, because one of our primary concerns in the United States is to protect the rights of the individual.

Sometimes what may seem unnecessary "government red tape" and time-consuming actions such as public hearings, etc., are the best ways to assure each of us that protection.

Some call it an "evil" of democracy. Frankly, until some better methods are developed and proved to protect individual rights, we'll stick with the present democratic ways—"evil" or not.

Final Rites Set For Last Union Army Veteran

Duluth, Minn. (AP). — Albert Woolson, last of the Civil war Boys in Blue, will be accorded full military honors, replete with an honor guard and visiting dignitaries, at his funeral Monday afternoon.

A highlight of the rites for the old soldier will be a guard of 109 soldiers—representing each year of Woolson's life—who will accompany the former Union army drummer boy on his last journey.

Hugh M. Milton, assistant secretary of the army, Gov. Orville Freeman of Minnesota and several of the state's congressmen will head the official party of mourners.

In a message of condolence to the family, President Eisenhower said Woolson's passing "brings sorrow to the hearts of all of us who cherished the memory of the brave men on both sides of the War Between the States."

Woolson's passing left only

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