

Urban Redevelopment Agency Moves Fast In Year

Anniversary Of Worst Flood In Santa Cruz History Sees City Ready To Move On Park Project

By Vic Jowers

On the eve of the anniversary of the most disastrous flood in Santa Cruz history the city's urban redevelopment agency is expected to get the whole-hearted support for the San Lorenzo Park project.

This will be a record for the city, according to Agency Chairman Kermit McGranahan. "No agency has accomplished this much work in under a year. All other projects have taken at least two years before a public hearing," said the chairman.

The hearing, required by the California Redevelopment law, is scheduled for tomorrow night at 7:30 o'clock. The first public hearing, not required by law, was September 27. At that time residents of the proposed San Lorenzo Park project praised the agency for the work accomplished to that date.

Following the flood on December 22, of last year, the city council designated the flood plain as the urban renewal area on December 30.

Eleven days later the city created the urban redevelopment agency. In the latter part of February the agency received federal approval on the preliminary planning on the initial project.

April 1, Agency Director Earl Newkirk began working for the city and in March the Harold F. Wise & Associates firm from Palo Alto, experts in planning and urban economics, was hired for \$40,000 to advise the agency on development of the area bounded by Front street, Soquel avenue, Water street and Ocean street.

Market analyst, E. S. Merriman & Sons, was also hired in March to advise the agency on the marketability of the area.

In August, the Wise associates, in conjunction with the market analysts, suggested to agency members that six uses be made of the land. Proposed were: a motor-hotel "for convention purposes"; retail trade stores; apartment buildings; a medical-dental block of offices; office buildings, and public and semi-public recreational facilities.

Following the agency's public hearing on the project, the city council will have its hearing early next year. The agency will then complete its application for federal funds for the project in February and negotiations for the purchase of project property will begin in March or April.

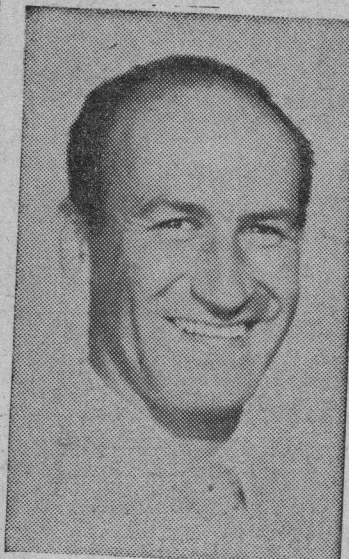
The five men and one woman who have guided the city in its program are all volunteer workers. An altruistic group—the six agency members represent labor, real estate, junior and senior chambers of commerce, and business and professional women.



Sam Combs



K. J. McGranahan



Arnold Levine



Mrs. Lela E. Swasey



believe we have an excellent opportunity to achieve our goals for development, for our hopes and ideals are solely for the benefit of the community."

Agency Member Hall, whose appointment as agency member ends January 9 (but is expected to be renewed by the city council before that time) has lived in Santa Cruz for 21 years.

He said this week regarding his agency work, "I believe the redevelopment agency serves the community interest of Santa Cruz best in that it will eliminate an area which has been blighted by the flood and turn it into productive uses. Much of the property is now zoned commercially but its present use is that of single family residences. This is not the highest and best use of the land and, therefore, neither the individual owners nor the community is getting the financial rates from this property which should be forthcoming."

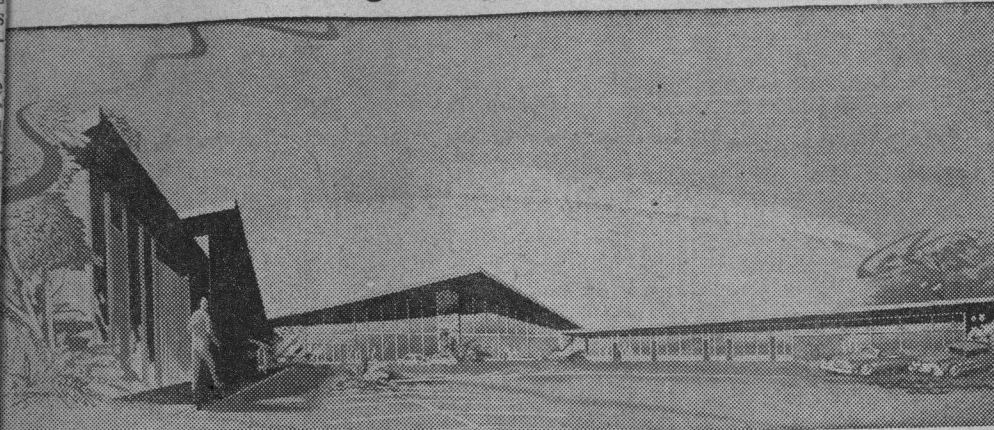
Hall continued with his statement by saying: "If the redevelopment area plan finally becomes a reality, it will mean that the community would then have a much needed hotel-motel convention center close to the center of town. With this center as a nucleus, I believe this will be the start of an increasingly good era for the whole of Santa Cruz."

"If agency goals rid our community of blighted areas, or areas which are on their way to becoming blighted, they will then serve not only the people of the community but will serve to strengthen the city as a political entity, making our city more attractive to outsiders to come to live, work, play and invest."

Behind Hall's appointment to the agency is a record of many civic duties. Hall's positions include: President of the Santa Cruz Republican assembly; regional director of the California Republican assembly; member of the Republican County Central committee; member of the Salvation Army advisory board; director of the Santa Cruz Kiwanis club; president of the Santa Cruz Realty board; director of the Santa Cruz Insurance Agents' association; and chairman of industrial solicitation for the Community Chest in 1953.

Agency Vice Chairman Ley went to school in Felton before moving to the city of Santa Cruz. His civic interests have included: Crusaders for Good Schools; director of the Santa Cruz chamber of commerce, 1950-52; chairman of the industrial committee of the chamber, 1955; director of the junior chamber of commerce; director of the San Lorenzo Valley chamber of commerce, and a member of the original county water commission.

First Building Planned For UR Area



This week the building department issued the first permit to build in the urban redevelopment area. Pictured above is an artist's conception of M. George's new drive-in market to be constructed on the northwest corner of Soquel avenue and Ocean street. The structure will cost approximately \$150,000, George said this week. A 9000-square foot grocery store is to be built to

accommodate the Green Frog chain. This is the chain's first appearance in Santa Cruz, George said. Frank Bagley & associates, San Jose designers and construction coordinators, designed the drive-in market, which will accommodate a dozen stores beside the grocery. "Planned in accordance with the wishes of the Urban Redevelopment agency members," said the investor. The pro-

posed drive-in market will encircle the rear of the present drive-in restaurant on the corner.

St. Louis (P).—Police said two men, one armed, held up a drug-store yesterday, took \$50 and on the way out grabbed a purse from a 3-year-old girl. It contained \$15. Officers said the girl was holding the purse for her mother, Mrs. Joan Rasnic.

Refugees Will Wed Tonight In SF Church

San Francisco (P).—Blonde 18-year-old Aniko Garavolgyi and husky 22-year-old Paul Balatoni, who came to California last week as refugees from revolution-torn Hungary, have found that things move a little faster in America.

Paul and Aniko planned to be married on Christmas day but the Russian tanks rolling into Budapest wrecked all that and they fled, homeless and with hopes but no plans.

Paul got a job last week with the employe owned Sunset Scavenger company and rented an apartment. Yesterday they obtained a marriage license and tonight at Sacred Heart Catholic church they will be married, five days earlier than they would have had they not been uprooted from their homes halfway around the world.

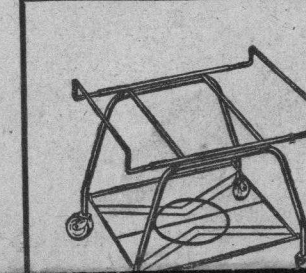
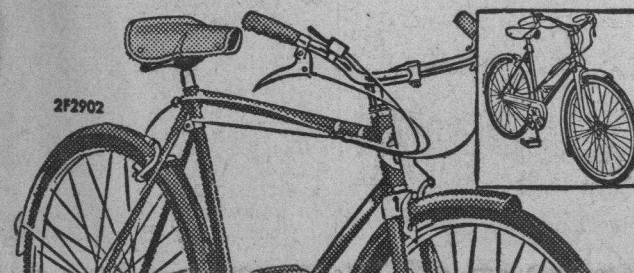
After a party and wedding reception provided by the Whitcomb hotel they will spend Christmas and their honeymoon in their own apartment here.



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business and professional women. Led by Chairman McGranahan, a building contractor, the agency includes Arnold Levine, Branciforte junior high school teacher; Mrs. Lela Swasey, county recorder; Charles Hall, realtor; Les Ley, director of the Santa Cruz Lumber company, and ex-officio member Sam Combs, business representative of the carpenters union, Local 829.

McGranahan, who has lived in Santa Cruz for 19 years, is resigning from the chairmanship of the agency on January 1. His place will be taken by Dr. Paul S. Kurtz of the First Methodist church. This year, McGranahan has served as president of the chamber of commerce, chairman of the city's planning commission and vice president of the Monterey County Council of Boy Scouts.

The retiring chairman said of the agency at the beginning of the project, "It is apparent to me at this time that Santa Cruz is entering into what appears to be its finest opportunity to develop all of its natural advantages due to its growing recreational clientele, its growing industrial and business expansion.

"The agency is the best medium to direct the proper steps to organize the improvements we should have to parallel our opportunities.

"I consider it a privilege to serve on this commission."

Levine, who has been in the city nine years, was president of the junior chamber of commerce when appointed to the agency, and is past president of the Santa Cruz Softball association.

On his appointment to the agency Levine said, "The redevelopment agency has a unique chance of helping the city to give itself a new grasp and outlook on life. It can, with the public's approval, attempt to rectify some of the haphazard planning of past generations and in some way get ready for the great boom which has hit California. We must be ready for this opportunity when it arrives."

Levine said, "I live in an area (Leibbrandt avenue) that is perhaps one of the future redevelopment projects."

Earlier this year members of the city's beach parking commit-



Les Ley

tee, backed by the apartment and hotel association, requested the city council to consider naming the eastern end of the beach "Urban Redevelopment Project No. 2."

Regarding the ultimate achievement of agency goals, Levine said, "Our most immediate concern is with the San Lorenzo Park project. Once this step is behind us, I can visualize our scrutinizing the entire city with the view of rectifying, if need be, those areas which no longer serve the purpose for which they were originally intended, and perhaps in some way make them once more a purposeful unit of our city."

Levine stressed the need of public understanding of and participation in the redevelopment program when he said, "I'm certain that every one on the committee realizes the worth of urban redevelopment. If we can sell the general population on the merits of our cause, then I'm sure they will see that our efforts to date, and theirs in the future will be justified."

A resident of the community for 28 years, Mrs. Swasey was well equipped to be an agency member. Her past record shows the following positions held in civic and community work: chairman of the Santa Cruz chapter of the American Red Cross, 1956-57; for several years, director of the Santa Cruz Community Chest; a member of the convention committee of the chamber of commerce; past president of the Santa Cruz Business and Professional Women's club — present chairman of the western region BPW, comprising nine western states, Alaska and Hawaii; past president of the Santa Cruz Parlor 26, Native Daughters of the Golden West; a trustee for the Society for Retarded Children

Charles F. Hall



Earl Newkirk

and past president of the County Records' Association of California. Mrs. Swasey is also a member of the Idlewild Chapter 19, OES, and other fraternal organizations.

The only woman agency member worked for 13 years with the Santa Cruz Land Title company, before becoming county recorder — thus giving her a familiarity with land parcel values and uses, besides getting her acquainted with many members of the Santa Cruz citizenry.

In explaining how the agency serves community interests, Mrs. Swasey said, "It is a golden opportunity to develop a blighted area into a modern and attractive area which, being adjacent to the main arteries leading into Santa Cruz, would be noticed by those approaching the city. Such a development would have a tendency to improve property values in nearby areas and this will do the whole city a great deal of good."

Public cooperation was also stressed by Mrs. Swasey when she spoke of the goals of the agency. "By cooperation of the public in trying to analyze the goals of the agency; by a sincere interest and frank expression of their thinking so that we may evaluate the suggestions or criticisms made, I

sole purpose is to serve the community's interest by improving property which left on its own may never be improved. It would be purely impossible to expect individuals to do it on an individual basis. I feel that the first project is almost completed, and will become a reality before too long."

Ley stressed the "importance of public support" on the issue when he said this week, "I believe the agency's goals will be achieved if there is public support for this development and so far I feel that general approval has been evidenced."

Combs, the labor representative of the agency, serves in an ex-officio capacity. When agency members were appointed, residents of the city were chosen to fill the posts. Combs lives outside the city limits, and serves the agency in an advisory capacity with no vote.

Combs has lived in the Santa Cruz area for the last 35 years and has spent 22 years in construction work.

Combs' past civic duties include serving as president of the Monterey Bay District Council of Carpenters and as a member of the industrial committee of the chamber of commerce.

Agency Director Newkirk, hired by the city council to run the city's urban redevelopment project, arrived here in April.

A graduate of the University of Southern California, Newkirk spent six years working for the federal government in the field of urban renewal before coming to Santa Cruz.

Newkirk said this week, "The city's urban redevelopment program serves as a 'focal point' for stimulation of community-wide interest in physical improvement of the city. The San Lorenzo Park project will result in the development of a city-wide awareness of the need for planning for the future."

The director praised the public's reception of the agency's work when he said, "I have every confidence our goals will be met if we continue to have the splendid public support and interest evidenced to date. It is nice that we have a majority of residents thoughtful enough to look to the future of Santa Cruz and interested enough to do something about it."



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