

Watsonville council hedges on annexation

Watsonville - Annexation
By TRACY L. BARNETT

Sentinel staff writer

WATSONVILLE — The City Council stopped short of approving the annexation of the 646-acre Tai property Tuesday night.

In a unanimous vote, the council decided to bring the land into the city's urban limit line, which is simply the city's indication of where it wants to grow. But in the interest of putting all its eggs in one basket — the Riverside Drive annexation — the council opted to hold off on the Tai project.

The council has already approved annexation of the 216-acre Riverside Drive property for an industrial park. The Tai property was to be developed as 1,800 housing units, half of which were to be dedicated as affordable housing.

3-26-97
Some council members felt that the Local Agency Formation Commission, which has the final say on the Riverside annexation, would look more favorably on one annexation than two, and they were prepared to sacrifice — at least temporarily — the housing development.

The developer and project opponents both claimed the vote was a step forward.

"It moves it forward, but not by as much as we had hoped," said Steve Hixson, who represents landowner Vincent Tai. "It's wonderful to see a 7-0 vote on anything from the council that moves it forward."

But Chris Johnson-Lyons of Watsonville Wetlands Watch called it "a great night for natural resource and farmland conservation."