

'Learn The Facts,' URA Urges Before Signing Beach Petition

Santa Cruz redevelopment agency today is mailing letters to beach area property owners urging them to learn "the facts and plans of the city" before signing a petition being circulated against the \$8.4 million beach project.

Agency Director Olin Carl White said purpose of the Communiqué is to answer questions raised and set down some of the facts misconstrued in a letter from Nick Faitos Jr., preceding circulation of the petition.

The letter was authorized by the agency board in a meeting last week.

It is not directed at specific points in the Faitos letter, but it does reflect the antagonistic literature in its content.

Basic among its points are the powers, procedures and compensation for relocation from the project.

This, White said, is where the agency feels Faitos is trying to make inroads through misinformation.

Planning phases of the project end March 31. The agency and the city council then will have three months in which to hold public hearings and approve of the project.

Faitos has said he hopes to submit his petition to the council before the final hearings.

White, in the letter, rebuts a Faitos allegation that agency offers are "undisclosed until you agree to sell."

"It is not true that you have

to consent to sell before the suggested price is made known to you," the agency letter states.

"After you have been offered the established fair market value, you may sell or go to the courts for assistance."

White points out that only three San Lorenzo Park project owners have gone to trial.

He adds that the agency, unlike the state, does not have the right of immediate possession.

"We have to pay you before you are required to move."

The agency pays up to \$200 for expenses of moving from a residence and up to \$3000 to relocate a business, White says.

Without making a specific point of it, the letter pinpoints inaccuracy of Faitos' contention that property in the project area — bounded by Cliff and Beach streets and the San Lorenzo river — would be purchased for an average of \$2.70 per square foot.

Faitos derived his "average" by dividing \$6 million estimated cost for property acquisition (including improvements) by 50 acres of the 67.5-acre project area not included in existing streets.

The letter says there are only 36.19 acres to be acquired after the street and flood control land are deducted. The figure includes residential and commercial properties and the Pacific Gas and Electric substation. It reduces to an average of about \$4.40 per square foot.

"The value for land alone (in agency appraisals) ranges from 77 cents to \$8.70 per square foot. The value of improvements is over and above the land value," the agency letter states.

It also points out "there will be another appraisal before any purchases are made to determine the value of property at the time of purchase. The final budget will be adjusted to actual costs."

The letter says, "It is expected that the cost of the highway (the proposed beach loop) will offset the local share of the project loss and the project will not cost the city one cent."

White has made no secret of the fact that the economic feasibility of the project hinges on non-cash credits for the beach highway loop. The state has approved it but has not yet formalized its plans.

The redevelopment planning deadline was extended until March 31 when federal officials informed the agency their loan and grant application cannot be considered until beach loop questions are answered. These include dates and areas for the highway construction.

The agency has recommended that the city council extend the "freeze" on new construction and major improvements in the project area until the March 31 deadline.

X15 Pilot Cancels Power Flight

Edwards Air Force Base (AP). — An attempt to make a fourth powered flight in the X15 space research plane failed today.

The rocket craft's radio went out and the mission was aborted 10 seconds before the X15 was to be dropped from a B52 bomber.

Earlier, test pilot Scott Crossfield had signalled the B52 and ground crews, by clicking the transmission button on his microphone, that he wanted to go ahead with the launch.

Plans had called for him to drop from the eight-jet bomber at 45,000 feet and make a 20-minute test flight.

But seconds before launch time Crossfield indicated, by signaling with a warning light, that he wished to abort the mission.

He then jettisoned 17,000 pounds of rocket fuel and the B52, the tiny X15 still locked under its wing, returned to the runway of this big research base.

The X15 is designed to carry men to altitudes of 100 miles in space.

powered flight No.