

Report outlines expected impact of new center

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Yet another commercial development planned at the corner of South Green Valley Road and Main Street is expected to add to the traffic and noise in that area, according to the draft environmental impact report on the project.

But the new shopping center is not likely to have a significant impact on business in the downtown, the study says.

The Pajaro Hill Commercial Center, proposed by the Jay Paul Company of Los Gatos, would be built on a six-acre parcel at the northwest corner of Green Valley and Main, across the street from the now-abuilding shopping complex containing the Orchard Supply Hardware store.

Plans call for 45,000 square feet of commercial space, one major restaurant and two fast-food restaurants. The Jay Paul Company is seeking permission for a wide range of retail stores and professional and personal services, according to the EIR.

The draft EIR, prepared by Denise Duffy and Associates of Monterey, has already been circulated for public review.

The environmental study lists two unavoidable negative effects of the project — increased traffic and a change in the "viewshed," which simply means that people will soon see buildings and parking lots where they now see open space.

The city has already indicated the developer will have to widen South Green Valley Road in front of the shopping center, the report says, and share in the costs of the center median on Green Valley, contributing more than \$100,000 to traffic improvements in the area.

To make sure the project is not an eyesore, the EIR recommends all utilities be placed underground, that landscaping be used to minimize the "visual impact" to the surrounding neighborhood, and that mechanical equipment and the delivery area of the shopping center be screened from view.

Regarding the financial impact of the shopping center, the EIR estimates it will generate property taxes in the range of \$36,500 to \$42,400 a year for the city and \$8,000 to \$9,250 a year for the county. The city can also expect to collect \$85,000 to \$105,000 a year in sales taxes from the businesses in the shopping center, the EIR estimates.

The EIR suggests that Pajaro

Hill is likely to attract shoppers from the rest of Santa Cruz County, rather than just from retail outlets in Watsonville. The project is not expected to have a significant effect on businesses in downtown Watsonville, the study says, because there the commercial growth in the city is matched by industrial and residential growth. Therefore, the report reasons, there is increased demand for retail outlets.

The report suggests the city carefully consider what kinds of businesses will be allowed in the center to make sure it does not draw customers from existing stores, particularly those in the downtown.

The EIR also suggested the following steps be taken to address other effects of the new development:

- Limit delivery hours behind the shopping center and install rubber materials on metal surfaces to dampen the noise of trucks and the garbage dumpster.

- Design the project so as to enhance the value of Main Street as a scenic corridor.

- Post bus schedules at the bus stop at the corner of Green Valley and Main to encourage people to use the bus instead of bringing their own cars.

- Employ water conservation devices.

City Planning Director Bud Carney said he expects the final version of the EIR to be ready soon. The Planning Commission will then review the Pajaro Hill plans in September or October, he said.

REFERENCE

WATSONVILLE
Register-PAJARONIAN
August 15, 1987