



## Aptos Village Icon

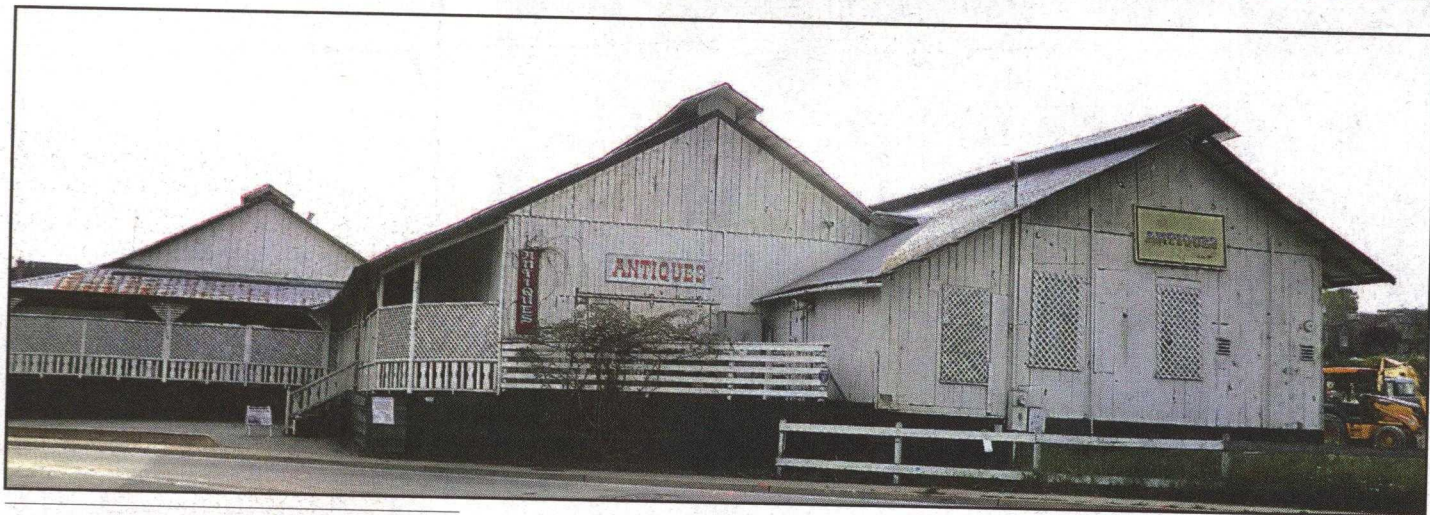
*Aptos - 2010*  
The centerpiece of the new Aptos Village is planned to be the Apple Barn (aka Hihn apple packing shed), which was built around 1891. According to the County's Aptos Village Plan approved in 2010:

"By the late 1890s, paralleling the agricultural trend going on in the Pajaro Valley, apples became the focus

of activities on the Aptos Village Site. The same railroad that carried lumber to the far corners of the country now began carrying railroad cars filled with apples. Most of the orchards were located north and east of Aptos Village and Frederick Hihn was one of the leaders of this new Aptos industry.

*Aptos Times - 4-1-13*  
continued on page 4

## Cover Story



"Aptos Village Icon" from page 1

By the 1920s, Aptos was the second most important apple shipping location in Santa Cruz County. Over 90% of the apples shipped in the 1920s came from Watsonville, and though only 5% of the county's apple crop went through Aptos each year, it was enough to create a microcosm of the apple industry in the Aptos Village. Box making, apple packing, an apple dryer and vinegar works were represented in what became a small apple-centered industrial park."

Now the former center of the Aptos Village apple industry is to become the latest in the chain of New Leaf Community Markets which will be featuring much more than just apples and vinegar on its shelves.

Looking at the Apple Barn as it is today, it will need a lot of renovation before it can become the anchor store for the new Aptos Village retail/residential development to be built by Barry Swenson Builder. To find out more about what will be involved to bring an 19th century building into the 21st century, we asked Mary Gourlay of Barry Swenson Builder about that aspect of the project. She referred us to Matthew Thompson of Thatcher & Thompson, Architects for the details.

We met with Mr. Thompson in his offices, which are the former offices of Supervisor Bruce McPherson in the old Santa Cruz Sentinel, now Cruzio Building. Thompson has done extensive surveys of the Apple Barn, which is now the Antique Barn on Trout Gulch Rd., in planning how to save and improve the structure.

"It is actually three buildings," Thompson said, "With the first one built in the 1890s and the last on built in the 1920s. There has been a lot added to it in partitions and stalls by the owners and tenants,

which will be removed in order to get back to the original barn. Above the false ceilings are marvelous wooden beams and trusses made of local fir, which will again become visible. The roof will be replaced because it has structurally deteriorated. Much of the building doesn't even rest on a proper foundation, just on posts sunk into the ground."

After a new foundation has been built and the building structurally braced, the Barn will be moved to its new location at the heart of the new Aptos Village. "The building as restored," said Thompson, "Will be about 12,000 sq ft. in size. It will become part of a 5,500 sq ft addition, which will total 17,500 sq ft for the New Leaf Community Market. Just in front of that building complex, which is in the center of the Village, will be the Village Green, a public gathering place for from 20, to 200, to 2,000 people - depending on the configuration - for public events. It will be a great place for the Aptos Parade."

When asked about the features of the building, Thompson said, "There have been loading docks for horse drawn wagons, for trucks, and even for trains. There was a railroad spur to the building at one time. The sides of the building bear the evidence of sliding doors and access



# Cover Story

windows that were boarded over or moved as the building's owners changed its configuration. It bears the marks of its own history."

"Once the shell has been restored," Thompson said, "And the building structurally rebuilt with the infrastructure for electricity, heating and air conditioning installed, it will be up to New Leaf to finish the interior to their standards."

Some other questions concerning the new Aptos Village that Thompson and Gourlay answered:

Total Retail space including New Leaf Community Market will be 71,000 sq ft.

There will be 63 residences, mostly townhomes and apartments as part of the development.

Barry Swenson Builder will be dedicating 33,000 sq ft to the county for a park at the edge of the Village.

It will be up to the community and to the county how the park will be used.

There will be an estimated 50-100 parking spaces available for visitors to Nisene Marks Park.

The biggest concern at this time is getting permission from the state's Public Utility Commission (PUC) for the new railroad crossing into the project.

One feature of the new Aptos Village that Thompson emphasized; it is designed to be a walking neighborhood where people could stroll and feel part of a very special community, Aptos Village at last. ■

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