

# Supervisors approve Felton park plan

By GREG BEEBE  
Sentinel staff writer

SANTA CRUZ — The master plan for a new community park in Felton, which was shaped by the San Lorenzo Valley residents who will play in it, was unanimously approved Tuesday by the county Board of Supervisors.

Felton Commons Park will be next to the historic Covered Bridge in Felton off Graham Hill Road, roughly across the street from Felton Faire Shopping Center.

"Lengthy and sometimes boisterous" community workshops yielded the final design of the park, said San Lorenzo Valley Supervisor

Fred Keeley. "It is a plan that truly reflects the desires of the community," he said.

The three-acre park will feature expanses of grass, a view of the Covered Bridge, picnic tables, a volleyball court, a children's playground, "meandering paths" near the banks of the San Lorenzo River, an information kiosk and a raised bandshell for entertainment and community events.

The park's 30-car parking lot will double as a Caltrans Park and Ride lot for San Lorenzo Valley commuters. An overall traffic management package will see similar lots established in Felton and Boulder Creek, and possibly Ben Lomond.

The final master park plan, said county Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services director Benton Angove, is "quite different than the original concepts" drawn up for Felton Commons last summer.

Original plans for the park included a Metro Transit District transfer station, where travelers could catch buses bound for Lompico, the rest of the Valley or Santa Cruz.

Felton residents, however, objected to the bus-station idea, fearing it would "interact with park users in a negative way," said Angove. Felton Faire Shopping Center, current home for the Felton

bus stop, also would like to break its ties with the Transit District.

The solution, said Angove, was to move the bus station out of the Felton Faire lot to county right-of-way property along Graham Hill Road.

Since the park is along the San Lorenzo Valley floodplain, its restrooms will be portable and the bandshell will be on a raised platform.

Dave Mitchell of the county parks service praised the park site for its setting in "a very natural area in an urban environment."

The overall cost of the park is nearly \$400,000, of which the coun-

ty only has \$70,000 available to spend. But Felton area volunteers, said Keeley and Angove, stand at the ready to help build the community playland.

"Volunteers are chomping at the bit to get going on this," said Keeley. He hoped the community effort would ensure "relatively immediate use of this park." Angove said parks staff would soon meet with prospective volunteers to determine what can be done and when.

Meanwhile, the master plan for the park will be reviewed by the county Planning Department, where it will be given a "priority" routing.