

annexation

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Sentinel

Live Oak Group Takes 'Wait' Attitude

By Wallace Wood
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"Wait," said Live Oak Monday night.

With thoughts of annexation to Santa Cruz or Capitola, incorporation and the status quo spinning through their heads, this was the plea of about 40 Live Oak residents.

The plea goes to a county agency tomorrow, through the Live Oak Improvement Association directors Ivan Netoff and Dorothy Weynacht.

Live Oak wants to wait to find out more about standing on its own feet as a city, or joining a mid-county "Cabrillo City" now being considered.

Residents already have heard offers from the cities of Santa Cruz and Capitola, which want to annex different parts of Live Oak. Both cities want the tax plump of the 41st Avenue-Capitola Road area, though.

The county Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFC) will hear from Live Oak tomorrow.

The LAFC is considering the annexation question.

Last night, a strong pitch for a Cabrillo City was made by Lucille Aldrich of Aptos, a member of a mid-county incorporation committee. She said Live Oak would be "dominated by downtown Santa Cruz," if it annexed to that city, and the area has too much "community identity" to annex to Capitola. She said Santa Cruz promises to Live Oak are "bait" for annexation.

Only in a mid-county city, Mrs. Aldrich claimed, could each community keep its identity, and "the octopus of an impersonal city hall" would not exist.

She said a Cabrillo City would have a population of \$65,000, while a combination of Santa Cruz and Live Oak would reach 100,000 "in a few years" and be out of the little city category.

The University of California has promised 190 man-hours of research time to study mid-county incorporation, according

to Mrs. Aldrich, and she said "We are working with the League of California Cities" on the question.

A counter-proposal to the idea of joining a mid-county city was made, however. Mrs. Weynacht told the audience later in the evening a strong case can be made for Live Oak incorporation on its own. She said some early investigation shows a Live Oak City would have a fair income.

Sales tax revenues already amount to about \$80,000 yearly for the area, Mrs. Weynacht said, and there is about \$60,000 in trailer coach license fees returned to the county which would go to a new city.

This, when the rich harvest of sales and other taxes from 41st Avenue are added in, could give Live Oak a yearly income of \$175,000 or more without any new taxes at all.

She added that her figures are only preliminary, and more research is needed.

She was backed in her sug-

gestion to wait for more information by Netoff. He moved that the association ask for a postponement on an annexation decision "until the results of the feasibility studies are made available to us."

About 25 persons raised their hands to back such a motion, and also to ask the LAFC not to allow any further annexations by Santa Cruz or Capitola until Live Oak makes up its own mind.

At the same time, it was plain that many persons at the meeting did not fully understand the crisis Live Oak now faces.

Several questions were asked about Live Oak's ability to have a say in its own future, and whether a vote on annexation would be taken.

It was explained by meeting chairman Emilio Maggiolo that the LAFC will set what it thinks the future common boundary between Santa Cruz and Capitola ought to be. The LAFC can approve or disapprove of

any annexations or incorporation, and its word is final.

However, Branciforte-Soquel Supervisor Dan Forbus backed Maggiolo's statement that Live Oak can't be annexed without a vote, no matter what the LAFC decides.

Mrs. Weynacht did point out one or the other city could annex piecemeal areas which have less than 12 residents without a vote.

"Will Santa Cruz have to vote to accept us when we vote to accept them?" asked Dennis Laird.

Forbus replied he thinks there might have to be a Santa Cruz vote as well.

Lambert Nordquist declared the area "should be left as it is," and was backed by more than one voice.

However, Mrs. Leonora Davison pointed out "we have always considered ourselves part of Santa Cruz. We put Santa Cruz as our address on our mail."

And Improvement Association Director John Weldon capped the disparity of viewpoints by declaring, "Capitola has nothing to offer at all. We could annex Capitola to Live Oak." He said annexation to Santa Cruz is a "maybe," depending on whether city officials would live up to their offers of parks, better streets, and a small rise in taxes.

Incorporation as a Cabrillo City or Live Oak City were also "maybes" in Weldon's eyes.

"As far as remaining status quo, fine. But can we?" he asked.

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