

Scotts Valley - 1990

A-4 — Tuesday, Aug. 22, 1995 — Sentinel

SV trustees will work to buy old quarry for high school

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SCOTTS VALLEY — Trustees have agreed to focus on buying land in the abandoned quarry at the end of Geyer Road for the city's first high school.

The Scotts Valley Unified School District board accepted the Geyer Road quarry property on Monday based on the recommendation of a committee that has been mulling over potential sites for nearly two months.

Should the Geyer property prove unworkable, the district will turn its attention to the land on Glenwood Drive that is owned by a private company with a stalled development project.

"We do want to be in a situation where we can go to a second site if we get any surprises," said trustee

Geoffrey Mayer. "It also helps us in the negotiating process. ... We'll research these sites simultaneously."

A few kernels of dissent surfaced at the board's meeting, including comments from a neighbor of the Geyer Road quarry.

Peggy Edwards asked the board to make sure that Bean Creek, which would run near the high school if it's built at the end of Geyer Road, remains healthy. She also pointed out that the upper quarry area is a "potential fire tinderbox," which could endanger high school students during dry years.

Edwards noted that she occasionally hears avalanches of loose sand cascade from the cliff, which obviously could be a danger if not adequately shored up during con-

struction. There also may be endangered plants and insects at the site, she said.

Several people asked trustees to ensure that any new exit from the site onto Mount Hermon Road have a signal light to make access onto the busy thoroughfare as safe as possible.

Despite her concerns, Edwards said she would not object to a high school for a neighbor. "The open space is nice, but if something has to go in there, I'm all for a high school," said Edwards.

Mayor Michael Shulman said he believed the school district could get a good deal on the land if it maintains a tough negotiating position.

"The site is useless for any other use to any other user, and I think that's going to bode well for the

district going into negotiations," said Shulman. "This Geyer site could sit there forever. ... Whoever owns it ought to be grateful."

Pacific Mineral Technologies of Mill Valley owns the land.

The Audience members also grumbled about the fact that voters passed a \$22.7 million bond measure in part because many of them believed a sweetheart deal had been arranged with the Kaiser Sand and Gravel Co. for 40 acres on Mount Hermon Road.

The land would not cost the dis-

trict anything in exchange for giving the company mining rights to the sand removed during construction. As a result, no money for buying land was included in the bond measure.

Less than a week before the November election, however, Kaiser officials made it clear that they had never agreed to a land-for-sand swap. School officials were forced to admit they had nothing in writing.

Since then, officials have learned that the amount of usable land at

the Kaiser site falls far short of the 35 to 40 acres required by the state.

"I wish things had developed differently with the Kaiser site," said board President Tom Balch. "But this is how things played out."

The ambitious three-year building plan now may not be feasible. Money spent to buy the Geyer site may mean the Brook Knoll modernization and the Vine Hill and Brook Knoll multipurpose rooms may be put on the back burner. Both projects had been included in the \$22.7 million bond measure.