

Another Freedom neighborhood wants to join Watsonville

By EMILIO ALVARADO
STAFF WRITER

WATSONVILLE — The owner of Monument Lumber is leading a drive to annex part of a Freedom neighborhood, the third Freedom neighborhood seeking to become part of Watsonville.

M.O. Shugart, owner of Monument Lumber, mounted a petition drive to have 21 parcels annexed to the city. The area is located on the west side of Freedom Boulevard, just north of Airport Boulevard. It includes six commercial parcels and 15 residential lots that border Burchell Avenue.

Two of the commercial lots are undeveloped. The residential lots are developed with detached, single-family homes.

The petitions were received last

month by the city. Also last month, Shugart submitted applications for annexation, rezoning and environmental review. Fees paid to the city totalled \$3,090.

The council last night accepted the petitions.

Residents of the Carnation Drive neighborhood, which is next to Watsonville Hospital and behind Kmart, also petitioned to have their neighborhood annexed. That annexation has been approved by the Local Agency Formation Commission.

The third Freedom neighborhood seeking annexation includes Freedom Elementary School and the surrounding neighborhood. The annexation is awaiting LAFCO approval.

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Pajaro Valley school officials started the annexation process a couple of years ago, following the murder at Freedom School of a 14-year-old Aptos High student. The body of the girl was found in the school's playground by a couple on an early morning walk through the school yard.

In other action:

- Acting as the Watsonville Redevelopment Agency, the council last night approved the deposit of \$100,000 in a non-interest bearing account with the Santa Cruz Community Credit Union. The money will be used for making below-market interest loans to local businesses.

The money will be used for the city's Business Loan Guarantee program, which makes "near-bankable" loans of between \$5,000 to \$50,000 to small businesses. These businesses would otherwise have difficulty getting a loan from a bank or other lending institutions because these institutions consider small loans unprofitable.

- Juan Barboza was appointed to the youth advisory board of the city's Gene Hoularis and Waldo Rodriguez Youth Center.

- Granite Construction was awarded a \$485,274 contract to widen Airport Boulevard between Larkin Valley Road and Aviation Way. The project is funded by city traffic impact fees.