

DeLaveaga Park Feud Unresolved

By John Elliott
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A 575-acre political football is still up in the air today, following strong indications last night that some Santa Cruz city councilmen want to give DeLaveaga park back to the Santa Cruz county board of supervisors.

The council, without voting on the matter since two councilmen were absent, verbally favored letting the land go to sole county ownership by a 3 to 1 margin.

Dissenting was Councilman Norman Walters, who said, "the quicker we set supervisors at ease that we're not giving the park back to them, the better off we'll be. If we lack confidence in them (supervisors), we surely shouldn't turn it (the park) back to them!"

With definite restrictions stated Mayor Eugene Fleming and Councilmen Norman Lezin and Richard Hackbarth indicat-

ed they would not oppose relinquishing ownership to the county. Councilman Richard Werner did not state an opinion, while Sam Leask III and Richard Goodrich were absent.

The feud between the city and county started last week when supervisors eliminated a State Proposition 1 fund request by the city for development within DeLaveaga. City officials claimed supervisors were acting on a political basis only, not judging merits of the city request, and that they had violated implied good faith between the city and county.

In a letter dated last Friday, Tom Black, chairman of the board of supervisors, told the mayor he was sure supervisors "would be happy to assume the responsibility to the people in seeing that the park is properly developed for their use and enjoyment," if the city relinquished ownership.

The city acquired the county's half share in the park

this summer, after three years of negotiation, when the two bodies signed an agreement opening the way for single ownership and proposed development.

The only action taken by the council was to instruct Mayor Fleming to find out if Black's letter is his own personal opinion or if it is an expression of the board.

Lezin and Hackbarth both said that if the county is serious and does plan to develop the land the city should support the move, a position with which Mayor Fleming had basically agreed earlier.

Hackbarth amplified on his remarks today, saying supervisors indicated during negotiations "that they were not interested in being saddled with another park." If Black's letter is a board expression, he said, it would appear "the whole board has changed its position on parks and this park in particular."

Lezin suggested that the council should, in order to determine if the county really does plan to develop DeLaveaga, "call 'em see how many jacks they've really got in their hand."

Hackbarth said the city took the initiative in seeking ownership because the county indicated it was not interested, but the city "has a great deal to gain" if supervisors have reversed themselves and are willing to develop DeLaveaga as a regional park.

Walters said that approach would be negative, that the city could retain the park and develop it without great expense through private investment for such things as a golf club.

Carl Bengston, city parks and recreation director, said the parks and recreation commission has been studying the park since 1958 and that a master development plan was based on sole city ownership.

Before the area is given back to the county, if it is, he said the commission would like to confer with the city council.

Fleming, Lezin and Hackbarth repeatedly stated they would not favor relinquishing ownership unless the council signs the same agreement that the city signed this summer when they acquired the property.

Fleming also said he would "hate to see" the county develop the park through taxes levied against residents. The city did not plan such a move, he said.

City Manager David Koest said that if the city would have been allotted \$1 in Proposition 1 funds it could have secured a matching dollar from the federal government. Any amount authorized by supervisors would have been matched, he said.

He said it is "unfortunate" the board stood in the way of matching funds, and that the city was "shot down" on the first request for development by the board's action.

MARKET PLUNGES

New York (AP)—The stock market embarked on another steep slide early this afternoon. Trading was moderate.