

LOCAL-G's Determined Fight For A Live Oak City

By DON RIGHETTI
Sentinel Staff Writer

A small but determined band of people called LOCAL-G keeps chipping away at the odds against independent cityhood for Live Oak, and if they can't see daylight yet, at least the red tape is getting thinner.

LOCAL-G (Live Oak Citizens Aligned for Local Government) claims it has two basic ob-

PUBLIC NOTICE

LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION
COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ UPON A PETITION FOR ANNEXATION OF TERRITORY TO THE CITY OF SANTA CRUZ. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Resolution requesting consent to initiate proceedings to annex territory designated as "Disposal Site No. 240" to the City of Santa Cruz in the County of Santa Cruz has been filed with the Executive Officer of the Local Agency Formation Commission of said County by the Clerk of the Governing Board of the City of Santa Cruz. Said Resolution is on file at the office of said Executive Officer, County Governmental Center, Santa Cruz, California, and may be examined by any interested person. Reference is hereby made to said Resolution for a description of the annexation, the boundaries of the territory proposed to be annexed, proposed terms and condition, if any, and for further particulars.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that said Executive Officer has fixed October 21, 1970 at the hour of 10:00 A.M. in the Supervisors Chambers, County Governmental Center, Santa Cruz, California, as the date, time and place of public hearing by said Commission upon this petition and the Waiving of Hearing thereon. All persons desiring to be heard on this matter should appear at the above time and place.

E. R. HANNA,
Executive Officer
Local Agency Formation
Commission

County of Santa Cruz
DATED: September 30, 1970
Oct. 6, 1970 (15765)

LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION
County of Santa Cruz

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ UPON A PETITION FOR ANNEXATION OF TERRITORY TO THE CITY OF CAPITOLA.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a petition requesting consent to initiate proceedings to annex territory designated as "New Brighton No. 241" to the City of Capitola in the County of Santa Cruz has been filed with the Executive Officer of the Local Agency Formation Commission of said county. Said petition is on file at the office of said Executive Officer, County Governmental Center, Santa Cruz, California, and may be examined by any interested person. Reference is hereby made to said petition for a description of the annexation, the boundaries of the territory proposed to be annexed, proposed terms and conditions, if any, and for further particulars.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that said Executive Officer has fixed October 13, 1970 at the hour of 10:00 A.M. in the Supervisors Chambers, County Governmental Center, Santa Cruz, California, as the date, time and place of public hearing by said Commission upon this petition and the Waiving of Hearing thereon. All persons desiring to be heard on this matter should appear at the above time and place.

stackles in its struggle for Live Oak incorporation — a kind of conspiracy in county government against the project and the natural reticence of the people of Live Oak to abandon their carefree status quo.

Since Live Oak currently is under county jurisdiction, all the governmental action involved with incorporation must be processed through the county. If the conspiracy of which LOCAL-G complains is real, then, the group has made solid progress against some lofty odds.

Whether the conspiracy is real or not, LOCAL-G has come quite a way through floods of advice from all sides that what it is attempting to do can't be done.

In the waiting time before the group presents to the board of supervisors its intention to petition for cityhood, the group is carrying its message of incorporation to the people in a series of informal neighborhood gatherings.

But only when it is asked to do so.

Barbara White said LOCAL-G is delaying its hard-core campaign until it is time to circulate petitions so its arguments for cityhood will be fresh in the minds of residents.

"We're trying to make the people of Live Oak aware of the terrific potential there," she said.

The notice of intention to circulate petitions must have the signatures of 25 to 50 qualified

Live Oak landowners, which shouldn't be too hard to come by.

The petition for an election must be filed within 120 days after the presentation of the notice of intention. The petition must bear signatures of at least 25 per cent of the area's landholders representing at least 25 per cent of the area's assessed valuation.

The election for cityhood will require a simple majority approval of Live Oak's registered voters.

Reaction to LOCAL-G's plans at the neighborhood meetings has been heartening, Mrs. White noted.

She said the people generally are surprised when they become aware of the level of services that is available to a community the size of Live Oak without the levying of property taxes. She reminded that LOCAL-G's proposal calls for the municipal operation of Live Oak on state subvention funds with no property taxes.

Betty Ward said the greatest obstacle the group meets among the general public is a distaste for any change at all.

"They say, 'We don't want anything to do with change. We want to stay the way we are.'"

"Our reply usually is, 'The only way we can keep our identity is by incorporating, otherwise, becoming part of a big mid-county city or annexation to Santa Cruz or Capitola will result in the loss of small community pride.'"

"We fell, too, that if we become part of a larger city the other people won't have any interest in Live Oak, but the people of Live Oak will still be paying their taxes." She said a large city also will need a disproportionate

amount of taxes because it uses a larger administrative corps than a small one.

Mrs. White resurrected the argument that the City of Santa Cruz is attempting to swallow Live Oak by gaining an economic stranglehold on the area. She noted Santa Cruz Mayor Ernest Wicklund has claimed Santa Cruz cannot force the annexation of Live Oak. She said Wicklund was referring to the fact that annexation to Santa Cruz will require a vote of the residents of Live Oak.

"But there are other ways to force it, such as the economics of being tied to Santa Cruz by our water and sewer systems," Mrs. White claimed. "When the cost of remaining outside Santa Cruz becomes equal or greater than the tax bite of joining, the annexation will have been forced."

Jeff Mauro, LOCAL-G president, maintains that without levying property taxes a City of Live Oak could provide services superior to those now given the area by the county.

He said revenue from state subventions will be greater than that now spent by the county on direct services to Live Oak, regardless of county claims to the contrary.

LOCAL-G long has maintained the county receives more funds in Live Oak-generated subventions than it returns to the area in services.

The idea hangs on that Live Oak still is the "chicken farm area" of the county, Mrs. Ward commented, and the people have a built-in inferiority com-

plex regarding their community standing in the county.

She said the knowledge of Live Oak's potential should be brought home to its residents.

Some of that potential, Mauro commented, lies in the area's wealth of developable land, the wherewithal to perform that development and the community pride to go ahead and do it.

Is there any chance the reactionaries can have their wish and maintain an unchanged Live Oak community?

Not much, according to Mrs.

White. "All you have to do is look at the immense changes on 41st Avenue," she commented. "We can be ostriches for just so long, then to further ignore the signs becomes shortsighted. Change is coming."

She added, "We can't remain unincorporated much longer. We can't ignore the sheer weight of economic law."

She concluded by pointing to the ominous fact that the general plans of both Santa Cruz and Capitola call for a takeover of Live Oak.