

Big housing project gets green light

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WATSONVILLE — The City Council last night approved a 69-unit housing project on a 12.8-acre parcel at Green Valley Road and Hope Drive.

The project, proposed by Barnett and Co. Inc., will include single-family homes, ranging in price from \$170,000 to \$185,000. The company agreed to set aside about half an acre for a park.

The council voted 6-1 for the project. Councilman Dennis Osmer, who cited the city's lack of open space for parks, cast the no vote. The city's Parks and Recreation Department estimates the city needs about 88 acres of park space.

The park at the housing project will be 3,050 square feet above the minimum city requirements. The housing lots will range from

between 3,000 and 7,849 square feet, averaging 4,286 square feet.

Other housing projects have been proposed for the parcel in the past several years.

In 1980, before the area was annexed by the city, the county approved a 96-home project there.

In 1984, the city approved a 175-unit apartment complex. That project, however, was met with opposition from neighbors and eventually was dropped.

In 1991, the city approved yet another project: 88 townhouses. Neighbors did not oppose it.

The present project supersedes all other projects.

The housing project will be built in four phases. The first phase will consist of 18 houses on Hope Drive.

Phase two will see another 18

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houses built on streets constructed within the parcel.

In phase three, 17 houses will be built and the new streets — Pepper Tree Lane and Firethorn Way — will be completed. Firethorn Way will connect with Hope Drive.

The final phase will include 16 houses on Firethorn Way.

The park will be located on the south end of the parcel. About two acres will be dedicated to the protection of Struve Slough, which the park faces.

Project developers said the prices of the houses were set to make them marketable. The project could be considered "affordable housing," the council said.

Fees collected from the project will also help the city develop park areas, said Pat Donohue, head of the city Parks and Recreation Department.

REFERENCE

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