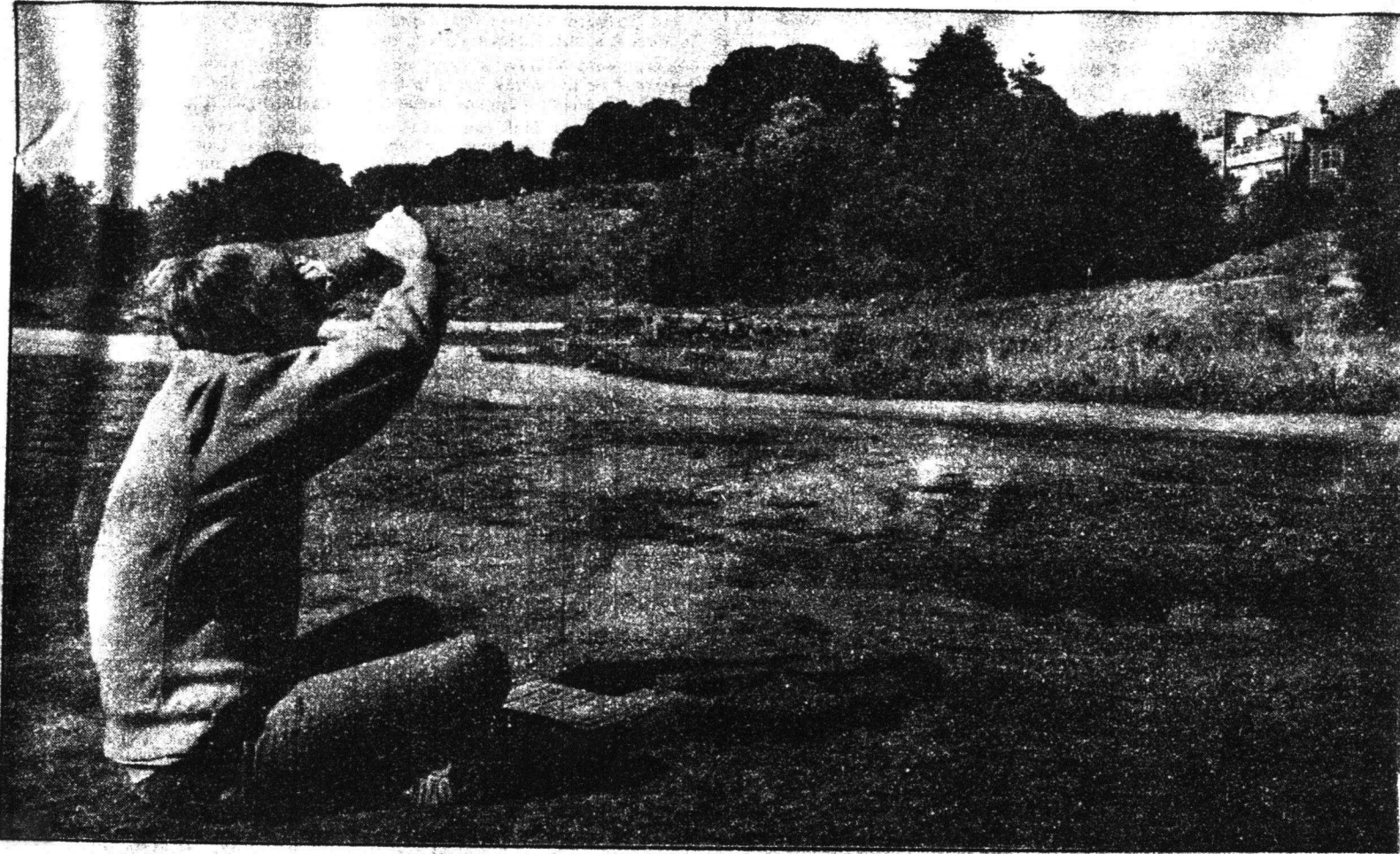


Transforming Aptos Village



Doug McMillen, owner of a village photo lab, shoots pictures on the parcel targeted for development.

By LANE WALLACE
STAFF WRITER

Three Aptos developers are proposing a housing-and-commercial project for Aptos Village that they hope will become a focal point for the town.

Their plan calls for houses, shops, offices, a town square, trees, off-street parking and various architectural styles "that will make it look like it was built out over a 100-year period," said Rob Marani, who is planning the project with Steve Mills and Ted Crocker. Granite Rock Co. of Watsonville, which owns 1.2 acres of the 7-acre site, is a partner in the project.

In an interview last week, Marani and Crocker emphasized that they're welcoming suggestions for their project from the public and from government agencies.

"We're saying, 'Give us some guidance,'" said Marani, who said the county "has failed to implement any kind of plan for Aptos Village."

The project is proposed for the area behind the Aptos Station shopping area, between Trout Gulch Road and the "T. Hopkins" Road, a short stretch that links Soquel Drive to the entrance to

Nisene Marks State Park and serves as an entrance to Aptos Station.

A bypass road would cut diagonally through the property from

where Soquel and T. Hopkins meet to the Cathedral Drive-Trout Gulch Road intersection. The road would help alleviate congestion at the Soquel-Trout Gulch intersec-

tion, Marani said.

The project will have a "strong pedestrian orientation," Marani

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said.

Another developer had proposed a shopping center for the 7-acre site two years ago, but the project never materialized. Crocker and Marani, who are in the process of buying the land, wince at the idea of a shopping center.

"This isn't a shopping center. This is a village, of homes, shops

Developers unveil ambitious village plan

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