

6-1-56

Urban Renewal:

What's It All About?

(Earl Newkirk, executive director of the city redevelopment agency, discusses urban renewal and redevelopment in these columns three times weekly. Suggestions, comments and queries are welcomed by the agency, whose office is in the city hall annex, 322 Church street, GA 6-0460.)

By Earl Newkirk

For some time now we have been urging one and all to give us the benefit of his thinking regarding the planning proposals we have made for the San Lorenzo park project.

We want to thank our readers for the many responses to our invitation for constructive suggestions and comments. We trust they are indicative of the cross-section of people so necessary to achieve success in a program as complicated as this.

I mention this once again by way of pointing out that your redevelopment agency has now reached the point where some very important—though tentative—decisions must be made in order for the planning to continue uninterrupted.

This is the more true because we have set this fall as the deadline for holding public hearings prior to adoption of a plan by the redevelopment agency and the city council. This, then, is our answer to those who contend it will be "10 years before the city does anything about this redevelopment business."

If we can stick to our schedule, your redevelopment agency will hold hearings first this fall, followed closely by the public hearings of the city council—all of which I believe I mentioned in an earlier column.

This hardly sounds like the rumored "10 years" which reaches my ears from time to time.

And this brings us to what I mean when I say "if we can stick to our schedule."

"Sticking to our schedule" means that we have to have the co-operation of everyone. We must believe that what we have done thus far meets with the approval of the majority of all of you.

In short, your redevelopment agency is met with the problem of deciding what it feels you want in the redevelopment plan—and still have that plan economically feasible.

So soon, you may say. And why so soon? So soon because first we feel Santa Cruz should have a pretty good idea of what it wants. (Surely you've seen our proposals in the paper. If not, come into the office before it's too late!)

Second, it takes infinite time to prepare cost estimates, to prepare plans for new utilities and facilities, to plan details for such a large project, too.

Third, the planning firm engaged by your redevelopment agency has completed its studies and recommendations (based on planning considerations) and is now ready to begin work on a detailed re-use plan—the rede-

velopment plan—if we but indicate the direction in which it should go.

And, fourth, we don't want this to take "10 years" any more than you do.

Obviously, I should make it clear that this decision is not irrevocable. Recently we hired Dwight Merriman of E. S. Merriman & Sons, San Francisco, to prepare a market analysis and re-use appraisal for us.

Merriman has done similar work for redevelopment agencies in Sacramento, Richmond and San Francisco—to name but a few cities, and enjoys a fine reputation for the caliber of his work.

But, we can't be positive about our recommendations until we have the complete results of Merriman's work. Still, we can't delay planning considerations, either.

Thus we anticipate Merriman's work will proceed hand in hand with the planning work to be done next by Wise Associates.

Even so, a word now may well save weeks, even months, of delay later. Just a minor change in a redevelopment plan can cause endless waste of time—all because it affects innumerable documents necessary to support the recommendations contained in the plan itself.

I know, I've fooled around so-called "government red-tape" quite awhile myself.

Century- Old Echoes from The Sentinel files, 1856

(Being a perusal of The SENTINEL'S columns of ten decades ago—which few current California publications can offer.)

Edited by Preston Sawyer

Third Santa Cruz issue of The "Sentinel" brought evidence that Editor John McElroy had ventured abroad to examine the outer gardens of his new home, the second week of his settling here just a hundred years ago.

He placed the following prominently on Page One of the four-page weekly:

(Note the spelling then used for today's "ZAYANTE").

"SAYANTE VALLEY—

FREMONT'S TREE

"On Saturday last, we took a pleasant ride into the country about our little village of Santa Cruz; going in a northerly direction, about seven miles over an undulating country, and through sandhills covered with majestic pine trees, we emerged into the beautiful and romantic valley of Sayante—which forms the residence of Capt. Isaac Graham, one of the old pioneers, 22 years a resident of California.

"This valley is a broad bottom about one mile wide and two miles in length, in the middle of which the San Lorenzo and Sayante rivers mingle their waters, and find their way down through a pass in the mountains to the ocean. Some parts of this bottom are open land, suitable for cultivation, with a rich, fertile soil, while others are covered with redwood timber of the most enormous growth.

"We passed on through the valley, which is surrounded with mountains and lofty hills covered with dense forests of timber across the San Lorenzo; upon one of the beautiful streams coming from the mountains on the western side, we passed a large body of miners, who were engaged in turning the creek from its bed in order to work for gold. They were just completing their ditch and flume which turns the water out of the creek for about three-fourths of a mile; we did not learn the name of the company, and we knew but few persons which we met; they treated us with kindness and hospitality, and we judge by their cheerful countenances and dispositions, that they have a reasonable prospect of good diggings.

"The next and principle object of our visit, was the great red-

Harold Johnson Is Chairman Of Life Underwriters

Harold Johnson, agent for the Occidental Life Insurance of California, was elected Monterey Bay area membership chairman for the California State Association of Life Underwriters during a three-day conference last week in Sacramento.

He was installed Friday in Monterey.

Speaker at the conference was Holgar J. Johnson, president of the Institute of Life Insurance of America, who told the delegates that "We in business must analyze economically and socially what is happening in this country in order to give better service. We must consider a better-living-philosophical-urge for better things."

Three officers were elected for the association in the Monterey Bay area. They are: Edwin Bliss, president; Edward Espitallier, vice president; and Dave Martin, secretary-treasurer, all from Monterey.