

SCOTTS VALLEY

Polo Barn's fate mulled

By JONDI GUMZ

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The City Council is expected to take a stand on the fate of the historic Polo Barn Wednesday night.

The barn, built in 1930 and designed by prominent architect William Wurster, is on a 117-acre ranch next to Borland where a developer proposes to build 40 upscale homes. A development of 95 homes was proposed seven years ago; the latest version calls for about 98 acres of open space, less grading in steep areas, and changes to preserve spine-flowers.

The big question is how to restore the barn, as Historical Society members would like, given that the city has no money to do it.

The developer, San Ramon-based Lennar Communities, commissioned a feasibility study exploring three possible uses of the barn, such as a museum, a community meeting room and a private horse stable, as well as mothballing to prevent further deterioration.

Rehabilitating the building for public access would cost an estimated cost \$1.5 million, and some contend the estimate is low.

The city Parks and Recreation Commission agreed the city should not accept the barn as is, due to its state of disrepair, and favored a stable over dismantling the structure. In response, Jerry Embree, the developer's consultant, submitted a proposal for a private stable on two acres for up to seven horses.

The problem is that a stable with no public access is inconsistent with the city's general plan, which calls for a 5-acre neighborhood park for the Polo Ranch property.

In addition, a zoning change would be needed. The acreage proposed is smaller than the four acres the city requires for seven horses.

City planner Michelle Fodge has concerns about incompatibility between the



Bill Lovejoy/Sentinel

Consultant Jerry Embree looks over plans by Lennar Communities for the historic Polo Barn, built in 1930 for golfer and polo player Marion Hollins.

Fate of historic Polo Barn under review

A developer proposing to subdivide the 117-acre Polo Ranch next to Borland into lots for 40 homes commissioned a feasibility study of uses for the historic Polo Barn. After reviewing the study, the city Parks and Recreation Commission recommended an equestrian center. The city has no money to fund any of the options.

USE	LOCATION	COST
MUSEUM	Move near creek	\$1,599,400
	Keep in place	\$1,483,100
COMMUNITY ROOM	Move near creek	\$1,602,000
	Keep in place	\$1,525,708
MOTHBALLING	Keep in place	\$109,987
PRIVATE HORSE STABLE	Keep in place	\$504,871

homeowners and the equestrians because three homes are proposed 60 feet from the stable, with its accompanying dust, noise, and odor. Typically, agricultural-related setbacks are 200 feet.

Fodge recommends the developer mothball the building to protect it because it could be some time any actual restoration takes place.

Another vision for the historic barn surfaced Friday. City arts commissioner Claire Hodgins suggested it would be an ideal site for artists' studios, a gallery

and tea shop with an outdoor picnic area. She said a nonprofit organization could seek funding for the project and oversee its development.

Neither the city planning staff nor the developer has had time to analyze that scenario.

The City Council will meet at 6 p.m. Wednesday at City Hall, 1 Civic Center Drive.

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