

General plan shaping up; still some anger over final form

By CAROLYN SWIFT (Live Oak General Plan Advisory
While members of LOGPAC Committee) still complain about



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reshaping of the Live Oak General Plan, the county Planning Commission gave its compliments last Wednesday to work done by county planning staff.

During a final study of the draft plan, the commission told staff of the Community Resources Agency that it is impressed with the way the general plan now addresses the needs of Live Oak.

Planners presented a number of revisions and clarifications to wording of the plan during the meeting last week, and a public hearing was scheduled for last night.

Linda Niebanck told the audience of more than 45 persons that latest revisions are based on planning commission recommendations made during the first

study session, and are intended to modify and clarify wording rather than introduce major changes.

"There is nothing really new," she said, "We are trying to make the wording more clear and therefore more useful, so there is nothing hidden when the plan is presented to the board of supervisors. It's all there in black-and-white so everyone can understand what's in the plan."

There were some changes in the general plan map, which is a physical illustration of the draft document. Some areas previously designated as high density were lowered to medium density if they are near rolling land and gulches and are located away from shopping areas. Other

areas near Capitola Road and 17th Avenue and near Capitola and 17th Avenue were changed from medium to high density because they are next to shopping routes. On Brommer Avenue, an area marked for commercial-industrial uses was changed to avoid conflict with residential development.

Another change recommended by a representative from Dominican Hospital was supported by Commissioner Penny Barkin. The hospital has acquired about 12 acres immediately north of the present site and plans to use the land for future expansion. There is concern the property may be zoned medium density residential which would prohibit the construction of additional hospital buildings that may be needed to serve the county's projected population growth. The hospital wishes to have the property designated for public use.

Ms. Barkin said she would like to have it clearly stated in the plan that Dominican Hospital will have room to expand, and added there is also a need for sites to be used for professional offices near the hospital. The plan now indicates residential uses with offices allowed with a use permit. The commissioner asked the staff to work with Dominican to help project its ultimate needs. Remaining land can then be zoned for residential use, she said.

There will also be further consideration given to lands along Portola Avenue between 36th and 30th Avenue. Business owners in this section wish the land to remain in a commercial

Ms. Barkin suggested planners consider motel use as appropriate for the area along with coastal commercial or mixed community - commercial designations along Portola Drive to the area between 35th and 30th Avenues. These uses could serve visitors to the area, she said, while other lands will be maintained primarily for local use.

Criticism to the general plan draft in its present form came from Christine Hooper, the last chairwoman of the LOGPAC organization.

"In consideration of a considerable amount of time citizens spent on the plan over a period of a year, I have a list of things I would like to restate," she said, "And I feel it needs repeating again and again and again."

She asked that a draft map submitted to the county by LOGPAC be hung on the wall along with the map compiled by county staff. "Every week it seems there is a different plan and a different map," she said, "I would like everyone to note there was no citizen participation in the county plan. I emphasized that it is a staff plan."

Mrs. Hooper complained that she has not been consulted by county planners in the last few weeks of final revision. "As best I can tell, it is either because the plan changes every week or because of the current dictates of the board of supervisors and the planning commission," she said.

The LOGPAC chairwoman charged that the Live Oak General Plan is now "completely an establishment plan," lacking the ideas of Live Oak citizens.

Ms. Barkin countered that the last LOGPAC draft submitted March 14 contains many recommendations that appear in the plan prepared by county staff. Among these are statements to encourage mass transportation; a recommendation to develop a variety of dwelling types, and the urging of financial aid to low income renters on an individual basis.

"As I went through the LOGPAC recommendations," she said, "I was really surprised how many of those ideas are in the plan we are considering tonight."

"The differences seem to be on how to do these things, not on what should be done," the commissioner added, "I see the goals and policies of LOGPAC addressed in the plan tonight."

One addition to the Live Oak General Plan under public facilities is the designation of the intersection of 17th Avenue and Capitola Road as a "community center," perceived as the "center" of the Live Oak area.

The addition states that the plan "intends that this area be enhanced and that through beautification and location of community facilities it does in fact, become a community center."

Recommendations include the further improvement of Live Oak School as a place for public gathering and activity; enhancement of the Live Oak Senior Center, and the possible addition of community garden space; consideration of recreational or community service space for day care, sports or outreach training programs; and improvements to the intersection with the addition

of street trees and landscaping, signs, pedestrian walkways and improved traffic signals to clearly identify the area as a community center. The location of a library facility near the intersection is also recommended.

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