

LOGPAC Votes Not To Designate Parks

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Live Oak citizens will search for state funding for parks without specifically designating any park sites and then will go out and shop for "the best park site available that would serve the most people."

So it was decided at Monday night's meeting of the Live Oak General Plan Advisory Committee (LOGPAC) when committee members passed by 21-8 a strongly worded motion made by Harry Hooper.

The motion states "that the Live Oak study area be given its fair pro-rata share of park purchase funds that might become available for Santa Cruz County.

"Once the amount of money is received, then the area be shopped for the purchase of the best park site available that would serve the most people -

and the site(s) purchased.

"Further, under no circumstances should the planning staff and/or commission refuse an application for a building or use permit based solely on the fact that LOGPAC had designated 12 properties as possible sites."

During a heated discussion on parks, the battle lines were drawn between those who thought the only way to get state park funds from the Roberti-Z'berg Urban Open Space Acquisition Bill would be by specifically designating a park site and those who thought designating a site is unfair to the owner of the property.

"Speaking as a real estate agent, if something is designated as a park, the planning staff is going to put so much cold water on it that you're not going to get it (building or use permit). . . It's the kiss of death. You're stuck with that

property and can't do anything with it," Hooper said in support of his motion.

Hooper then blasted LOGPAC members who were active in June for sending a letter to the planning commission in which 12 general park sites on the county's Parks, Recreation and Open Space plan (PROS) were indicated as park sites.

Christopher Dasilva and Darby Miller, two Live Oak property owners whose lots were designated in this letter, piped up in protest during the meeting. OGPAC member Wally Kaufman also pointed out that his friend, Bill Anderson, owned property on Capitola Road that he wanted to develop, but was having trouble with the planning staff because the property was slated as a possible park site. Anderson was unavailable for comment

today.

After the meeting, Deputy Planning Director Henry Baker said he supported Hooper's motion and added that "I can't hold back anybody's permit because I'm studying something."

He added that in recommending for or against a permit, the planning staff goes by the designation on the 1961 County General Plan.

If a site is designated on the PROS plan for a park, Baker said he would call it to the developer's attention and "If we got into the area where everything was built up except the last five acres, certainly I would have to point that out to the planning commission."

LOGPAC Co-chairman Dick Dugan agreed that designating general park sites in the letter could make people believe that these were the only sites available. He added that the purpose

of the letter was to encourage the county to begin buying park sites in Live Oak.

In an emotional plea, LOGPAC member Phil Baldwin said that if LOGPAC fails to get funds and the county agrees with the LOGPAC move not to refuse use permits because a site is designated as a possible park area "that every single vacant lot can have construction on it."

Baldwin's move to table Hooper's motion until the group could find out for sure if they needed to designate a specific site in applying for funds failed 21-6.

Dugan echoed the fear of losing park land to development, saying, "The facts are that in Oakland today there's a one and a half million dollar bond issue to put in a small

neighborhood park because they didn't plan ahead. If we don't buy the land now, we're going to buy it later for a much greater cost."

Dugan said, however, that he agreed with Hooper's move to get the money without designating park sites because "we're not a zoning commission or a planning commission. Let's get back to being a citizen advisory committee that's planning recommendations for a general plan."

Throughout the discussion, County Senior Planner Dennis Pisisla contended that the application form for money from the Roberti-Z'berg bill has a space for designating a specific site. When Hooper's motion was finally passed, Pisisla was overheard saying, "I don't believe it."

I'm voting