



Woodlands Association
Bill Armstrong, President
Carol Ann Gray, Editor

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Walnut Creek, Ca.

From the President

Many of you will recall that about a year ago Grant Burton Proposed a plan for the shopping center which has been slated for his nursery property for many years. In addition to the Bank of America and the Ross Valley Savings and Loan which are already on the property, the proposal provided for a grocery store of up to 15,000 square feet, a drug store of up to 10,000 square feet, and about 50,000 feet of space for smaller shops. The concept was intended to match the high quality of the Prune Yard Center in San Jose, and it was often referred to as a "boutique" center, although no precise definition of such a center was or can be given.

Nevertheless, most people who heard about the proposal thought they knew what the center would be, and most of the comments heard by the members of the Board at that time were favorable. The Board therefore supported Burton's proposal, subject to conditions imposed by the Planning Commission, which specified the types of businesses which would be permitted.

Mr. Burton has advised the Board that he has contacted a large number of grocers including Black's in Lafayette and Lupoi's. None of the grocers would accept the 15,000 foot limitation (economically unfeasible), except "7-11," and that was not what any of us had in mind. In addition, Mr. Burton said that he is unable to obtain any financing for a plan which would use a 15,000 foot grocery store as an anchor tenant; the lenders apparently agree that 15,000 feet is too small to be economically feasible. For comparison, the Safeway at Encina Grande is about 23,000 feet.

Mr. Burton has now presented to the Board a new plan which is essentially identical to the first except that the grocery store has been expanded to 28,000 feet ("Ralph's is a probable tenant if that footage can be provided). Mr. Burton has asked for our support and the Board is now faced with a difficult decision.

Any development on the property will, of course, generate a good deal of traffic in and out of the center. A traffic survey estimates that the proposed new center will add about 6,000 trips a day (3,000 in, 3,000 out of the center). The property now generates 1,500 trips per day. The report also says that with the

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presumed completion of improvements to Ygnacio Valley and Oak Grove in the next year or so, those roads could handle this additional traffic. It will obviously be more inconvenient, but any commercially feasible venture that we know of would have to generate substantial auto traffic. A business needs customers and customers use cars. ✓

Another concern is the use of a bigger market as an anchor tenant. To be successful, the center must have some kind of anchor tenant to act as a drawing card for the remaining small shops and to provide some certainty that the landlord will receive at least some rent during bad times. In a center of this size, the use of a grocery store is quite common as we all know. It is perhaps the only kind of anchor tenant which would be able to do the job. Other suggestions, such as a department store, normally do not generate the volume of business which a grocery store does. Without the volume, the small shops which most of us thought would give the center its "boutique" quality would have a much more difficult time; perhaps they could not exist at all.

The immediate question is whether we should support or oppose Mr. Burton's request to increase the permitted size of the grocery store. In reality the question is not, however, whether the grocery store should be 15,000 or 28,000 feet. If this change is not approved, the "boutique" center apparently will not be built, although Mr. Burton didn't tell us what alternatives he had in mind. It is also unlikely that Mr. Burton will abandon his plans to develop his property. We can only speculate as to what the next proposal might be.

An important consideration is that Mr. Burton has consistently been cooperative with this Association. Over the past several years he has come to our Association to seek our view with regard to the use of his property. He is doing so again, and he advises that he and his family intend to retain ownership and management of the proposed center, so we would retain a good neighbor. We must realize, however, that there is a limit to what we can ask of Mr. Burton is controlling the use of his property. The Board is not happy with the increase in the size of the grocery store, but we think that Mr. Burton has made an honest effort to make the other proposal work, and it cannot work.

We would like your views. Please fill out the questionnaire below and return it to Bill Armstrong, 3418 Perada Drive.

AUTO WORLD

An estimated 225 people attended the County Planning Commission meeting on August 14 to hear the public hearing on a proposed County General Plan amendment for the area on which Auto World has been proposed (Bancroft and Ygnacio Valley). After hearing testimony as to what density would be appropriate---everyone was then assuming residential use---the Auto World representative suggested commercial use, for obvious reasons of self interest.

The Commission wanted staff input on the suggestion and wanted to consider all suggestions at one time. So, the hearing was continued to October 30. Please plan to attend if you can. The specific issue is important enough, but also involved is the broad issue of the extent to which local residents and City governments can affect County land use planning.

Civic Affairs

No bids were received this Spring for the "Woodlands Park", so development of the .9 acre parcel remains in a state of limbo. The City plans to re-evaluate its bidding process and call for new bids in the Fall, when contractors are not as busy.

The proposed shopping center at Treat Boulevard and Bancroft Road -- which might have included a "bonus" park --- was denied at the August 6 City Council meeting, and the same plan cannot be submitted again for one year. Influencing the Council's decision were an environmental impact report and a staff report which stated:

-the need for the shopping center was questionable.
-traffic at the intersection is already at capacity
-strong neighborhood opposition was apparent
-the previously stated city position discourages commercial development of the valley

The tone of the Council seems to be one of careful deliberation in deciding the impact of future development on the community.

Gail Murray, Vice-President
937-0841

CABANA CLUB CORNER

- President.....Chuck Stefanetti.....933-9983
- Vice-President.....Bill Kentnor.....939-2984
- Secretary.....Liz Moore.....933-1469
- Treasurer.....Dick Redden.....935-7233
- Buildings and Grounds.....Dave Palla.....937-9878
- Swim Activities.....John Rodriguez.....932-2495
- Pool Equipment.....Jack Foudy.....939-7104

The next Board meeting will be Monday, September 11th.

If you are an interested Woodlands resident who wishes to buy a Cabana Club membership, call the Secretary at 933-1469. If you have just moved into a Woodlands home and wish to transfer the membership, call 933-1469.

Any Cabana Club member who is interested in serving as a Board Director should contact the nominating committee chairmen, Patti and Ed Grubb at 935-8070.

Bikes have been stolen from the Cabana Club bike racks, so we ask that you remind your child to lock his bike in the rack.

WOODLANDS SWIM TEAM T-SHIRTS ARE STILL AVAILABLE!!! See Diane Rodriguez at the pool or at 513 Rock Oak Road. The T-shirts cost \$2,50 each or we have family plan prices for Mom, Dad and all the children:

- 4 - T-shirts(\$10.00) will cost.....\$9.50
- 5 - T-shirts(\$12.50) will cost.....11.00
- 6 - T-shirts(\$15.00) will cost.....12.50
- 7 - T-shirts(\$17.50) will cost.....14.00

*July 30
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Opposes
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