



Woodlands Association
Ron Borgman, President
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NEWSLETTER

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Walnut Creek, Ca.

LATEST BURTON CENTER PLAN REVISION PRESENTED TO CITY; FALLS SHORT;
WOODLANDS HOPES TO HELP RESOLVE THE ISSUE

In a rather sudden move, the latest Burton Center plan was presented to the Walnut Creek City Council on November 17. The goal of the presentation was to secure an opinion from the Council concerning whether or not the new plan meets the general intent of the 1972 ordinance under which Grant Burton was granted permission to develop a botique shopping center in the general area where the nursery now exists. The issue focused, as it did under a similar 1974 plan, on the extent to which the grocery market meets restrictions designed to exclude a supermarket from the botique concept of the center.

Lack of Coordination in Planning

Members of our Burton Center Liaison Committee and the Woodlands Association board were disappointed at the lack of interest shown by the Burton Center people in coordinating their planning efforts with our community. The last cooperative effort, in 1972, met with success when the Woodlands Association supported Grant Burton and his entire botique shopping center plan (including a botique cement plant) before the City Council. Two efforts by Burton at changes to the 1972 ordinance (a Ralph's Market in 1974 and a somewhat more attractive, but oversize Fry's "gourmet" grocery in 1975) have not been coordinated with, nor supported by, the Woodlands.

Three Key Neighborhood Concerns About the Burton Center

Key concerns of the Woodlands people (expressed informally and in a 120 to 12 opinion poll rejecting the 1974 plan) are:

1. Lack of an apparent need for a 5th large grocery market within three miles of our neighborhood.

- 2. The traffic impact of a large-volume grocery market-anchored shopping center, for which Citrus Avenue will be the sole entrance/exit.
- 3. Lack of guarantees for:
 - a) Stability of ownership, and
 - b) Retained integrity of concept over the years

What Next?

The Burton's people will probably have to secure a rezoning from the City to allow the type of center they presently envision. With continued stiff opposition from the neighborhood a certainty, Burton's faces an uphill battle with success unlikely.

In order to avoid continued failure, we have asked the Burton's people to begin discussing their plans with us. The objective of re-establishing cooperation would be to compromise and resolve differences in order to get the boutique shopping center started. It is an attractive project which, if planned and executed in concert with the needs of everyone concerned, would be a positive addition to our neighborhood.

FEDERAL BLOCK GRANT

Following up on his description in last month's Newsletter of Walnut Creek's Federal Block Grant program, Frank Racioppo made a presentation to the Woodlands Association board at the November meeting. Having considered several options for projects to be undertaken, it is likely that the Woodlands Association will work through the Walnut Creek Homeowners Council to support a project for North Walnut Creek(Larkey) general improvement.

NEXT WOODLANDS ASSOCIATION BOARD MEETING

The December meeting of the Woodlands Association Board of Directors is scheduled for Wednesday night, December 3, at 8:00 p.m. at the home of Terry Farley, 3527 Perada Drive. You are welcome to attend. Please call to notify Terry in advance at 938-4670.

Ron Borgman, 939-8026

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EIRs: A Step Towards Environmental Protection

A recent application to change the development plan for the Franco Ranch illustrates the advantages and problems of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The Franco Ranch is about 201 acres located in South Walnut Creek, northeast of Livorna Estates. An approved plan permits 218 townhouses and 108 detached homes. Most of the site, hills and creeks, will remain open space.

The change proposes 66 townhouses and 173 detached homes(overall a reduction of 87 units) and realigns the roads to reduce the impact on the hills. The EIR, however, noted that the change proposes development in a new portion of the land, causing the elimination of a wildlife community there.