



The view eastbound on Ralston Avenue can look deceptively uncongested, but there's usually a

Belmont: Officials changed, p

By STEVEN SHELBY

Times Staff Writer

BELMONT — Things went humming along in Belmont during 1990.

After being proposed, debated and defeated 20 years ago, a plan to relieve traffic congestion on Ralston Avenue got the go-ahead, and state financing, this year. Ralston and its major intersections will be improved with the construction of an underpass at the railroad crossing between El Camino Real and Old County Road.

The City Council in December decided to name a citizens task force early in 1991 to advise the city on the construction project and its

1990 meant progress on underpass and

Looking back on 1990

impact on residents, commuters, business people and shoppers.

The underpass is among projects planned by cities up and down the CalTrain line to lessen traffic congestion caused when commuter trains stop or go through town. The number of trains is expected to double to 116 daily within the next few years, and work on the

underpass itself is expected to begin in 1993.

Protest continued into December over City Manager Ed Everett's naming of Assistant City Manager Rick Haffey as interim chief of police after Chief Steve Staveley resigned to become chief of police in La Habra in November.

Everett said the appointment is temporary, until a new chief is named in early 1991, and is an essentially administrative move which should provide closer ties between the police department and other city departments.

Opponents said it was

destructive to most department, because cities choose some within the department temporary chief was searching for a new

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The view eastbound on Ralston Avenue can look deceptively uncongested, but there's usually a crowd of cars in that background area near El Camino Real.

Times file photo

Belmont: Officials changed, police and fire didn't

1990 meant progress on underpass and development projects

ELBY

Looking back on 1990

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destructive to morale in the department, because most cities choose someone from within the department to be a temporary chief while searching for a new chief.

The Belmont Police Department survived intact when Belmont and San Carlos city officials decided during the summer not to combine the departments of the neighboring cities. The proposed consolidation, designed to save both cities money, was under study for several months and included a consultant's report that savings could be achieved

Carlos and Belmont fire departments were combined to form the South County Fire Protection District.

The Belmont and San Carlos city councils said citizens of the two cities were concerned they would lose local control of their departments. Economic savings could be achieved by changes within the departments, the consultant said, and the councils decided to make some of those changes — such as combining the police dispatch functions.

The fire district experienced changes, too, when Chief Gary

Department. Richard Latr administrative chief for So County, was named acting chief effective Aug. 1. The department is involved in a program to combine and remodel stations during the coming year.

The Western Hills Area was approved in May. Originally, up to 400 housing units were proposed in the of Hastings, Carlmont, Geraldine and Lower Valley Drives, but the zoning plan now calls for 76 units due to the steep canyons, small valleys, streams and unstable soil there.

In April, the city of Belmont

Things went in Belmont

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Enquirer Bulletin
November 13, 1991

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Della Santina and Rodriguez

By Kim Schneiderman

Belmont Planning Commissioner Adele Della Santina and Belmont City Council incumbent Ed Rodriguez beat two other candidates last Tuesday for election to the City Council.

Della Santina led with 2,393 votes, 127 more votes than Rodriguez, who took second with 2,266 votes. Judy King was third with 1,648 votes, and Gloria Purcell trailed with 1,013.

An elated Della Santina, who has served nine years on the Planning Commission, was celebrating with her supporters by 9:30 p.m. when only 13 of the 17 poll precincts had reported.

"I'm flying," she said, raising

her voice over a rejoicing crowd. "I really don't know what to say. I'm in a state of shock."

Later, Della Santina attributed her landslide victory to the fact that people in the community were pleased with her record of accomplishments on the Planning Commission.

Della Santina, a real estate associate who works at Fox & Carskadon in Belmont, had campaigned for revitalizing existing structures to enhance the downtown and preserving the city's aesthetic appearance by landscaping more streets.

Della Santina, who said she never knocked on doors or circulated fliers at the train station, had not anticipated beating Ro-

driguez by as many votes as she did.

"I'm not a politician," she said. "They just knew what they were getting."

Rodriguez, a retired engineering consultant, offered his congratulations to Della Santina but admitted he had thought he might take the lead.

The four-year council member, who will now assume his second term in office, said he was looking forward to completing plans for vital city projects. Rodriguez had advocated wiping out a "polyglot"

COUNTRY'S PRODUCTIVE elected to City Council

block of old housing and businesses to build a fresh and cohesive village center.

King, a parks and recreation commissioner and member of the Ralston Avenue Grade Separation Task Force, seemed embittered over the results but shrugged it off, adding she was glad to be returning to her seat on the commission.

Purcell, an active member of the Green Party in California and the Grade Separation Task Force, said that while she hadn't given it much thought, she might consid-

er seeking appointment to the Planning Commission and would definitely run for council again.

"It is the first time I've dipped my feet into (city elections) and it's encouraging that so many people had enough faith to vote for me and support my campaign, too," she said.

Santina will replace Mayor Dick Green on Nov. 20. Green announced his retirement last summer, and his position of mayor will be transferred to Councilmember Gary Orton.

Central Belmont under evaluation for low-income residential sites.

Times file photo



SM James Feb 5, 1991

Belmont council to study housing proposals

By STEVEN SHELBY

Times Staff Writer

BELMONT — City officials are moving ahead on proposals to provide low- and moderate-income (LMI) housing in Belmont.

The City Council is scheduled Feb. 12 to consider two proposals for developments which would take care of some or all of Belmont's requirement to provide 20 units of LMI housing. Additional proposals have been put forth, including two for development of the Christensen Nursery site at 635 Old County Road, but formal application has not been pursued.

Also, the Planning Commission will consider revision of the housing element of the general plan, probably beginning in March, which will establish overall city policy on housing.

Belmont is required by state law to see that 20 LMI units are made available, because the city was granted an exception in approving housing in Island Park. The land and housing costs there are too high to make LMI housing practical, the city noted. It also is required to provide that 15 percent of new housing within the redevelopment area is LMI housing.

The Mid-Peninsula Housing Coalition has submitted a request for a redevelopment agency subsidy in order to build 24 units of affordable housing for the developmentally disabled at 801 Old County Road, which is within the redevelopment area. If that is approved, the redevelopment agency would have the benefit of meeting all its very-low-income requirements, which are the most difficult to fulfill, planning staff said.

The other active proposal, according to Planning Director Dan Vanderprien, is an application by Amervest to build 16 townhouses in the \$275,000 price range and 3,000 square feet

of commercial space at 900 Sixth Avenue, near the Ralston Avenue intersection. The developer has obtained all approvals and is ready to build, he told the City Council, and has requested an agency subsidy in order to provide the two moderate-income units which will be required.

The council said it would not consider at all a proposal which included amending the general plan to allow 45 units to be built at 1100 Ralston Ave. Councilman Gary Orton said that idea goes against the intent of the general plan for that area.

The applicant, Ike Gillory, considered building the units with the idea of selling them to senior citizens and noted some subsidy might be needed in order to provide LMI housing there, staff said.

Plans or amended plans for 1100 Ralston Avenue had not moved forward as of the end of January. The same situation held for the two Christensen Nursery site proposals on Old County Road.

Applicant Jim Melcher proposed a 62-unit condominium project, about 30 units per acre, nine to 11 of which would be available to moderate-income families.

The council said it didn't want to adopt a policy position regarding the second proposal. That policy would have the redevelopment agency staff work with developers requesting rights to exclusive negotiation in providing 100 percent of the city's LMI housing needs.

The proposal calls for the development of 935 Old County as a 100 percent moderate-income project, without Melcher's participation. Allen Parker & Associates proposed to work with the redevelopment agency as the representative of Bridge, a not-for-profit housing developer. "The developer team would try to purchase the Christensen site if an agreement could be worked out with the agency to subsidize and build 100 percent moderate-income housing on the site," staff said.

"Failing a purchase, they would request eminent domain proceedings," staff said. "The issues of density and subsidy have not been discussed, although the developer stated that at least 30 units per acre would be necessary."

The Belmont Redevelopment Agency has a housing fund balance of about \$1.1 million and it increases at the rate of about \$250,000 to \$300,000 per year. Vanderprien said.

In the five years of its existence, the agency has accumulated an "excess surplus" of about \$750,000 which, if not spent on Belmont housing projects, would have to be turned over to the San Mateo County housing agency or some other public agency, the planning director said.

"The agency appears to be in no immediate danger of losing control over these monies," Vanderprien told the council.

photo - over

Mayor honored, new council members sworn in

By Kim Schneiderman

BELMONT — Two City Council members were sworn in at a ceremony last Wednesday, followed by passage of the gavel from former Mayor Dick Green to new Mayor Gary Orton.

Green was presented with a resolution listing his accomplishments both as a citizen and a politician.

The former mayor, who chose to retire, gave a brief speech, expressing his satisfaction with creating a Caltrain carpool/parking program, producing a quarterly city newsletter and taking the first steps to improve relations with the Harbor Industrial area during his four-year term in office.

"I wish this new council a lot of luck," said Green. "There are some very difficult decisions ahead and they need your support."

Orton was later administered the California Loyalty Oath by county Superior Court Judge James O. Miller.

After being sworn in, Orton thanked his family for being supportive and then expressed regret that City Manager Ed Everett would be leaving within a month to become city manager of Redwood City.

He went on to speak of the

burdens brought before city governments in the difficult financial times of today.

"From my perspective, local government is where the action is," Orton said.

Projects like the Ralston Avenue grade separation and other civic facility improvements, he maintained, enhance the quality of life for the entire community.

"1992 will be a year of challenges," he added, stressing that the city would strive to balance the budget.

But the first item on the council's agenda is to find a new city manager to replace Everett.

Adele Della Santina, a newcomer who received the most votes in this month's election, was sworn in next to incumbent Ed Rodriguez.

Della Santina, a nine-year planning commissioner who served as chair for five consecutive years, thanked her friends and family who had ventured down from Petaluma.

Rodriguez, a former mayor going on his second term in office, stepped forward to thank the community for voting.

Rodriguez received 2,322 votes, Della Santina earned 2,451, Parks and Recreation Commissioner Judy King came in third with

1,706 and Gloria Purcell trailed with 1,041.

City Clerk Dottie Hall, who was also sworn in for her second

term in office, reported that 4,342 of the 13,712 registered voters had made it to the poles. This computes to 31.7 percent of all

registered voters in Belmont.

Jean Zucca was also sworn in as City Treasurer and Councilmember David Bomberger was named vice mayor.



NEW COUNCIL — Belmont City Clerk Dottie Hall (left) swore in new City Councilmember Adele Della Santina and incumbent Councilmember Ed Rodriguez at an installation ceremony Nov. 20 in Twin Pines Park.

BY KIM SCHNEIDERMAN/STAFF

SM Times articles of Nov 21, 1991
see over

S M Times Nov 21, 1991

Gary Orton sworn in as mayor of Belmont

By STEVEN SHELBY

Times Staff Writer

BELMONT — The first order of business for Belmont, according to Mayor Gary Orton, is to begin the search for a city manager to replace Ed Everett, recently named city manager of Redwood City.

Orton was installed as head of the City Council and ceremonial leader of the city of 24,000 Wednesday night at the Twin Pines Senior/Community Center.

The crowd of more than 100 present included Assemblyman Ted Lempert, D-San Mateo; Tom Nolan, president of the Board of Supervisors; John Violet, president of the Belmont School District board; former Councilwoman Eve Sterry and former City Clerk Jim McLaughlin; and former Mayors Don Heiman, Joe Zucca and Ferd Giuliani.

The oath of office also was administered to Adele Della Santina, elected to the council Nov. 5, and to Councilman Ed Rodriguez, re-elected.

Councilman David Bomberger was elected vice mayor by his colleagues on the council.

Della Santina, who was chairwoman of the Planning Commission, thanked her family and supporters for their work in the election.

Rodriguez, noting only 31 percent of Belmont's eligible voters turned out for the election, thanked "everyone here and all who voted for me." Though he wished the turnout had been better, he said, it is "deeply gratifying" to be re-elected.

City Clerk Dorothy Hall and City Treasurer Jean Zucca, who ran unopposed Nov. 5, were sworn in for four-year terms.

Orton's wife, Beverly, and son, Ross, a UC Berkeley student, joined him in the celebration.

"I see a very active and productive year ahead for us," Orton said. At a time when residents view the state and federal governments as not meeting the needs of ordinary citizens, "local government is where it's at," he said.

The city will continue to cooperate with its sister cities and the county in seeking solutions to regional traffic, air pollution and landfill problems, he said.

The new mayor said Belmont, like many cities and businesses, is caught in the recession, with expenses continuing to outrun income, "but we have the healthiest reserve ever" and the city is determined to stay within its budget.

Mayor Dick Green, who did not run for re-election, turned over the gavel to Orton.

Belmont looking to thaw relations with San Carlos

Kim Schneiderman
Enquirer-Bulletin

BELMONT — The City Council last week appointed a delegation to improve recently strained relations with San Carlos, its neighboring city and frequent competitor.

"I thought it would be a positive move to appoint a subcommittee

to talk about areas of mutual concern," said Acting City Manager Rick Haffey, who introduced the proposal.

San Carlos and Belmont have been at odds over the possible annexation of an unincorporated island sandwiched between its borders.

Belmont city officials were offended when the San Carlos City Council recently backed efforts of property owners in the Harbor Industrial Association to become part of the city, despite the fact that boundaries are set up for future annexation into Belmont. San Carlos, on the other hand, claims Belmont is being insensitive to the property owners' concerns.

The issue has aroused hard feelings between the cities known for being both the best of friends and arch rivals. Mayor Gary Orton said representatives of the San Carlos City Council painted the Belmont council in an "unfavorable light" when the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) recently met to debate the future of the Harbor industrial area.

"I think this is the appropriate

time to (sit down and talk)," said Orton, who also is chair of LAFCO. Although Orton has obvious stakes in the outcome of Harbor industrial area talks, there is reportedly no legal conflict of interest under the state laws that created LAFCO.

Councilmember Ed Rodriguez noted that problems between the two cities could have been averted had Belmont and San Carlos city officials sat down together previously. Rodriguez and Coun-

cilmember Pam Rianda volunteered to be part of a subcommittee that would meet periodically with two members of the San Carlos council to discuss issues that involve both cities.

Examples given of such topics were South County Fire Authority, whose jurisdiction covers both San Carlos and Belmont, and coordinating efforts among the San Carlos and Belmont police departments.

"The future is rich for coopera-

tive ventures with our neighbors," Rianda said.

Haffey reported that San Carlos City Manager Mike Garvey seemed "very open" to the idea of a forum, although he would first have to discuss it with the San Carlos council.

Haffey further proposed contacting San Carlos when an issue was raised concerning both cities, provided that San Carlos would return the favor.

August 10, 1992

City Council Members
Belmont City Council
1365 - 5th Avenue
Belmont, CA 94002

Dear Council Members:

The following property owners wish to have that portion of downtown Belmont declared "THE WALTERMIRE HISTORIC DISTRICT", because

1. The block bounded by Waltermire Street, Fifth and Sixth Avenues and some portions of O'Neil represent the ONLY remaining contiguous original buildings of this City. They date back over 60 years and in some cases as far back as 90 years. No other district of this era and completeness exists any longer in Belmont. No other district is better located to showcase Belmont's Heritage.
2. Historic District designation would enable this area to be eligible for the California Main Street Program, established by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The Program provides significant tax incentives to property owners to enable them to do necessary work to their property. The City of Belmont also would be able to participate in other financial incentives as The Main Street Program offers a four point approach to rebuilding the image of a declining downtown. These include:
 - A. Organizing groups within the City to better work together
 - B. Promotion and advertising of downtown activities and stores
 - C. Rehabilitation and design to improve the image of buildings
 - D. Economic restructuring to provide the right mix of retail, offices and housing.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>
Robert L. Carville	1235 6th Ave
Nancy C. Jank	935 Waltermire St
Michelle A. Abuna	1201 6th AVE.
K. L. Miller	887 WALTERMIRE ST.
B. L. Hay	925 Waltermire / 901 Waltermire
V. Mitchell	925 Waltermire
Russell G. Smith	955 WALTERMIRE
Carolyn D. Miller	955 WALTERMIRE ST.

HISTORIC DISTRICT
WATERMIRE DISTRICT

RECOGNIZE
DISTRICT

2

COUNCIL COULD

PICK &
CHOOSE

MAIN STREET
PROGRAM

Sept 23 - 1992
Sept 23, 1992

Belmont joining war on vehicles

Abandoned cars, trucks are targeted

By STEVEN SHELBY
Times Staff Writer

BELMONT — Belmont Tuesday night joined a new countywide program to take abandoned cars off the street, but not without council members complaining about the state interfering in their business.

Belmont expects to receive about \$23,000 per year from \$1 added by the state to vehicle registration fees. The money will be used to tow away and dispose of cars and trucks abandoned on city streets and public property. The program will be run by San Mateo County, which is coordinating it for the 20 cities in the county.

Over the last five years when Belmont itself was taking care of junkers, a Police Department spokesman said, the entire cost was about \$3,000.

"So this is an opportunity for us to capture some revenues that other cities in the county are going to take advantage of," City Manager Richard Haffey said.

"If we don't choose to pick their (taxpayers') pockets, they (the state) are going to pick their pockets anyway, and we just won't get the money," Councilman David Bomberger said. "It makes me angry."

Mayor Gary Orton said Belmont will find good, traffic-safety uses for the funds. He said it is irritating, however, to have the state Legislature impose a fee for a program it favors when the income from such a new fee could be put to better uses on the local level if only local officials had a say in how to use it. The more than \$670,000 which will be collected yearly in San Mateo County during the five-year program might better be used for improving public transportation, for instance, he said.

Also, Orton said, "I'm concerned that the state is real good at giving us a money source and then taking it away" after local government has committed to spending on a particular program such as abandoned vehicles.

It is not clear what will happen if Belmont doesn't use all the \$23,000 each year — whether it goes into a countywide pot or back to the state or into the city general fund — but staff will find out, Jennifer Britton, assistant city manager, said. The money can be used to pay police and city salaries, buy equipment and pay for the use of facilities in connection with abandoned vehicles and related traffic-safety/public-safety programs, she noted.

The Legislature and governor this year dinged the Belmont city budget for about \$160,000 — \$119,000 in property tax losses and the loss of \$39,000 from cigarette taxes — "not minimal impacts" but survivable, Finance Director Sandra Salerno said. The Belmont Redevelopment Agency, on the other hand, suffered a \$319,000 loss as a result of the state budget crisis, she noted.

Belmont staff and its Finance Committee are working on a long-term strategy for coping with the state's cutbacks, Salerno said. "We feel this will be a continuing process until the economy turns around and the state changes how it deals with local government," she said. "We want to avoid knee-jerk, chicken-little reactions on future projects."

San Mateo County suffered a more than \$10 million loss and that will be reflected in charges for services and new fees for the cities, Salerno noted. Future capital improvement projects will require some reprioritization, but the money crunch won't affect anything now under way, such as the railroad grade separation project on Ralston Avenue at El Camino Real, she said. She said Belmont's regular midyear budget analysis is essential this year.

Penin Times Feb March 5, 1992

Power politics on Belmont's council

Mayor Orton takes detour around democratic process

At last month's Belmont City Council meeting, it was hardly surprising that Mayor Gary Orton got his way.

Orton has expressed strong opposition to the issues of term limits for city commission appointees and an advisory vote on the Ralston Avenue grade separation.

To ensure his views wouldn't be challenged, Orton decided to stack the deck in his favor. He sent 38 personalized invitations to the meeting — all to officials Orton figured would side with him on the two issues.

The letters repeatedly emphasized how both proposals were "requested by one council member," Adele Della-Santina. To make sure they wouldn't forget, Orton consistently bolded and underlined the time, place and date of the council meeting.

As a result, the meeting turned into a political rally for Orton's supporters.

The commissioners who received the letter universally derided the term limit issue. Members of the Grade Separation Task Force chastised the idea of a public vote on the grade separation.

The issue at stake here is "process," one of Orton's favorite words. Lobbying does not fit into the picture of a council who exercises fairness in reaching out to the community.

While solicited individuals were obviously experts on either city commissions or the grade separation, they were clearly a partisan target group.

If Orton really wanted balanced feedback, he would have sent letters to all the applicants seeking appointment to city commissions. And while he was at it, he could have copied additional letters for the 37 people on the city clerk's mailing list, including homeowners' association presidents and citizen activists.

If Orton truly believes in the "process," then he ought to set the example a little more often.

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

BELMONT CITY COUNCIL

Tuesday, June 23, 1992

MINUTES SUBJECT TO APPROVAL
AT NEXT REGULAR MEETING
DOROTHY D. HALL
BELMONT CITY CLERK

At 7:50 P.M., following Special Fire Protection District and Adjourned Redevelopment Agency Meetings, Mayor Pro Tem Bomberger called this Meeting to order.

ROLL CALL:

COUNCILORS PRESENT: Della Santina, Rianda, Rodriguez, Bomberger

COUNCILORS ABSENT: Orton (arrived at 8:30 P.M.).

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Haffey, Assistant City Manager/Finance Director Salerno, Assistant to City Manager Morrissey, Public Services Director Hopkins, Police Chief Oliver, Planning and Community Development Director Vanderprien, Senior Planner Chopyk, City Attorney Dickerson, City Clerk Hall.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION:MAYOR'S PROCLAMATION PENINSULA MUSIC THEATRE MONTH, JULY, 1992:

Mayor Pro Tem Bomberger read the above-titled Proclamation and presented it to Mary Pack, Publicity Chair, who came forward, thanked the Mayor and invited all Belmont citizens to attend and support the Peninsula Music Theatre's production of "Bye, Bye Birdie" at College of Notre Dame Theater, July 10th through the 19th.

COMMUNITY FORUM (PUBLIC COMMENTS):

Mr. Steve Eckert, 1814 Oak Knoll Drive, came to the lectern and requested that requirements for his floor area variance, granted last year be reconsidered. He said the Building Code requirements being imposed by the Building Department were unreasonable and explained that he needed consideration of permission to bypass the requirements. He said the estimate of \$4800 was unreasonable for additional stairs at the rear of the house which did not meet the code when built. Mayor Pro Tem Bomberger explained that Council was prohibited at this time to take any action and suggested he call the City Manager or Planning Director who would be able to give direction for procedure to mitigate this problem.

COUNCIL/STAFF REPORTS/COMMENTS:GRADE SEPARATION: Rail Bonds and Transportation Capital Improvement Funding:

Public Services Director Hopkins reported he had met with the Transportation Commission who thought the unused San Mateo Funds would be assigned to program other projects possibly in Southern California or Gilroy. He said, with the aid of Assemblyman Sher, Mayor Orton and the City of San Mateo, he was able to convince the Commission that these left-over funds should be rightfully assigned to the City of Belmont under two conditions based on passage of the Bond Measure in November, SB30G, funding of \$9.6 million rail bond funds. He explained that if this measure failed to pass in November then there would be a scramble for reassignment of funds to the first city in a state of readiness, and assured Council, Belmont was in that state.

Council concurred that the City of San Mateo should have a letter of appreciation from Staff for their cooperation that would allow us to go forward.

APPOINTMENT PROCESS AND CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENT TO THE CARLMONT CENTER FOR FAMILY COUNSELLING (CCFC):

Police Chief Oliver explained that the City of Belmont had three representatives on the Board of Directors and there was currently a vacancy for one of those positions that needed to be filled.

Councilor Rianda said she would be interested in serving on this Board. Mayor Pro Tem Bomberger requested a presentation by the Executive Director was in order, to which Council concurred. Police Chief Oliver said he would arrange this presentation for the next Council Meeting.

REPORT OF AGENDA AMENDMENTS:

Mayor Pro Tem Bomberger announced that Agenda Item No. 24, consideration of a temporary hiring freeze, would be considered as part of Agenda Item No. 23, consideration of the proposed budget.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Mayor Pro Tem Bomberger announced and explained the Consent Calendar and invited removal of any items for separate consideration. There being no response to this invitation it was moved by Councilor Rianda, seconded by Councilor Rodriguez and carried unanimously, with Councilor Orton absent, that the Consent Calendar be adopted as presented. Approved, adopted, carried and acknowledged thereby were the following items:

MEETING MINUTES AND WARRANTS APPROVED ON CONSENT CALENDAR:

Meeting Minutes approved were those of the Adjourned Regular Meetings for Budget Review June 3 and 4, 1992 and the Regular Meeting June 9, 1992. Warrants approved for payment were those listed on the Warrant List dated June 23, 1992 in total amount of \$606,865.15 comprising General Fund expenditures in amount of \$203,398.51, Co-Sponsored Recreation Fund expenditures in amount of \$6,119.79, Gas Tax Fund expenditures in amount of \$5,688.65, Belmont Fire Protection District Fund expenditures in amount of \$219,800.17, Planned Drainage Fund expenditures in amount of \$528.75, Ralston Grade Separation Fund expenditures in amount of \$25,923.58, Debt Service Fund expenditures in amount of \$61,072.50, Sewer Enterprise Fund expenditures in amount of \$71,751.80, Sewer Capital Improvement Fund expenditures in amount of \$1,507.50, Liability Insurance Fund expenditures in amount of \$1,347.25, Redevelopment Agency Fund expenditures in amount of \$9,618.15 and Low and Moderate Income Housing Fund expenditures in amount of \$108.50.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED ON CONSENT CALENDAR:

- RESOLUTION NO. 7153 -- AUTHORIZING THE CITY CLERK TO DESTROY CERTAIN RECORDS SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE CITY ATTORNEY (CORRESP. ACK., UNSUCCESSFUL CITY CONTRACT BIDS, BULLETINS 1988-1990):
- RESOLUTION NO. 7154 -- REJECTING ALL BIDS RECEIVED FOR CITY CONTRACT NUMBER 308 STORM DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS - BAY COURT:
- RESOLUTION NO. 7155 -- APPROVING APPLICATIONS FOR STATE-LOCAL TRANSPORTATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (STLPP) FUNDS (SB300; GRADE SEP. & RALSTON AVE. INTERCHANGE MODS):
- RESOLUTION NO. 7156 -- FIXING THE EMPLOYER'S CONTRIBUTION UNDER THE PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' MEDICAL AND HOSPITAL CARE ACT (G.C. SEC. 22825.6):
- RESOLUTION NO. 7157 -- AUTHORIZING A \$350,000 NOTE TO THE CITY MANAGER FOR HOUSING ASSISTANCE:
- RESOLUTION NO. 7158 -- ACCEPTING WORK AND AUTHORIZING RECORDING OF NOTICE OF COMPLETION CITY CONTRACT NUMBER 304 - SANITARY SEWER REHABILITATION PROJECT BASIN 14 - SAN JUAN HILLS (DETRICK CORP):
- RESOLUTION NO. 7159 -- ESTABLISHING THE 1992-93 APPROPRIATION LIMIT (\$5,799,278):
- RESOLUTION NO. 7160 -- APPROVING PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS AND CALLING FOR SEALED PROPOSALS CIVIC CENTER STORM DRAIN IMPROVEMENTS CITY CONTRACT NUMBER 311 (BID OPEN 7/21 @ 2 P.M.):
- RESOLUTION NO. 7161 -- REESTABLISHING THE GENERAL OBLIGATION DEBT SERVICE TAX RATE FOR FISCAL YEAR 1992-1993 (\$0.0041/\$100 ASSESSED VALUATION OPEN SPACE, PARKS & SEWER BONDS):

MOTION ADOPTED ON CONSENT CALENDAR:

Motion denying claim of Phyllis B. Stephens filed on May 5, 1992 alleging trip hazard on city street under reconstruction not properly marked.

CORRESPONDENCE ACKNOWLEDGED ON CONSENT CALENDAR:

Notice received 6/10/92 from Division of Ratepayer Advocates protesting granting of the Authority sought by P.G. & E. in application 92-04-011 unless accounting guidelines & notification requirements are adopted as conditions and is subject to Public Utilities Code Section 851.

END OF ITEMS ADOPTED ON CONSENT CALENDAR

ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION:

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY CODE TO ADD PROVISIONS FOR THE PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND DISTRICTS (CONT'D FROM 3/10/92):

Senior Planner Choypk reported that this Ordinance was proposed March 10 to include 52 listed structures with consideration for incentives and how to apply the ordinance. He said two workshops were held and staff researched programs of other cities that included the Mills Act incentive, State Historical Building Code, improvement loans, redevelopment financing, fee waivers, tax credits and the National Trust for public preservation programs. He reviewed seven options for Council consideration which included no ordinance. Landmarks only, commercial districts, historical districts of which Belmont had two that included Belburn and Waltermire, city-wide landmarks and historical resources, voluntary program and a combination of any or all of these. He requested Council direction to pursue Certified Local Government (CLG) status to be eligible for National Trust Financial Assistance and determination of which group of buildings the proposed ordinance would apply. At this time, being 8:30 P.M., Mayor Orton arrived and requested that Mayor Pro Tem Bomberger continue to conduct this meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING CONTINUED:

Mayor Pro Tem Bomberger announced that this was a continued Public Hearing and invited anyone wishing to speak to come forward and be heard.

Mrs. Francesca Karpel, 903 Avon Street, came to the lectern and requested that this proposal be a voluntary option and referred to Page 5 of the staff report, No. 15 comment that historic resources belong to the entire community and asked what became of the private property concept. She said a historical board would be necessary to maintain a long term commitment to community standards.

Mr. Geoff Fernald, 909 Avon Street, Belburn Village Historical Building Committee, referred to comment No. 18 on Page 6 of the staff report that preferenced a voluntary program with architectural advice provided by the City. He said he could not support adoption of the proposed ordinance due to the subjective process and lack of citizen control and suggested Council adopt a voluntary historical building preservation program. Tom Seivert, President Belmont Historical Society, 2046 Mezes Avenue, came forward and said the historical review did not carry weight and referenced a letter regarding the Ross House. He requested these not be addressed individually and said he hoped to develop a basic curriculum.

Mrs. Hartley Laughead, 2632 Sequoia Avenue, said she assisted with the list of historical buildings and landmarks which included 410 addresses, of which, 52 were the cream of the crop. She said she would like to see the Waltermire District remain as it was in 1926 for purposes of education and city pride. She said an ordinance should be in place that included all 52 buildings for safe keeping and suggested Council tour the City in order to appreciate the unique quality of these buildings.

Caroline Fisher, 1124 Continentals Way, Belmont Historical Society Member, came to the lectern and requested Council adopt the proposed ordinance and not allow voluntary choice which would serve to cause problems for the city. She suggested there could be compromises for specific problems and expressed the need to protect these historical properties.

William R. Rehlich, 501 Palomar Drive, Redwood City, Belmont property owner, came forward and said he was wary of the degree of flexibility, zeal and the unknowns of this proposal. He requested that his property, located at 1240 Elmer Street, not be included in the proposed Ordinance since it was an isolated building in the middle of commercial properties and apartments and suggested that any building in a location such as his not be included.

Bob Carrillo, 1235 Sixth Avenue, came forward and said the Mills Act as applied in Redwood City seemed to work well. He recommended Belburn Village not be included in the proposed ordinance because it would add a fear to purchase and homeowners would not be able to sell their property. He said his home, located in the commercial district, would not sell for commercial use because it was too small to accommodate any business. He suggested the proposed ordinance was not clear and staff should consider a look at the San Francisco Ordinance which was clear and definitive.

Action: Council concurred that this Public Hearing be continued to the next regular meeting of Council on July 14th and requested that staff send out packet materials and notice of hearing at least ten days ahead of the next meeting to all owners on the historical building list.

ORDINANCE INTRODUCED:

ORDINANCE AMENDING ARTICLE III, CHAPTER 2 AND REPEALING ARTICLE IIIA CHAPTER 2 OF THE BELMONT CITY CODE - ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER - FINANCE DIRECTOR:

Action: Following City Manager Haffey's explanation that this proposed Ordinance was consistent with the City Organization it was moved by Councilor Rodriguez, seconded by Councilor Della Santina and carried unanimously by roll call vote, that this Ordinance be introduced by Title, further reading be waived and continued to the next meeting of Council for second introduction and adoption.

BUSINESS CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

DISCUSSION RE: ORDINANCE PROHIBITING INCOMPATIBLE ACTIVITIES:

City Attorney Dickerson explained that under Section 1126 of the Government Code the city was authorized to adopt regulations governing incompatible activities or enterprises by employees and commissions. He said this did not apply to elected officials who were under rules set by the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC).

Action: Mayor Orton requested that staff meet and confer with the employee groups to which Assistant City Manager/Finance Director Salerno requested a three week leeway to allow her the necessary latitude to conduct these conferences to which Council concurred.

PUBLIC HEARINGS HELD:

PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER REPORT AND OBJECTIONS, IF ANY, TO PROPOSED SEWER SERVICE CHARGES TO BE COLLECTED BY THE COUNTY ON THE PROPERTY TAX ROLL FOR FISCAL YEAR 1992-93 (DATE SET 5/12/92):

Finance Director Salerno explained that the residential rate increase of approximately sixty cents a month was due primarily to increases in the South Bayside Systems Authority regional costs and the commercial increases included these costs and a reduction in flows that produced a lower base.

REGULAR MEETING

June 23, 1992

Page 3

Councilor Bomberger reported that the South Bayside Systems Authority adopted a program to replace \$90 million in capital equipment and by the year 2031 will need another million dollars which they will probably acquire through the sale of bonds.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED:

Mayor Pro Tem Bomberger announced that this was a Public Hearing and invited anyone wishing to be heard to come forward. There being no response to this invitation it was moved by Councilor Rianda, seconded by Councilor Della Santina and carried unanimously that this Public Hearing be closed.

ORDINANCE INTRODUCED:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BELMONT AMENDING BELMONT CITY CODE SECTION 21-39 SETTING SEWER SERVICE CHARGES:

Action: Moved by Councilor Orton, seconded by Councilor Della Santina and carried unanimously, with all Councilors present and voting, that this Ordinance be introduced by Title, further reading be waived and continued to the next meeting of Council for a second introduction and adoption.

PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 1992-93 (DATE SET 5/12/92):

Finance Director Salerno reported that this proposed budget was the final document produced following the June budget sessions and included requested amendments. City Manager Haffey explained that Agenda Item No. 24, a temporary hiring freeze, would be included in ways to cut back the budget if it became necessary due to State mandates affecting the budget. Council discussion ensued and it was determined that the budget review would be scheduled in January for further consideration of items requested at the budget hearings to include delayed tape television of Council meetings, capital improvement facilities, deferred roads, sidewalk policy and unaccepted and accepted streets.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED:

Mayor Pro Tem Bomberger announced that this was a Public Hearing and invited all interested parties to come forward and be heard. There being no response to this invitation it was moved by Councilor Della Santina, seconded by Councilor Rodriguez and carried unanimously that this Public Hearing be closed.

BUDGET ADOPTED:

RESOLUTION NO. 7162 -- ADOPTING THE REVISED 1991-92 BUDGET, AND PROPOSED 1992-93 BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF BELMONT (\$8,009,525 1991-92 GEN. FUND: \$7,876,850 1992-93 GEN. FUND):

Action: Moved by Councilor Rodriguez, seconded by Councilor Della Santina and carried unanimously by roll call vote, with all Councilors present and voting, that this Resolution, No. 7162, be adopted.

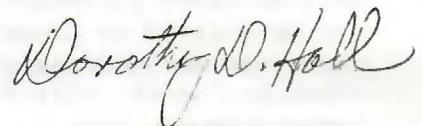
COUNCIL/STAFF ACTION REVIEW & CLARIFICATION:

Councilor Rianda handed Council and Staff a pink flyer of citizen information regarding the impacts on the City of Belmont of proposed legislative actions to meet the State Budget which she said included 14% of the General Fund, or \$1.1 million, or 20 of our 32 Police Officers or all Parks, Recreation and Senior Services. She requested, with Council approval, that Staff write a letter to the legislature, to request exemption from the proposed budget cuts, for Council signatures.

ADJOURNMENT:

At this time, being 10:25 P.M., this meeting was adjourned to conduct three scheduled Redevelopment Agency Closed Sessions, on motion made by Councilor Rodriguez, seconded by Councilor Orton.

MEETING TAPE RECORDED:
Tape No. 192:100a-554c



Dorothy D. Hall
Belmont City Clerk

5 p.m.
June
Oct
1992

Belmont building being rededicated today

It's part of the city's continuing facade improvement project

By STEVEN SHELBY

Times Staff Writer

BELMONT — This evening, Belmont officials will rededicate a building at the corner of Ralston and Sixth avenues.

The 5 p.m. ceremony will celebrate the completion of one of the city's new Facade Improvement Program projects.

The ambitious program, conducted for two years now through the Belmont Redevelopment Agency, is intended to spruce up the city's downtown, roughly the area along El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue between Sixth Avenue and Old County Road, and make it more attractive and inviting to both shoppers and businesses alike.

The building at Sixth and Ralston is the property of Charlotte Alford Nissen, whose mother had it built in 1952. The most recognizable business there is longtime tenant, Knutson's Bakery.

Those attending today's reception will have an opportunity to meet Nissen and city officials to learn more about the facade program, according to Jennifer Britton, assistant city manager.

"This is absolutely one of the most creative things Belmont has done in a number of years," said Frank O'Neill, property manager of the Nissen building and often an outspoken critic of

city projects. "The cooperation we have received on this has been fantastic."

The city redevelopment program paid about a quarter of the cost of the improvements, which included fresh paint and extension of the overhang to the roofline "to give it a Belmont Village, cottage-like appearance," O'Neill said. Also, the brickwork and windows were rejuvenated and plants, outside lighting, new signs and awnings were added all around.

"The owner wanted to make it really first rate ... and it reflects that pride of ownership now," O'Neill said.

Additional projects are in the works, including improvement of a pizza parlor, coffee club, shoe repair, gift store and other shops kitty-corner from Knutson's. The building there is owned by Willatte Steventon, who has closely monitored Belmont's redevelopment plans and was a leading opponent of plans to create "Village Center," a downtown mall centered on the Safeway store. That project was put on hold late last year when redevelopment officials concluded it wasn't financially feasible during a recession.

The city has moved ahead with facade improvement and downtown landscaping, however.

Planning Director Dan Vanderprien said the facade program has been so successful, he plans to recommend to the City Council that it be extended and enlarged.

"The council has been real happy with it and it is my impression they want to con-



MIKE RUSSELL/The Times

Belmont Mayor Gary Orton in front of Knutson's Bakery.

tinue with it, but state funding cutbacks may limit us," he said.

The planning department modeled the program after similar programs in other cities, including neighbors San Carlos and San Mateo.

"The response has been very good considering we only targeted Ralston, El Camino and Old County Road," Vanderprien said. "Clearly, there are some other streets that could benefit in the downtown area."

Ralston Avenue interchange to get cosmetic overhaul

Kim Schneiderman
ENQUIRER-BULLETIN STAFF

BELMONT — The City Council last week stepped up efforts to improve Belmont's much maligned entrance from the Bayshore Freeway.

The council opened bids for contracts to cosmetically enhance stretches of land between Ralston Avenue and Hiller Street and along El Camino Real.

Entrance improvements include replacement of the Bel-

mont sign and bus stops, median landscaping and the creation of a mini-park with brick paving, benches and shrubs.

The long-awaited plan was developed to create a more residential impression of the first glimpse drivers catch after leaving the freeway.

The council acted in response to concerns about appearance raised by residents in the Sterling Downs and Homeview neighborhoods, located in northern and southern Belmont, respectively.

Neighbors complained that the area is a blight, citing San Carlos' landscaped entrance as an example of what can be accomplished when cities devote attention to entrance beautification.

Denny Lawhern, president of the Sterling Downs Homeowner Association, had not reviewed the details but praised the latest development. "We're certainly looking forward to it," he said. "I think it will certainly improve the entrance to Belmont."

Lawhern, however, called the

council's action "long overdue," noting that homeowners had been pushing such improvements for the past 10 years. "We felt that it was not being prioritized in the right sequence," he said.

Unlike Ralston, improvements along El Camino from San Carlos to O'Neill Avenue and Middle Road to San Mateo will concentrate on safety.

Among such measures are median construction, landscaping, traffic light modification at Harbor Blvd. and installation of "Belmont" signs at the northern and southern ends of El Camino.

Safety measures were developed with the input of El Camino business and property owners.

A total of \$1.1 million in redevelopment funds has been set aside for the project. The deadline for bids is Nov. 18 and the council will choose a contractor at the following meeting. Construction is estimated to take six months.

According to a city report, traffic will not be detoured during construction; however, it may be restricted to one lane for a short period of time.

In other business, the council voted 5-0 to support November ballot measure Proposition 156, the Passenger Rail and Clean Air Bond Act.

Among the provisions, Prop. 156 would allow the state to enter into \$1 billion in bonds to fund acquisitions of rights-of-way, capital expenditures, and purchase stock for inter-city rail, commuter rail and other

transit programs.

"It's critical to Belmont and other cities that the bond measure passes," Public Works Director John Hopkins said. "If it fails, California's transportation improvement picture will be chaotic."

Hopkins said the Ralston Avenue Grade Separation (rail overpass) project is listed as one of the benefactors under the 1990 state Transportation Improvement Plan.

If voters approve Prop. 156, the grade separation would receive \$9.6 million. But if the measure fails, the city would have to find another source of outside funding.

The council took similar stands on county ballot Measures B, C and D:

■ It voted 3-0 to support Measure B, which asks whether the county should negotiate to join the Bay Area Rapid Transit District.

■ It voted 5-0 to support Measure C, which asks whether the county should continue to pursue extending CalTrain to downtown San Francisco.

■ It voted 4-0 to support Measure D, which would give preliminary approval for the development of a hotel, conference center residences and a golf course on an 862-acre parcel of land near Half Moon Bay.

Councilmembers Adele Della-Santina and Ed Rodriguez abstained on Measure B for lack of information, and Della-Santina abstained on Measure D because she felt it shows a lack of faith in cities to control development.

Voters to decide on annexation

Choice is between
San Carlos, Belmont

By TERRY ROBERTSON

Times Staff Writer

BELMONT — Opponents of a plan by the City Council to bring a nearby area of tax-rich unincorporated land under city control threw a wrench into the proceedings this week by forcing the matter to an election on April 12.

A majority of property owners gathered enough protest signatures to force the issue onto the ballot and spoil, for now, the city's hope of annexing 153 acres of the Harbor Industrial Area, a predominantly light industrial expanse of land.

Howard Jones, chairman of the Harbor Annexation Committee, which favors the area becoming part of San Carlos, said protests came from nearly 70 percent of the property owners in the area.

Belmont and San Carlos officials have been fighting for months over the area, which lies between the two cities east of El Camino Real and west of the Bayshore Freeway.

City Manager Sandy Salerno said the area currently would bring to either city \$220,000 in commercial tax revenues and \$200,000 in property tax revenues annually.

Jones said 87 percent of the property owners in the disputed region prefer being in San Carlos because of what they perceive to be a friendlier business climate.

"Belmont has a history of favoring residential uses over industrial uses," he said. "We're very fearful of becoming part of Belmont and seeing the properties being downzoned. We could easily see that happening down the road a few years."

But Salerno said that wouldn't happen because of the wealth of tax revenues available from the

See ANNEXATION, Page A2

S.M. Times Oct 7, 1983

Annexation

Continued from Page One
area's current uses.

"There's no economic incentive to turn it into housing," she said.

She pointed out that Belmont has been providing city services to the 153-acre area for about 20 years, ever since San Mateo County's Local Agency Formation Commission split a 218-acre industrial area, leaving the rest to San Carlos. Each area was eventually to be brought into the city that provided its services.

"It's not like we woke up seven weeks ago and said, 'Oh,'" she said.

Annexation proceedings began early this year when residents of a four-acre mobile home park bordering the city, but in the disputed area, asked to become part of Belmont.

LAFCo approved the annexation of the 153 acres based, in part, on the fact that Belmont has been providing the area's services.

The protest petitions were handed to the City Council dur-

ing an annexation hearing on Tuesday.

City Councilman Gary Orton said, still, the outcome may rest with the approximate 104 registered voters of the trailer court rather than with the protesters who own property there but are ineligible to vote because they don't reside there.

"Election laws in the state favor voters over landowners," said Bill Davis, executive director of LAFCo. "Voters in this case will make the final decision."

Jones said it may be an uphill battle if Davis' interpretation is accurate, but added that the members of the Harbor Annexation Committee have received a different interpretation.

"Our contention has been very clear that one may not manipulate an election through the use of a small portion (of land) to gerrymander a larger area into a city," he said. "We wish the people in the trailer court well if they want to go into Belmont. But everyone should have the right of self-determination, including us."

Civic Facilities Make the First Impression

We've been seriously thinking about our civic facilities, these days, and it has occurred to me you might want to know why it is even necessary to consider them. I'm going to borrow a statistic I heard from a colleague who attended a presentation on the popular "reinventing government" theme. The statistic was that 67 percent of Americans never go to their City Hall in their lifetime. I'm going to pretend, for the sake of a starting point, that the figure might be a little low. It has made me ponder: was it something we did? If 100 percent of our resident customers receive our services, are the 33 percent who make it to one of our facilities any different than the 67 percent? Further, do our facilities make any kind of impression — good or bad — on our visitors? My thoughts today surmise that in fact, our City's "house" does make an impact. It is part of the impression we get about how you are being served. I'd project that it's a good time to take a closer look at where we provide many of our services to you.

If you are part of the "in" crowd of the 67 percent, and you decided today to come see City Hall, you might be surprised to see what you'd find. You might fall into the popular notion that the building was once a school. I'd have to inform you that in fact the building, constructed in 1951, was that way on purpose. If you start at one end of the building, and move in and out and in and out of every sepa-

MAYOR'S DESK

by Pam Rianda
Belmont
Mayor



rate door, you would successfully interface with four of the departments (don't forget the basement level where you are likely to need a building permit form some day!). Your tour would not be over. You would then need to walk to Sixth Street, and look for a very modern looking building with a deli at the base of it, go up to the second floor, down the halls and, surprise! There is the Administrative Office for the Police Department. Go outside again and cross through the Twin Pines parking area. You will see a small setback building. This is where our police officers, dispatchers and other police staff check in and out for their day at work. Keep walking through the park to a charming brown, two-story house with a porch on the front. Walk through a large oak door and you will find yourself in the middle of our Parks and Recreation building, the central office, if you will. Other related sites can be found in the adjacent modern structure, that is one of our pride and joys, the Senior and Community Center. Behind

the main office house, is our famous charming Cottage. Next to the office house, is our older homey Lodge building. We're not done with our tour so get another cup of coffee.

The next trek is across 101 on Ralston and over to the Belmont Sports Complex and Conference Center. Whether you are a local group or not, this is the site for many of our sports activities and also a great place for meetings. This is also a modern building that has a timelessness to it — there will always be a flurry of activity there, no matter where our main City Hall is located. We're coming close to the end of the tour. It takes us back to Ralston, through the light and past the Motel 6 to Sem Lane. Near the end you will find our Public Services Department facilities, home of all the employees for that department. This is also the home of our corporation yard where our heavy equipment, vehicles and other tools are located.

We've also come to the realization that managing is not good enough. We've also come to understand from any of the 33 percent that the current set up is not very user-friendly. That is a serious charge these days, and it should be. We are also experiencing difficulty with being able to comply with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act. The costs to bring the group of facilities into compliance are exorbitant, and, the Feds didn't ex-

actly send money with this mandate. The cost to bring the main facility, here on Fifth Avenue, into compliance is great enough that it would make much more sense to flatten our current structure and start over. If we pursued that option, we would have to move out, rent another space, add underground parking and this would still not completely address the issue of collocating our services in satellite locations throughout town.

The City's house has served us well for a long time. A better house would bring you a one stop counter area to get you started when you do come down to see us for something. It would be able to be designed with the customer citizen in the forefront of our minds. In addition to being planned for new and future technology needs, it would be a safe and ADA compliant structure. It would be a welcome change for our staff to have a setting where they could interact in closer proximity, more often and see the bigger picture of the group on a day to day basis.

So we're thinking of seeking recommendations about changing where we do business. We welcome your thoughts on this issue and look forward to your comments as proposals for a new location come before us. If you'd like to get a better feel for our house right now, I'd really encourage you to take the tour I outlined earlier and join Club 33!

Belmont assessments may lead to court fight

By DIANA MARSZALEK

Times Staff Writer

BELMONT — Angry downtown property owners say they will take the city to court if forced to pay for contested improvements in the area.

"There's 5 percent of me that hopes there's some humanity left in those council people and they will hear from people that they've accidentally strayed over the line," said Michael Lindeburg, the third-largest property owner in the district.

The district has a total of 14 property owners.

"The realistic part of me says

Property owners say they'll sue city

we're going to court."

City officials, however, say the threat of a lawsuit won't stop plans to establish a downtown assessment district to pay for the improvements, which include a public parking lot, sidewalks and trees.

While opponents contend that officials were unethical in designing the district, city leaders say they acted by the book.

"We followed the procedure dictated by the law," said City Manager Damon Edwards.

Still, Lindeburg officially registered his protest at a special hearing Wednesday — and he has already hired an attorney.

"A protest meeting is really an exercise in futility," Lindeburg said. "They have rigged it so we have no choice but to pay for it."

Another session is scheduled after the council's budget hearing at 8 p.m. Wednesday at the Senior Center in Twin Pines Park.

Opponents contend that the

city mistreated them by creating a district — roughly bordered by Emmett, Sixth and O'Neill avenues and El Camino Real — in which the city and Safeway have the majority vote.

Safeway, which plans to redo its store, will pay for 65 percent of the \$2.4 million project. That, combined with city, fire district and redevelopment agency contributions, leaves 16 percent of costs to other property owners.

Edwards said the majority of property owners will not be assessed for the parking lot — the largest project — but for

See BELMONT, Page A4

Belmont

Continued from Page A3
improvements adjacent to their properties.

Still, for Lindeburg, that means \$170,000. And, while that figure is substantially under his original \$360,000 assessment — the city removed some projects from the plan — Lindeburg says it's still too much.

"It's a foregone conclusion that this is going to happen," he said. "The lawsuit is the only way to fight it."

Downtown residents attack assessments

BY ALAN SISSENWEIN
Staff Reporter

The Belmont City Council got an earful from residents of the downtown area last week as they protested a plan which would cost them thousands of dollars for public improvements.

At the third public hearing in a month, about 20 homeowners and small-scale property own-

ers vented their anger at being assessed roughly \$380,000 for a project designed to turn their neighborhood into Belmont's central shopping district.

About \$1.8 million of the \$2.6 million project will come Safeway, which is slated to build a new, expanded supermarket in the district. The new Safeway is meant to be the centerpiece of the shopping district, attract-

ing passing customers from outside the city.

Many of the area's argued that their peaceful neighborhood—roughly bounded by El Camino Real and O'Neill, Emmett and Sixth avenues—would be wrecked by the proposed shopping district.

Michele Ahuna, the owner of Michele's Hair Care on Sixth Avenue, contended that having

Safeway's dumpsters across the street from her business would drive away her customers.

"Do you want to get your hair done and smell the garbage?" she asked.

Several speakers also attacked the way the district was drawn up, which gives the city and Safeway a 51 percent vote. At a previous meeting, City Manager Damon Edwards ex-

plained that the district was designed to succeed.

"Because of this I have little faith in local government or politics," said Judy Sanders, a homeowner.

Michael Lindeburg, a commercial property owner who is planning to sue the city if the Council approves the district,

See **ASSESS**, page 8A

Page 8A

Enquirer-Bulletin

ASSESS: Property owners being taxed for public mall

Continued from 1A

suggested that the city should work with the property owners to find common ground.

The property owners, Lindeburg said, favor some of the proposed improvements, such as trees for the neighborhood, and the two sides could reach a compromise.

But if the issue goes to court, Lindeburg said the city could lose its entire package.

"Don't risk the whole game on one roll of the dice," Lindeburg said.

Caroline Fisher, an archivist

with the Belmont Historical Society, also urged that the city not tear down four historic Victorian homes in the district.

The homes, she said, belonged to some of Belmont's most prominent pioneers and their loss would be irreparable.

"How can a store with a large parking lot replace any of this?" Fisher said. "Please preserve our heritage."

But while most of the district's property owners and the Belmont Historical Society see the assessment district as a loss, a few of the property owners have decided the city's plan

represents a potential financial windfall.

"I believe the best course is to turn our residences into commercial properties," said Jo Mitchell, a homeowner who plans to move out of the neighborhood and develop her land.

Following the public testimony, Councilwoman Pam Rianda said the city is trying to work with the property owners to make the assessments as equitable as possible.

"We are trying to respond to the input you give us," Rianda said. "What you are seeing is the democratic process."

At the advice of legal counsel, who wish to study the property owners objections in greater depth, a final vote on the assessment district was deferred until a regular City Council session.

May 21st 1996

B-5

Belmont mayor aids Harvard med school

By Tyler Cunningham
STAFF WRITER

PALO ALTO — Most medical students admit they are overworked. Students juggle classwork with hospital rotations, and need to recall complex symptoms and pharmaceuticals as if they had microprocessors in their heads.

Nancy Levitt is giving them the next best thing. The Belmont mayor and Hewlett-Packard employee has issued high-tech relief to Harvard medical students, granting the school some 800 PalmTop computers.

The program is up for a Smithsonian Award early next month.

Concerned with the decline in numbers of students pursuing general practice medicine, Levitt agreed to meet with Dale Curtis, an educational computing coordinator at the Harvard School of Medicine. Curtis convinced Levitt that most students avoid general practice because of the overwhelming amount of information they need to process.

Engineers at Hewlett-Packard tinkered with their PalmTop Computer — a six-by-three inch mini-laptop — and made it the perfect machine for medicine on the go.

"Until just this year, the attitude in medicine has been that computers are for computer-science people," said Curtis. "We were fighting against the tide."

With the PalmTops at their dis-



Levitt

posal, the aspiring doctors are able to:

- Stay in touch, via e-mail, with the school as they work at nearby hospitals.

- Perform online searches of the latest medical papers and journals, giving students the latest information before they treat a patient.

- Store and access a patient's medical history, telling them at a touch of a button what medication to take or other crucial details.

"When they first saw the PalmTops, they were so small everyone thought it was just a toy," said Curtis. "Now they're typing on them when they're in bed. They're finishing reports on the train on the way to work."

In the program's first year, said Curtis, students were able to treat twice as many patients than in the pre-PalmTop era.

Since then other schools — including Stanford, Duke and UCLA — have turned to Levitt and Curtis for information on the PalmTop program.

Both Curtis and Levitt will attend the Smithsonian Awards, held in New York on June 1. The program is one of five vying for the Education and Academia award.