

# Council Delays Taking Action

## On SJ Canyon

*BEL. COUR. 1/26/77*

After declaring the month of February to be "Melodrama Month," Mayor William Hardwick and city councilors decided to vote Feb. 14 to amend the method of changing zoning, delayed approving a zoning change on the Britshgi property and continued a subdivision hearing.

### SPECIAL MEETING

Before the meeting adjourned at 1:05 a.m., Monday, Jan. 24, councilors Pam Ketcham, Walter Worthge and William Hardwick decided to meet again last night, Jan. 25 to discuss some 11 items.

Since Councilor Robert Jones left the meeting at 11 p.m., the council discovered it could not vote on an ordinance to amend the moratorium in the San Juan Canyon area to allow building to start again. The amendment would disallow sewer hookups unless homeowners installed acceptable holding tanks. A four-fifths vote was required to approve that ordinance. Council Frank Gonsalves was not at the meeting.

Because the special meeting was scheduled at press time, the results will be printed in the Belmont Courier-Bulletin next week.

### SAN JUAN DISCUSSED

At the special meeting, councilors planned to discuss the amendment to the San Juan Canyon building moratorium, to call for sealed proposals on the Hallmark tennis courts, will consider establishing a time deadline for council meetings and re-establishing study sessions. They will also

discuss awarding a bid to W.A. Moroney Co. to improve the Twin Pines lodge building.

### DELAYED OKAY

At the Jan. 24 regular meeting, councilors asked that Antique Forest Homes, who are planning to build 34-single family homes on 900 Cypress Ave. submit a photo rendering of the hillside with sketchings of the planned houses. According to Mr. Jones, councilors want to know how the homes will look from the street level.

Mr. Jones also requested that the Belmont Water District submit a report on water quality in the area and that Antique Forest Homes submit a preliminary report on landscaping.

When those three items are ready, councilors will then vote on whether the zoning should be changed from R-1B and R-1A to planned development.

### CLOSED HEARING

Councilors closed a public hearing on changing the zoning ordinance. If approved, the amendment would allow the city council to establish an area as a planned development without waiting for a developer to submit plans, City Planner Neal Martin explained.

A planned development should state "proposed land uses, specific standards of development, including but not limited to circulation of traffic, landscaping and architecture and specific density," the council decided.

### DECISION DELAYED

A hearing to consider subdividing 2.2 acres at 1801 Ralston Ave., to allow

for the creation of five lots and let applicant Gilbert T. Armando build a private road met with objection from 13 Kittie Lane homeowners.

A decision was delayed until Feb. 14.

According to a petition signed by the homeowners, allowing such action would increase the traffic, parking and noise on Kittie

Lane and "impair wildlife habitat" on a nearby hillside.

### LEASH LAWS

In other action, councilors approved an ordinance where residents would be cited for an infraction for allowing their dogs to run unleashed. The ordinance will also require that owners give their animals rabies shots every two years.

Councilors discussed amending the city code which would reduce the authority of the building official. Currently, the official may issue a building permit to allow hauling up to 500 cubic yards of dirt and excavation with a building permit up to 1,500 cubic yard.

Councilors will decide whether to reduce the figure to 500 cubic yards or less.



# Commission Decides To Change Ordinance

BEL. COUR. 1/19/77

Belmont Planning Commissioners changed the ordinance on detached garages, asked for an environmental impact report (EIR) in the San Juan Canyon area and rescheduled a public hearing.

At the Jan. 17 meeting commissioners voted to amend an ordinance to allow residents to build detached garages in the front of their homes if they do not detract from the neighborhood and reduce grading.

Commissioners agreed that the detached garages must be "well-planned," conform to other buildings and can be built if they will reduce grading on homeowner's lots. The Board of Design must approve the plan.

Commissioner Donald Costello asked that the Board of Design also consider the impact of such structures on the neighborhood.

He told the group such structures should not "stand out like sore thumbs."

The Commissioners also decided that San Mateo resident Peter J. Zartun must get an environmental impact report before they will consider declaring the Belmont Canyon Road area in the San Juan Canyon an assessment district.

Mr. Zartun told the planners he and at least 60 per cent of the residents along that road are willing to pay to improve a road.

But commissioners were worried that "paving in-

creases the amount of water runoff," as City Planner Neal Martin phrased it.

At present, City Councilors have declared a moratorium on sewer hookups after deciding that the present pump station was inadequate and presented a possible health

hazard. Another station is going to be built.

Although commissioners did not approve or disapprove of the road improvements and "encourage and try to acquire these public improvements at no cost to the city," said engineer Barry Trainer, they wanted to know the

possible impact of the road.

Mr. Zartun told the commissioners that submitting the EIR report "would be an additional hardship." He has 10 days to appeal the decision to the city council.

Commissioners also

delayed a public hearing on the subdivision of land on Lyall Way and Old Lake Road until resident Jenny McCarthy could consult with attorneys.

The petitioners want the 3.6 acres split into two parcels to make their multiple ownership easier, Mr. Martin told the commissioners.

The public hearing will be held on Feb. 7 at the regular commission meeting.



## Belmont Sewers

### Get Replaced

*BEL. COURIER 3/16/77*  
Construction on three Belmont County Water District projects will begin on or before March 22.

Fairley Constructors, Belmont, will replace water pipes in the Sunnyslope area, but will not dig up pipes in rear yard easements. New pipes will be placed in the streets.

Fairley won the contract with a bid of \$248,751.

W.H. Ebert Corp., San Jose, will install a 10-inch iron pipe under sidewalks on the south side of Ralston Avenue between Notre Dame Avenue and Alameda de las Pulgas.

The project also includes tie-in west of Cipriani Boulevard, replacing an old main on San Juan Boulevard and installing a new Academy Avenue main to service the Barrett School area.

The third project will be the replacement of mains on Read, Arbor, Terrace, Manzanita, Pine Knoll, Hillman and Newlands Avenues and a portion of Mezes Avenue.

Ebert Corp. won with a bid of \$225,820 and \$237,500 respectively.

# Belmont May OK Sewers in San Juan

*S.M. TIMES 11/16/77*

By JANET PARKER

Property owners in Belmont's San Juan Canyon area may soon find some relief from a sewer connection moratorium.

The City Council this week told its staff to prepare an emergency ordinance that will allow certain "hardship cases" to complete sewer connections and move into their homes.

The council is expected to consider the ordinance — which must receive the approval of four council members — at its special meeting Nov. 23.

The council sympathized in particular with the dilemma facing Paul and Crista Martyr who currently are living in a one-bedroom, unfurnished apartment on Old County Road.

Although they purchased a home in the canyon and moved their furniture in three months ago, they are unable to occupy the house. The City Council enacted a construction moratorium last year when it learned that the San Juan sewage pump station was overloaded and in disrepair.

The regional Water Quality Control Board also was monitoring the problem and periodically sampling the sewage flow.

Early this year, the council eased the moratorium by allowing construction to continue while the city wrestles with the sewage problem.

City officials were expecting that the new San Juan pump station with an expanded sewage processing capability, would be installed by Nov. 27.

However, the firm that constructs the pumps has said delivery is impossible until March at the earliest.

Several families have asked for an exemption from the moratorium, enabling them to move into their homes immediately.

Paul Martyr made his request for a "special variance" in July but the council didn't agree to consider his problem until last week.

Martyr explained that he and his wife began searching for a new home in 1975 when they linked up with contractor Hays McLellan of Belmont.

When the building moratorium was imposed, the plans were delayed. However, they agreed to enter into a contract with McLellan when the building ban was eased, believing that they would be able to occupy their house by this time.

"However, our hardship has been magnified a thousand times by events which have happened during the past three months," he said in a letter to the council.

Martyr said his mother-in-law died in August and his father-in-law — a "very sick man" who was in Belmont Hills Psychiatric Center until recently — needed to live with his son-in-law and daughter.

The couple already had sold their Oakland home and the three of them were

forced to live in the tiny Belmont apartment. Their dream of owning a new home that they helped design has turned into a financial nightmare' he explained.

The regional WQCB has said that temporary sewage holding tanks can be installed. But, the installation of the tank alone — not including periodic maintenance — would cost the Martyrs about \$3,000 which they can not afford to spend.

"Everything we own is in that new house," Martyr told the council. "We have stretched ourselves to the limit." He asked the council to consider each sewer connection application on an individual basis, taking into mind the personal and emotional traumas involved.

Another potential San Juan resident, Tom Hunter, said he also has sold his former home and is forced to lodge his family in an apartment or motel until he can get a sewer connection.

A Redwood Shores resident, Bruce Watkins, said he too will be forced to take up a temporary residence this week. He had bought a San Juan Canyon home expecting to move in this month.

Several Belmont residents opposed any move to ease the sewer connection ban. Cora Fieierbach said the overloaded pump station already is causing a stench in East Laurel Creek. Any additions to the system, she and others said, will only increase the stench and possibly endanger the health of nearby residents.

Resident Floyd Samson said all the future San Juan dwellers will "have to hold on until they get the pumps in."

City Engineer Adel Mepomuceno said the moratorium affects 34 homes — about five of those ready for occupancy. Several developers are involved.

He said the city is applying pressure on the pump manufacturer for an earlier delivery. However, the pump involved is highly specialized and not easily available, he explained.



# Restrictions on Building in Wooded Areas

S.M. TIMES 11/26/77

A step toward slicing up to one dwelling unit per acre off density in development of Belmont's wooded Ralston area in an effort to reduce subdivisions there has been taken by the Planning Commission.

The commission voted its unanimous support this week of a plan that will allow one unit per half-acre in Area A, between Ralston Avenue and El Varano Way, and only one unit per acre in Area B, just east of College of Notre Dame.

The existing general plan allows a density of three units an acre in both areas.

The proposed general plan change still must be discussed at a second commission hearing and at two hearings before the City Council.

An attempt by Commissioner Donald Heiman to reduce development density even further failed.

The Planning Department has been looking at ways to preserve the rural

appearance of the Lower Ralston part of town.

City Planner Neal Martin explained in his report that the goals of the general plan change are to:

- Maintain the natural, tree-lined character of Ralston Avenue as the primary entrance to central Belmont.

- Retain sloping streets in their natural state as an open space backdrop for the uses on Ralston Avenue.

- Reserve Belmont

Creek.

- Retain open space lands in private ownership.

- Preserve trees as a feature in their rural area.

Martin explained the plan under consideration will ultimately allow 112 units in Area A and 16 in Area B. Presently, there are 108 units in "A" and 16 in "B."

"This is a particularly sensitive area of Belmont," said Commissioner Steve Vartan. "So many people

who see Belmont only see Ralston Avenue."

Other options available for the commission were to retain the general plan as is, reduce density to one unit an acre, or a combination of these.

The first time the commission voted, Heiman opposed the one unit per half-acre maximum.

"I would have preferred a lower density," he said. A combination of the proposals, he said, would be better.



# Belmont Eases San Juan Area Moratorium

S.M. TIMES 1/11/77

By DAN COOK

The lid on development in the San Juan area of Belmont, dictated by an inadequate sewage pumping station, was partially lifted Monday night by the City Council.

Acting in the wake of numerous appeals by residents seeking a way around the moratorium, the council directed City Atty. Kenneth Dickerson to prepare several amendments which would allow construction to continue while the council wrestles with the sewage problem.

The council's action came after an alarming report by City Engineer James Doerksen, who said that a recently installed flow meter ordered hooked

up at the beleaguered pumping station by the council showed intrusion of storm drainage inflow into the station.

Doerksen said the meter was installed Dec. 22, and overflows were recorded in rapid succession, starting with one on Dec. 30, a second on Jan. 2, followed by the third on Jan. 3.

Doerksen reported, however, that the state Regional Water Quality Control Board would approve of the temporary use of sewage holding tanks by residents precluded from obtaining a hookup to the San Juan pumping station.

Mayor William Hardwick presented an outline of a plan which he indicated would allow continued construction and the continued processing and acceptance of building permits in the area.

Hardwick's plan would allow new sewage connections only after the San Juan pump station is rebuilt, if holding tanks are acceptable under county and state codes, and if a 250-cubic-foot excavation limit in the area is maintained subject to the issuance of a special permit

requiring additional on-site parking.

Councilman Robert A. Jones echoed Hardwick's sentiments about allowing construction to continue, but added that he wanted to see the continued preparation of a hillside ordinance dealing with allowable excavation.

Councilman Frank Goncalves said he wanted no further connections to the sewage system until the present facilities are improved.

"My hope was to allow people to go ahead with their work, perhaps under an interim ordinance," Hardwick explained, "to come up with a solution so people wouldn't be put into an economic bind."

Attorney Dickerson said the council could authorize construction to go on, but that no sewer connection nor occupancy permit could be issued.

Following further discussion, the council directed Dickerson to prepare an amendment to the moratorium ordinance to authorize the use of holding tanks but precluding the issuance of the permits Dickerson had mentioned. He also was directed to look into amending the ordinance to require a special permit

when more than 500 cubic yards of excavation is required.

Another item which took considerable council discussion was the awarding of a contract for improvements to the lodge building at Twin Pines Park.

The award followed a heated debate as to whether interior remodeling should be done with lath and plaster or whether more economical sheetrock construction could be used.

City Manager James P. DeChaine told the council that the San Mateo firm of W.A. Moroney was the low bidder with a bid of \$63,700, although a lower bid by another contractor had been rejected.

DeChaine explained that the apparent lower bid was based on the mistaken belief that sheetrock construction could be used despite the architect's recommendation that lath and plaster be used to be more in conformance with the existing structure.

The lowest bid, at \$54,989 was rejected on the advice of Dickerson, DeChaine explained.

Councilman Walter Worthge moved acceptance of the bid, which was \$3,700 more than the budgeted amount, the balance to come from unbudgeted federal revenue-sharing monies and from revenue-sharing monies budgeted for the improvement of Belameda Pool.

The motion passed 4 to 1, with Councilwoman Pamela S. Ketcham in opposition.

In other business, the council:

- Appointed Richard M. Trainer Engineers, Inc., to improve the San Juan pump station, 4-1, Councilwoman Ketcham opposed.

- Defeated a motion to appoint a police officer to fill an existing vacancy, 2-2, with Councilman Jones absent.

- Approved an appeal from Mr. and Mrs. Robert P. Lombaerde allowing for a room addition in the San Juan area.

- Accepted a tentative subdivision map allow for the conversion of existing apartments at 200, 300 and 400 Davey Glen Drive to condominiums, subject to conditions.

- Approved the wording of an impartial ballot statement to be placed on the March 8 ballot dealing with the possible acquisition of additional properties at Twin Pines Park.



# Belmont Plans San Juan Study

A special panel of two councilmen, two planning commissioners and interested Belmont citizens will be convened in the San Juan Canyon area of Belmont Thursday by Mayor Frank Gonsalves to attempt to work out the multiple development problems of the area.

Gonsalves announced the session during a long night of council discussions and arguments over setbacks, dirt haul and excavation and related problems, and suggestions that more than 1,500 home sites might be involved in future use.

Among the San Juan disputes was one in which several residents opposed a requested variance to cut

to 11 feet the setback for construction of a home at 3015 San Juan Blvd.

City regulations require a 15-foot setback.

The variance finally was denied by the council.

Mrs. Judy Nowag of 2942 San Juan summed up the situation on that street, saying:

"Someone who lives in the San Juan area can currently come down to any City Council or Planning Commission meeting and find at least three items on the agenda that will concern him personally because of the explosion of construction in the San Juan area."

Others pointed out that

more attempts for variances may be sought.

Robert Calquhoun, who sought the variance, said he believed "most of the people of this area would rather I did not build here. I doubt they have looked at the plan."

Calquhoun contended that many homes on the street are as close or even closer than the 11-foot setback, and said he doubted that one house would make any difference in widening the road.

As to objections already voiced as to increased traffic flow, he commented, "Everybody else appears to be getting permits to build on San Juan."

None of the homes now being built have 11-foot setbacks, responded Mrs. Nowag.

While councilmen agreed there was little likelihood at present of widening the 27-foot street, Councilman Walter Worthge felt the house would prevent any substantial widening.

Worthge said he would

like to see various individual studies of the area problems combined before a group attempted to make determinations, suggesting as a center for such action the Cipriani Homeowners Association or the city Building Department.

John DeFelice, chairman of the city Planning Commission, told the council there are potentially twice as many lots as there are homes in the San Juan area. There is a lot of data, he said, and a professional and impartial study is needed.

Councilman Robert Jones urged a broad survey

of all factors that might be involved, including possible back-zoning. He felt concern, too, he said, that the Planning Commission might not take all possible steps before letting the matter go on to the council.

The matter of the excavations came up when three persons asked permission to move dirt in large amounts and were referred on to council as the alternative to a negative decision in the Planning Commission. Commissioner Al Fletcher explained, that while a negative declaration on the environmental effect

might have been permissible for one, as a whole, there would be serious environmental impact from all three together.

Two of the sites on Monte Cresta Drive, the other on San Ardo Way.

The council authorized all three excavations. Numerous conditions were attached.

The largest dirt haul proposal, that of James G. Yamas to excavate 8,000 cubic yards and haul 7,300 from lots on San Ardo Way, won easy approval after Yamas explained that he had arranged with neighbors to accept nearly all of the dirt to improve their lots. Two were ready to take 3,000 cubic feet apiece, he said.

However, one objection — that of hours of truck movement — was raised, with it being pointed out that small children using a path in the area might be endangered. Yamas said he would be present and so would others during hauling hours.



# San Juan Moratorium Tackled by Councilors

*Bel. Courier 1/12/77*

In a lengthy discussion of the building moratorium in the San Juan Canyon area, Belmont city councilors heard pleas from land owners to find some alternative so building could continue.

At the Jan. 10 meeting, councilors also discussed some method of curbing unleashed dogs and accepted a bid to start improvements on the lodge building in Twin Pines Park.

## **ORDINANCE READIED**

The councilors did, according to City Clerk James McLaughlin, did direct City Engineer James Doerksen to prepare an ordinance that "would allow construction subject to no connection (to the sewers) with the alternative possibility that could hook up with a holding tank."

The city attorney was also directed to look into an ordinance that would allow developers to excavate up to 500 cubic yards without a special permit.

Mr. Doerksen was directed to go ahead with plans to construct a new pumping station in the area. Mr. Doerksen estimated the station will cost \$383,000 and will be completed in mid-or late-October, 1977.

But several homeowners spoke before the council, including Hays McLellan who owns 35 lots in the San Juan area.

"You have prevented me from building because the city has been negligent in maintaining the sewer since 1963.

## **'GOT TO ALLOW US'**

"You have got to allow us to go back and start building again," said Mr. McLellan.

The city engineer and a

consultant have looked into the possibility of allowing new homeowners to install holding tanks at an approximate cost of \$1,250 which would be used until the pumping station is completed, but the council did not take action on any plan.

The moratorium has again been placed on the agenda for the Jan. 24 meeting.

## **BID AWARDED**

Councilors hedged over awarding a \$63,700 bid to W.A. Moroney Company in San Mateo to improve the Twin Pines Park lodge building since four alternatives to inside improvements were presented.

Councilors wanted to award the bid to another firm, which had claimed it could do the job for less but had not followed all of the city engineer's specifications.

W.A. Moroney Co. presented the next lowest bid, which was some \$9,000 more.

## **NOT ENOUGH MONEY**

But the council did not have all the money available to contract the job and were forced to take \$813 from the Belamed pool project and \$2,887 from revenue-sharing funds to make up for the shortage.

The council will decide whether it will install a sprinkler system, paint the interior, perform door and cabinetry work and sheetrock the ceiling at the next meeting.

## **DOGS CITED**

A change was made in the method of citing unleashed dogs. Previously, owners of dogs that were declared a public nuisance were charged with misdemeanor of-

fences, which gave them a right to a jury trial.

Now, owners will be issued a citation, either by the Belmont Police Department or the Peninsula Humane Society. If found guilty, the pet owner will be fined and forced to remedy the situation.

Councilors also decided that owners should give

their dogs rabies shots every two years.

Several residents complained of dogs running loose at the Monday night public hearing.

## **POSTPONED**

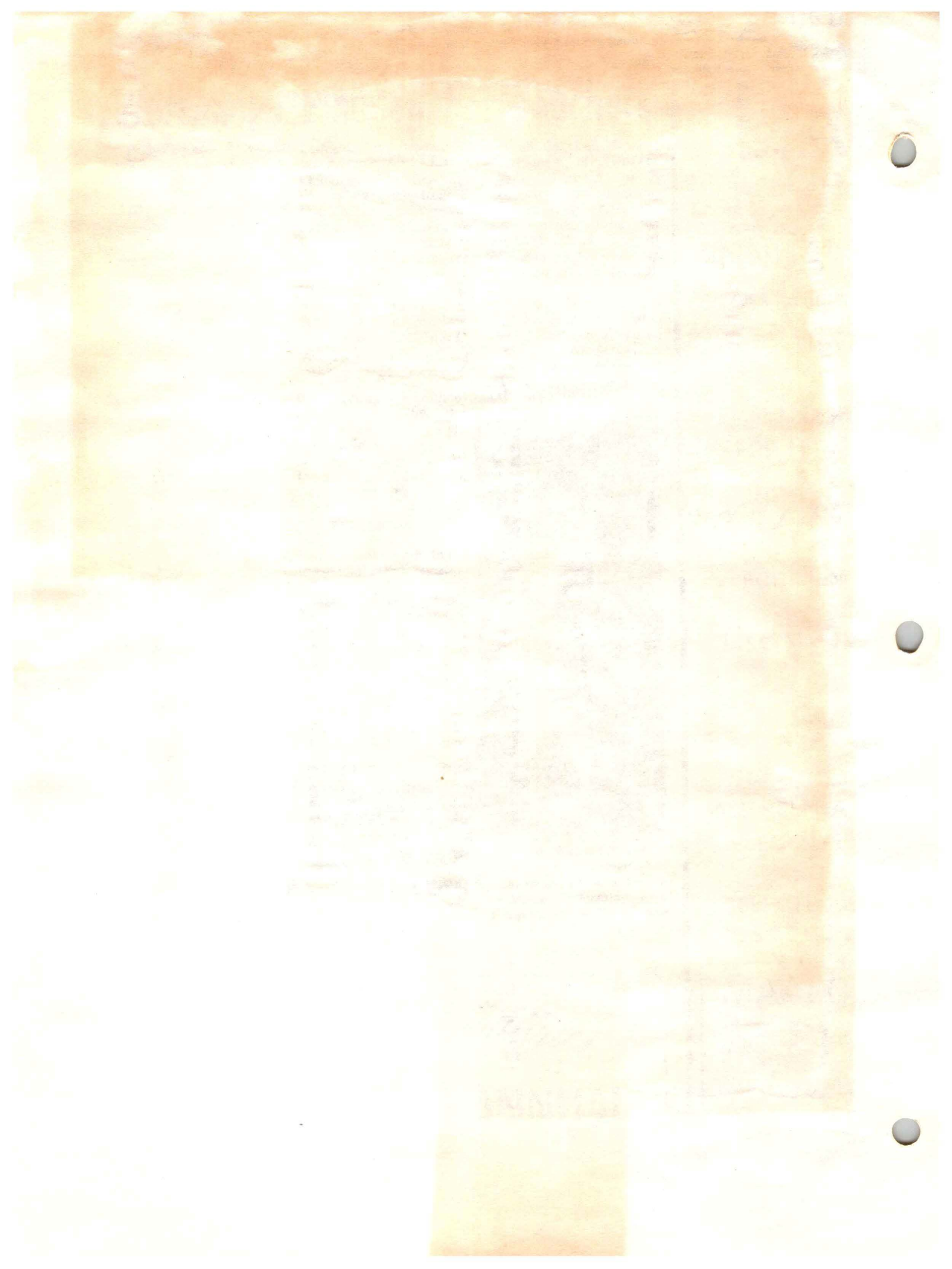
The council postponed discussion of a tree policy statement until the Feb. 14 meeting. If adopted, the homeowner would be asked

to assume the cost of correcting tree problems in any area not designated a "target area."

Ken Taylor, president of the Sterling down Neighborhood Association told councilors his group would be meeting to discuss the problem and would be prepared to discuss the issue at the February meeting.

The council also approved the planning commission's rezoning of the Britschgi property, where Antique Forest Homes has plans to build 34 homes.







# City Council Lifts Ban On Canyon Building

*Bel. Cour. 2/2/77*  
San Juan Canyon area landowners may now apply for building permits but will not be allowed to hookup sewers or occupy new buildings without specific approval, after Belmont city councilors amended the building moratorium.

In a special meeting Jan. 25, the five councilors voted unanimously that building may be resumed.

## MORATORIUM

The council had declared a moratorium on building and sewer hookups on Nov. 8, 1976 after deciding that the San Juan pump station represented a health hazard to residents. The moratorium was declared after it was found the aged pump station overflowed and raw sewage was backed onto the streets.

At that time, councilors decided to approve the building of a new pump station, but until it was completed, all construction must halt.

## MAY START

After hearing pleas from area builders, councilors decided that building may continue if, "no building...may be occupied or inhabited."

Residents may, the amendment reads, inhabit buildings if a holding tank "or some other appliance or device to dispose of the sewer effluent" has been approved by City Engineer James Doerksen, the state Water Quality Control

Board and the San Mateo County Health Department.

## AUTHORIZATION

Residents may also move in if "the city engineer has authorized connection to the city sewer system and said connection has been made," the amendment reads.

The area affected is bordered by Ralston Avenue, Cipriani Boulevard, Newlands Avenue to Haskins Drive and Laurel Creek Drive.

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sewer system and said connection has been made," the amendment reads.

## LODGE PLANS

Councilors also approved a \$78,450 bid from the W.A. Moroney Co. to improve the Twin Pines Park lodge building. The council decided a sprinkler system will be installed, the interior painted, door and cabinetry work done and the ceiling will be sheetrocked.

Councilors Walt Worthge, Frank Gonsalves and William Harwick all voted to draft a letter to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors asking that \$31,000 of State Park bond

money be spent to improve the area around the lodge building. The council decided a sprinkler system will be installed, the interior painted, door and cabinetry work done and the ceiling will be sheetrocked.

## RETURN EQUIPMENT

It was also decided that the city should try to return unused offset printing equipment to the manufacturer. Councilors Pamela Ketcham and Robert Jones had asked that the equipment be sold.

The city council also tabled indefinitely a motion to set a time limit on council meetings.

## Belmont Sewers Get Replaced

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Ebert Corp. won with a bid of \$225,820 and \$237,500 respectively.



# Bidding To Open For SJ Facility

*BEL. COUN. 3/30/77*

The Belmont City Council decided March 28 to open bidding on the San Juan pump station and force main, approved allowing bingo games for charitable business, okayed an assessment district on Emmet Avenue and formally closed the old Belameda pool.

The pump station in the San Juan Canyon will be open for bidding on May 4 and is expected to be completed in 168 days, or by Nov. 1, said City

Engineer James Doerksen.

However, the council is unsure whether a 20-year-old force main, which could last another five to 10 years, will have to be replaced. So, they decided to accept bids to replace the main, but only if it is economical.

At present, the pump station is so overloaded it cannot handle the present residents. The council put a moratorium on building in the area, then amended it to a moratorium on sewer hookups

The council authorized the engineer to conduct tests on the force main at an approximate cost of \$1,000, to see if it would need replacement in the near future.

In a 4-0 vote, they officially closed the Belameda pool, which was built in 1913. The pool was the site for a local aquatics programs and a number of citizens and councilors have said they are committed to building or finding another facility.

However, it is expected a new pool facility could cost \$450,000.

It would have cost \$500,000 to rebuild the Belameda facility, the council was informed.

The council approved 4-0 an assessment district on Emmet Avenue to pay for construction of improvements.

The firm of Warren, McVeigh, Griffin and Huntington was hired for \$3,100 to take a risk management audit of the city insurance needs.

For a fee of \$25 per year, Belmont organizations can hold bingo games for charitable purposes, the council decided.



# Sewers Worry Homeowners

A Belmont homeowners association Monday told the City Council it is becoming concerned over maintenance of the sewers in Belmont.

Floyd Sampson, president of Plateau Skymont Homeowners Association, warned that drought conditions could bring on a crisis.

"If certain residents have sewage backflow, you will be surprised how we will fill this chamber hall," Sampson warned.

"For some time, we

have been concerned over the quality of sewer maintenance in Belmont," Sampson said.

"The minimum standard should be basic maintenance of the sewage system. With the drought, we will be cutting back on the amount of water in the sewage system. And that is going to bring problems.

"You need to keep a certain amount of moisture in the system — it is designed that way — or it will block up," Sampson said.

The civic leader urged

maintaining an adequate crew of maintenance men and seeing to it that the sewers are clear.

Sampson went to the microphone after Councilman Robert Jones attacked delay in replacing two maintenance workers who have left the work force, one of them as long ago as last fall.

Councilwoman Pam Ketchum suggested that there should be more delay so that citizens could let the council know what they want.

Councilman Walt Worthge, however, said he felt that no matter how the department might be restructured — it is under consideration — there still would be need for an adequate work force.

Jones responded that "this is not a case of beauty, but necessity."

The council finally agreed to hire two men, with Mayor Frank Gonsalves supporting Jones and Worthge.



## Second Contract Delayed

# Council Approves San

# Juan Pump Contract

BEL. Cour. 5/11/77

The Belmont City Council approved a contract for the construction of a new San Juan Sewer Pump Station, but delayed action on a force main contract for at least two weeks Monday night.

In other major actions, the council agreed to buy 3.7 acres of open space land from Edward and Margaret Cunningham, and authorized the city staff to replace two maintenance workers who have retired in recent months.

The council awarded the contract to E. Mitchell Inc. of San Francisco, for \$209,475. The council had originally authorized construction of a new pump station in early April, and Mitchell was found to be low bidder on the project.

The vote was 4-1, with councilor Pam Ketcham in opposition to the contract. Ms. Ketcham criticized what she called a lack of foresight concerning the pump station.

"It's been very poorly planned," said Ms. Ketcham, who argued that the Belmont City Council should have sought to link the city's sewage system with that of San Mateo at least two years ago.

"I'm sorry it wasn't pursued more diligently. It could have saved \$400,000," she said.

While the pump station contract was approved rather routinely, the contract for the force main leading into the San Juan station, was delayed after Mayor Frank Gonsalves raised objections.

The proposed contract, for \$191,315 to Dalton Construction of Foster City, was continued by unanimous consent when Mr. Gonsalves claimed that continued use of the current force main for the indefinite future could save the city money.

Mr. Gonsalves complained that the city staff's studies of the existing main weren't precise enough to warrant immediate replacement.

He added that the city should wait until it was sure it needed a new main. "I know it's a gamble, but I'd like to take a chance and not base it (a new contract) on a wild guess," he said.

### IMMEDIATE FIRE

The mayor's comments drew immediate fire from City Engineer James Doerksen and Councilor Walt Worthge.

Terming the move "false economy," Doerksen warned that even with the drought this last winter, the city still had to pay hundreds of dollars in overtime for repairs.

Should more normal weather conditions return next year, he warned, overtime repair costs could run into the thousands.

Doerksen also stated that a recently completed study showed that savings in energy costs from a new main alone would enable the main to pay for itself in 20 years.

Mr. Worthge claimed that Doerksen's predictions were conservative, projecting a payoff period of only 12-15 years.

Councilor William Hardwick chimed in, saying the council could wind up with "egg of its face" if it voted down the proposed contract.

Although it seemed likely to pass by at least 3-2, the contract was postponed until the next regular meeting to give the entire council time to digest the cost study cited

by Mr. Doerksen.

In another action that had been delayed repeatedly, the council voted to buy 3.7 acres of open land up in the Western hills for \$21,875.

The city had originally signed an option to buy the property in July, 1972, and acted last night as the deadline on the option threatened to expire.

The council approved the purchase by a vote of 4-1 with Ms. Ketcham voting in the negative. The vote followed a discussion in which several members of the public expressed strong support for the purchase.

### SAFETY THREATENED

Lloyd Sampson of the Parks and Recreation Commission warned that any private development resulting from the council's failure to buy the land would be disastrous for the area.

"If the road in that area were paved, the rest of the citizens could not walk even halfway safely, and they would lose a chance to enjoy one of the more desirable sites" in Belmont, he said.

Concern was expressed by some that even with the purchase of the Cunninghams' property, the city would still not be adequately safeguarded against private development, which is adjacent to Waterdog Lake.

John Kriskow warned that the purchase wasn't unless the council made a commitment to purchase the Lumberman property.

The adjacent property, which Mr. Gonsalves termed "landlocked," and thus precluded from development, is "potentially developable, and potentially a very valuable piece of property," said Mr. Kriskow.

In one other action of note, the council voted to permit the Gerald Ferrari Corporation to convert a 36-unit apartment complex on 1101 Continentals Way into condominium units.

### COMPLAINTS STIRRED

The conversion stirred complaints from residents who argued that the apartment didn't meet adequate plumbing standards and that they hadn't been fully informed of the proposed change by the owners.

"A majority don't feel the apartment should be turned into a condominium," said one resident, who charged that several residents had had their kitchens flooded by dishwashers which came with the units and that the water contained rust particles.

He also complained he had been kept in the dark by the Ferrari Corporation. "My lease ended in January," he said. "We batted our brains out for a lease, but nobody told us anything. They left us dangling," he complained.

Gerald Ferrari responded that the city had found the appliances to be in working order, and that the residents had been posted as soon as plans for a conversion had been finalized.

The council vote was 4-1, with Ms. Ketcham in opposition.



# San Juan Canyon Sewer Moratorium Eased

S.M. TIMES

11/24/77

A moratorium on sewer permits in Belmont's San Juan Canyon area, aimed at curbing the potential of pollution until a new pump is installed, was eased by the City Council this week.

As the result of an emergency ordinance, anyone who has purchased any of the 32 homes being developed in the canyon can now apply to hook-up a residential sewer system.

Only about five of the homes are presently ready for occupancy, according to City Engineer Adel Nepomuceno.

The council's unanimous action — with Councilwoman Pam Ketcham absent — marked the second time that pleas have convinced the council to ease its ban.

The City Council originally enacted a construction moratorium last year when it learned that the San Juan sewage pump station was overloaded and in disrepair.

Early this year, the council eased the moratorium by allowing construction to continue while the city wrestles with the sewage problem.

City officials were expecting that the new pump station, with an expanded sewage processing capability, would be installed by Sunday. However, the firm that constructs the pumps has indicated delivery isn't possible until March at the earliest.

But, several persons who have purchased homes in the canyon have asked the City Council to let them connect their sewers and move in. They have claimed that the ban has imposed a hardship upon their lives.

One couple, Paul and Crista Martyr, explained that they are currently living in a one-bedroom, unfurnished apartment on Old County Road. Her father — who is ill — is living with them.

However, City Engineer Doug Herden proposed a method to protect the city from polluting its sewer system in case of an overflow.

The city will hire four pump trucks on a stand-by basis. When it appears that there is a danger of an overflow in the San Juan area, the pump trucks will be called in to pump out the sewage from the creek into the Cipriani manhole.

The four trucks will cost about \$160 an hour and each overflow would last about 10 to 12 hours, at a cost of \$1,600, Herden said. The city — in a normal wet-weather winter — has about three overflows in that area, he added.

Herden proposed that the homeowners involved be required to post bonds that would be cashed if the overflow system were utilized. The council however, voted to pay for the system out of the city's general fund.

Several persons protested any move to ease the ban and further burden the San Juan pump.

John Stoddard, president of Cipriani Hills Homeowners Association, said the

should not give in to "hard-luck stories."

The potential of pollution in that area is serious enough to concern all Belmont residents, she added. She also noted that many of those persons who want to move in to San Juan are not presently residents of the city.

Councilman John McInerney pointed out however, that the homeowners are not entirely responsible for the situation and shouldn't be punished for it.

Resident Eve Sterry also urged the council not to pass the emergency measure. She said the council

did the homeowners a favor by simply letting them build the houses to start with.

The pumps involved are older and more dangerous now, he said. Everyone who bought a home in the area was told the city could not guarantee when a sewer system hook-up would be permitted, he noted.

## Sewer Found To Be Okay After Study

*BEL. COOP. 12/28/77*  
Concerned by the recent complaints of residents in the San Juan area over sewer problems City Manager James DeChaine requested the Department of Public Health and Welfare to inspect the pumping station facilities.

According to a letter to DeChaine from the Public Health Engineer Henry F. Eich their findings indicate that the present conditions are satisfactory and pose no threat to the health of Belmont residents.

Furthermore, the letter states, both pumps are in operating order, a beacon arrangement has been installed which will indicate any operating difficulties and police regularly check the area for any problems.

Four pump trucks are on stand-by during predicted rains and, according to DeChaine, a new high capacity pump is expected in the near future.

Eich, in summing up the situation, feels that the combination of precautionary measures is a reasonable approach during this interim until the new high capacity pump arrives.



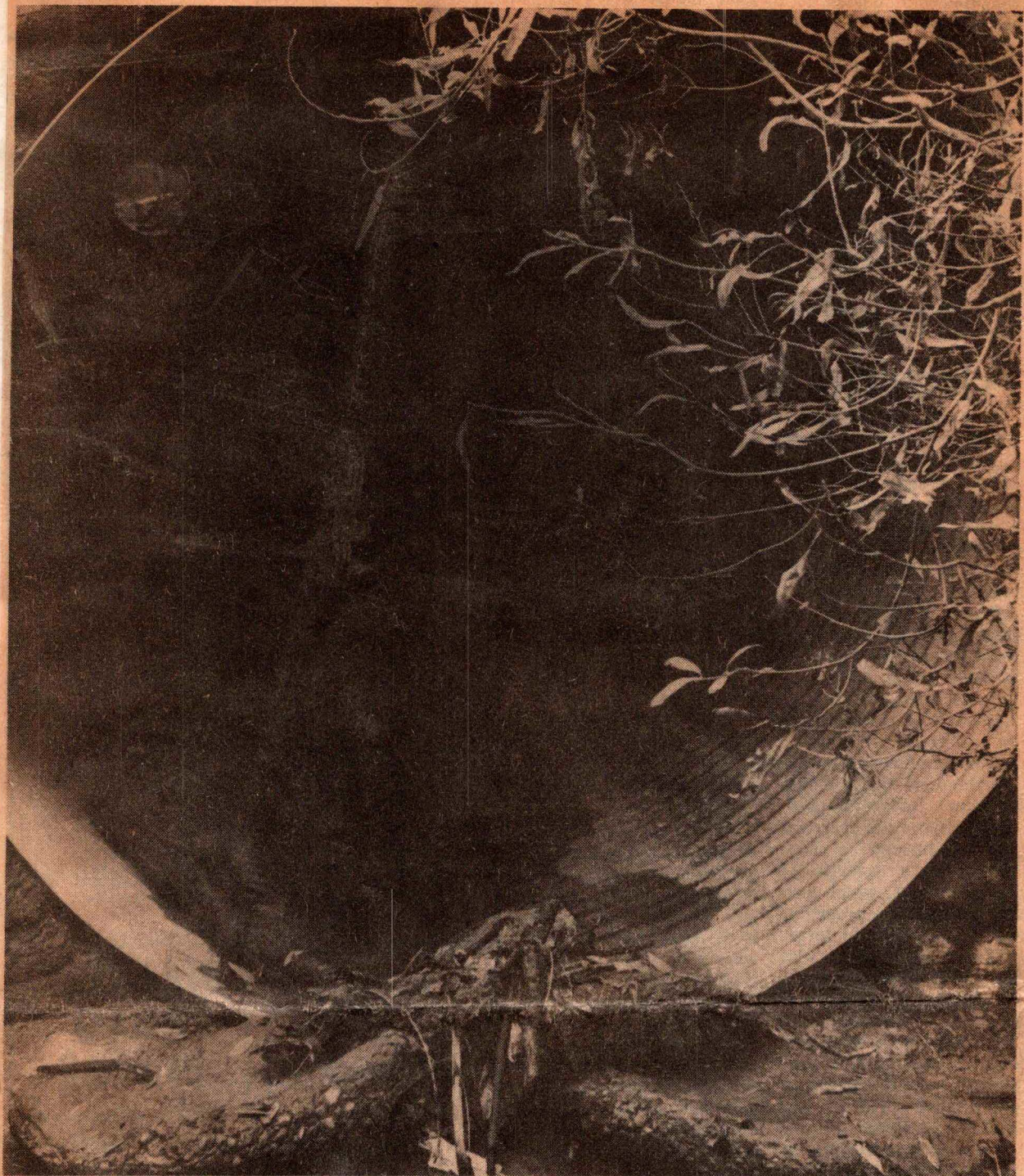
BEL. COUR. 11/19/77



**WATER MAIN BREAK**—Young Belmont residents Stephen Morgan, Jim Mackall, Paul Green and Mickey Dixon survey the site of the major water main fracture that occurred late Sunday afternoon near Hillman Avenue and North Road. The break sent an estimated 40,000 gallons of water cascading down several streets, according to officials. Most of the water poured into

catchbasins, though some water did flood nearby yards. The longitudinal fracture of a cement-lined eight-inch main occurred below ground 20 feet off the intersection of Hillman Avenue and North Road. Water service was cut to a large area of Belmont for several hours, as the water burst through the surface and ran down the steep hillside. —Photo by Margie Jeangerard





*BEL. Cour. 12/14/77*

## Health Hazard?

CAROL WISETH AND CORA FEIERBACH fear another hepatitis case in the San Juan area after sewer pipes broke on Nov. 26 and Dec. 4. They said the problem has

been allowed to go on too long and that the city council is negligent in allowing more hook-ups to the already inadequate system.



# San Juan Area Has Sewer Woes

*BEL. COUR. 12/7/77*

Residents in the San Juan area spent an unpleasant night this past weekend when another sewer pipe broke sending raw sewage rushing down East Laurel Creek.

"My husband and I returned home at 1 a.m. Sunday and our house was filled with the smell," said Cora Feierbach, 3206 E. Laurel Creek Road. "There was a torrent of raw sewage rushing down the creek."

Repair crews did not come out until 5 a.m., according to Feierbach, meanwhile raw sewage flowed through San Mateo to finally spill into San Francisco Bay. "San Mateo residents called their city officials to find out what was happening.

"The Regional Water Control people won't step in to take tests unless it is daylight, meanwhile disinfectant has been poured into the creek which kills the bacteria. When the Water Control Board comes the tests are fine," said Feierbach.

On Nov. 22 the City Council passed an urgency ordinance to provide for a limited number of new sewer connections in the San Juan moritorium area after giving approval for the use of four pump trucks to be on standby during predicted heavy rains. This past weekend had no precipitation.

At that same meeting Mayor Frank Gonsalves issued instructions to the city staff to look into a back-up and auxiliary system and make every effort to have new pumps installed as soon as possible. No provision was made to install reliable pipes.

"The Council was gutless in permitting more sewer connections they should have said 'wait'," said Feierbach.