

## Election To Be Held

# Twin Pines Park Purchase Going to Voters

*Bel. Courier 1/12/77*

The decision whether or not to buy—approximately 3.27 acres in the Twin Pines Park area to use for open space will go to Belmont voters on March 8 under the title of Proposition G.

Citizens will vote on whether the city should spend approximately \$485,000 to purchase the acreage.

### **BUILD CARE CENTER**

If the voters decide not to purchase the land, Dr. Albert Voris and his seven co-owners have plans to build a senior care facility and the city has the option to purchase some of the land for police station use.

If the land is bought, according to the ballot measure, 1.52 acres will be set aside for open space, the remaining 1.75 acres will be used by the City of Belmont, presumably for a parking lot for the police station and access road out of the park.

Two groups in Belmont are writing the pro and con arguments that will appear on the ballot.

### **BOUGHT IN 1972**

The city first purchased the park in 1972, acquiring 17.12 acres for approximately \$1 billion. Recently, voters also agreed to purchase an additional 2.5 acres for \$325,000 cash, according to Rose Ozwirk of the citizens Committee Against Twin Pines.

Jane Curry, a member of the committee working to buy the land for open space, helped write the pro-purchase argument for the ballot.

The major argument, said Mrs. Curry, is that if voters do not buy the land, the owners have plans to build a three-story, 144-apartment building.

### **MORE FOR SERVICES**

"It costs far more to provide police and fire protection, sewers, streets, water and to resolve traffic problems than it costs for open space," the argument reads.

Those for buying the land claim it will cost residents "about \$5.70 per year per \$80,000 home."

"We can have a level, wind-free and tree-studded area," read Mrs. Curry.

### **WILL TAKE AWAY**

Those against the move said they feel the money used to purchase the property will take "away from other priorities" such as the Belameda pool project and the sewer repairs in the San Juan Canyon area.

"We would like that senior citizen thing," said Mrs. Ozwirk. "That would bring revenue into the city."

### **LOSE TAX REVENUE**

The purchasing of the land would take away tax revenue, the citizen's committee wrote.

Mrs. Ozwirk claimed the entire bond issue, including interest would cost the city "a little under \$1 million" while the original purchase of 17.12 acres is still being paid off for another 16 years.

The land "is not vital to the Twin Pines Park and you could say it will become a parking lot," said Mrs. Ozwirk.

The loss of revenue when the land is taken off the tax rolls, as well as the cost of maintaining the property is the argument of the group against the purchase.

The Belmont City Council has come out publicly in favor of the purchase of the property.

## Voris Moving Ahead To Develop Land

*Bel. Cour. 3/16/77*  
The fate of the 3.27 acres of land that some residents wanted the city to buy and add to Twin Pines Park now rests in the hands of owner Dr. Albert Voris.

And, Dr. Voris told the Belmont Courier-Bulletin, he and the other seven co-owners are getting final plans ready to submit to the Belmont Planning Commission Board of Design.

He estimated that it will take about two months to finalize plans for a 141-bed senior care center, which they plan to build.

The owners received a use permit in December, 1976, to develop the property off Ralson Avenue and the city has an option to buy four sub-parcels, totalling about one-half acre.

The city cannot exercise an option to buy the 22,500 square feet for approximately \$84,150 until Dr. Voris has the building permit "in my hands."

According to City Manager James DeChaine, the city council can decide whether it wants to buy one or all of the four subparcels at the north end of the property, some of which may provide an access road for the police station.

"It will take a while before the council fully comes to grips with what we are going to need, now or later," the manager said.

# Twin Pines Topic At Chamber Meet

By C. J. MARROW

Members of the Belmont Chamber of Commerce listened on Tuesday to arguments for and against Proposition G—the bond issue concerned with purchasing two parcels of land totalling 3.27 acres adjacent to Twin Pines Park. Walt Worthge, member of the Belmont City Council, and Larry Stueck, transportation planner with SamTrans, a Belmont Planning Commissioner, presented the opposing points of view at the group's regular luncheon meeting at the Iron Gate.

## IN FAVOR

Walt Worthge emphasized that he was not representing the City Council but was speaking as a private citizen when he urged Chamber members to support the "yes" vote. He felt personally that empty land is limited and precious and urged people to think of the generations to come.

"We can all look back," he commented, "and see what we should have done in the past, but now we have a rare opportunity to make a decision that will preserve the atmosphere of our town and set a tone that will last for hundreds of years to come."

He felt that the land under consideration was critical to completing Twin Pines Park in which the city is already heavily invested.

## ALTERNATIVES

The alternative is a large apartment complex and an acute-care unit which will rise like "a three-story brick wall". Nor did Mr. Worthge feel that the development would be a business bonanza. "The people in the acute-care unit certainly won't be doing much shopping." The elderly in the apartments are mostly on small fixed incomes, he commented, and having a dining facility of their own will discourage them from patronizing local restaurants.

Mr. Worthge also expressed the viewpoint that the figures used by the opposition were incorrectly high and that the increase in taxes would be somewhere in the vicinity of \$5.70 annually for the owner of an \$80,000 house.

## THE OPPOSING VIEW

Larry Stueck, speaking in favor of a "no" vote, said that both the Park and Recreation Department and the planning commission had, after much serious study, come to favor the commercial development of the land.

His feeling was that the two relatively small parcels of land were not vital to Twin Pines Park. They are not large enough for specific development—such as a ball park—and could end up simply as parking lots. He thought the land was too valuable for such a use.

He suggested that residents go and look at the parcels in question and note that the Police Department is already positioned between the park and the new land. He also refuted Mr. Worthge's assertion that the development would look like a brick wall. The planning commission has endorsed the architect's plans and do not consider them unattractive, he said.

To pay interest for 20 years on the bonds and at the same time remove the land from the tax rolls, Mr. Stueck thought would be a financial strain on the city. "We don't even have the money to develop what we now have," he

said. "This same money could be used to develop other open spaces in the city...we must consider the priorities."

Normal city planning, he suggested, usually strives for inner-city density rather than open space. Elderly residents would be more likely to patronize nearby businesses. Most do not have cars and are unlikely to travel to more distant shopping centers.

## REBUTTAL

In a rebuttal, Mr. Worthge said that it would be up to the citizenry to decide how the land is used after it is purchased—that it is premature to conclude that it would become a parking lot.

He also questioned the statement about developing other open spaces. "Where?" he asked, "There is nothing under consideration at present."

The bond issue will come up for vote on March 8 and both factions are urging residents of the area to give the matter careful evaluation.

# Proposition G Defeated

# Voters Say No To Twin

BEL. COVA. 3/9/77

# Pines Park Purchase

Proposition G, the proposal to buy 3.27 acres adjoining Twin Pines Park for recreational purposes failed by a margin of 945 votes last night.

The final tally, not yet confirmed by the San Mateo County Clerk's office was 2,372 to 1,427.

The plan to buy the acreage for \$485,000 had been hotly contested.

Presumably, plans to build a 141-bed, three-story senior care facility on the land will now go ahead.

Previously, Dr. Albert Voris, one of the landowners, had announced that the development would go through if residents did not purchase the property.

The original 17 acres for the park were purchased by a bond issue in 1972. An additional two acres was purchased by the city council, using revenue sharing funds.

The park, situated along Ralston Avenue, also houses

the San Mateo County Arts Council, the recreation department and police station.

If the proposition had passed, \$5.70 in additional taxes would have been levied on an \$80,000 assessed valuation home.

The Twin Pines issue has been the topic of hot debate ever since it was learned last December that the issue was being to the hands of the voters.

## BALLOT MEASURES

Immediately, there was a disagreement between those who opposed the purchase and the city council over who would be in charge of writing and editing the ballot measures.

It was found that the City Council could have no control over the ballot measures and the responsibility lay with

City Clerk James McLaughlin to be sure the measures were written.

Then, as the election date grew closer, the argument expanded with those against the measure posting signs saying it would cost residents \$1 million to purchase the 3.27 acres.

To make matters worse, they claimed, some of the property would be paved over for a parking lot.

City Manager James DeChaine denied this, saying the land would be used for recreational purposes.

Those for the measure said the purchase would 'complete' the park, since portions have been purchased over the years.

Those against claimed they had been promised the park was already complete and countered that the city would

lose tax money if a senior care facility were not built.

It went on from there.

The Yes on G people claimed the owners of the facility would file for a tax-exempt status, continuing with those claims even though owner Dr. Albert Voris announced he had promised not to file as a non-profit corporation.

'But what if he sells the property?' one woman asked.

## COUNCIL VS. COMMISSION

The City Council passed an resolution favoring the purchase but the Planning Commission came out against the move.

Densel Lawhern and Larry Stueck, both planning commissioners, served on the No on G committee.

Both the pro and con people spent approximately \$300 on the campaign, the bulk of it going for signs, handbills and newspaper advertising.

# Whats Your Opinion?

DEL. COUR. 2/23/78

## Councilor Says Ethics are Issue

**Editor:**  
 Regarding the city employee rap sheet (criminal information) investigations of unknowing citizens and city government members, I have just received Governor Brown's Executive Order B-22-76. It provides a model for local government approach to the same rights and principles involved in the rap sheet investigations. The order insists on: The right to privacy. The right to access information concerning every individual personally when there is no clear and overriding public interest in withholding knowledge from the individual. The right to correct any misinformation. The obligation to collect only that information on an individual for which there exists a compelling government interest, and the government's obligation that every individual be informed of the uses to be made of personal information the individual is asked to supply to government.

The rap sheet investigations were totally out of line with these rights and principles, and with state and city laws and regulations. If, as the City Manager stated, he had been doing this for the last five years, without Council's knowledge, were not those citizens investigated informed either?

The Lockyer Act Government Code Amendment (Sec. 1105 and Sec. 13300 Penal Code) says rap sheets should not be run unless the information is required to implement an ordinance or regulation expressly referring to specific criminal conduct applicable to the individual and when expressly based upon specified criminal conduct. These are also the requirements of City Resolution 4371, and are compelling needs.

This need was used to get the rap sheets even though no criminal background or conduct existed on individuals who were investigated. Sacramento also was told some were job applicants even though they were then well-established city committee members appointed by the council.

The Belmont Code (Sec. 2-88), the Personnel Rules and Regulations (Resolution 3725) and the official job Classification Plan also completely rule out any job or employee claims. Other cities don't run rap sheets on city board and committee members or on applicants for membership either. The Brown Act defines board and commission members as legislative advisors, rather than employees.

Most unfortunately, there has not been a formal apology to the investigated citizens and city government members whose "right to privacy" were invaded and abused.

To quote a legislator on the national level, and just as applicable on the local level; "Ethics is the number one issue. It must be. We've got to restore trust of the people....we've got to restore integrity."

Thank you,

Pamela S. Ketcham  
 Holly Road  
 Belmont

## Committee Urges No Vote on G

**Editor,**  
 On Tuesday, March 8 we, the citizens of Belmont will decide whether or not the City will purchase the 3.27 acres located on the east and south of Twin Pines Park. Citizens should look at both sides of the issue before they cast their vote. What are they?

If you vote No, a private housing development for the elderly of our City, which will not be tax exempt, will be constructed on the southerly portion of the property.

It will provide accomodations for the elderly adjacent to transportation and to the downtown area for shopping. Minimum requirements for city services: police, fire, water, schools, etc.

It will increase our tax base. The new facility will have an assessed evaluation of \$2 million, and the estimated property tax alone will be between \$6,000 and \$8,000 a year.

The city will have four options under which we can purchase some or all of the remaining property. The cost for the entire parcel is \$85,000. The amount we purchase can be used for any purpose: a site for a future community building, a parking lot to supplement the city owned property, or anything we may decide upon.

If we don't exercise any or all of our options, it will be developed commercial to augment our downtown business area and will further increase our tax base.

If you vote Yes, we will purchase over three acres of undeveloped land which can only be developed for the city's use, whether a portion of it be a parking lot (for which there is currently much talk), a site for a community building, or just plain open qpace.

Cost? Not \$485,000, but over \$1 million over the twenty year period of the bond issue!

- a. Bond cost of \$485,000 (\$470,000 for the purchase and \$15,000 for the City's initial cost).
- b. Bond interest of between \$400,000 and \$450,000 over the 20 year period of the bond.
- c. Costs to develop and maintain the land.
- d. Loss of taxes, both property and sales, from the proposed developments. We haven't attempted to figure the total amount, but the property tax from the housing for the elderly alone represents a loss of between \$120,000 and \$160,000 over the 20 year period.

Simply put, do you want to spend over \$1 million for land, a good portion of which could very well become a parking lot? If we need a parking lot, and indicators are we do, we can exercise our options and obtain the land for about \$170,000 (principal and interest assuming a bond) or less.

Do we really need the balance of 2½ acres adjacent to the 19½ we already own? That's land that could remain on the tax rolls and add to the city's tax base.

Our city has many other priorities upon which you may need to vote in the future: Funds to develop the open space we already have, such as Twin Pines park itself, the purchase of open space in other parts of the City, or to replace Belameda Pool with a new aquatics facility that will serve the entire city.

Before you decide how you will vote, we urge you to go see what you are being asked to purchase for \$1,000,000, go to city hall to look at the plans for the proposed housing for the elderly, ask questions of city staff and check our figures, and consider carefully the ramifications of your decision. Then case your vote.

Committee Against Proposition 'G'  
 Denny Lawhern, Chairman

# What's Your Opinion?

BEL COUR. 2/23/77

## If Park Bond Fails, We Lose

### Editor:

All Belmont citizens will lose if the Twin Pines bond issue fails.

Can anyone truly believe that putting the remaining Twin Pines acreage on the tax rolls as planned will benefit anyone? The only relief that Belmont citizens will ever have is if the downtown develops. The remaining land is a vital and necessary part of that potential development. If proposition G fails, an apartment for the elderly will wall-off the downtown from the Twin Pines area. Consequently, the downtown will remain virtually as is.

If our interests are truly for the needy elderly, will the needy be able to afford the rates of a care-center that has 'it's own' park? Once established, who ensures that rates are kept reasonable so the middle-class elderly can live in dignity and comfort, let alone the poor and down-trodden.

If tax potential is a major concern, why was and individual(s) and homeowner group(s) so opposed to the Harbor District annexation when a million dollar tax base was at stake. Neighborhood infringement took precedent over tax base—and rightly so.

You might remember when apartments were going to solve all of Belmont's tax problems. The proposed development, if Proposition G fails, differs only slightly from an apartment development.

Remember also the Pullman Estate—a Safeway and a church are now lessening our tax burden.

Passage of Proposition G is vital to the future of downtown development, the future of our Parks and Recreation needs and everyone's future needs.

**Henry J. Rianda**  
Forest Avenue  
Belmont

## Belmont Doesn't Need Development

### Editor:

A letter by Mr. Gilbert T. Armando (*Courier-Bulletin*, Feb. 16) repeats once more a common misconception. What we need to cure our woes in city financing, says Mr. Armando, is more development so as to collect more taxes. He concludes that the proposed apartments for the elderly in Twin Pines (which will be built if Proposition G, the bond initiative to buy these parcels for open space fails) would be a good thing for the city.

The truth is that Belmont cannot become financially self-sustaining from property taxes. And while development is necessary, Belmont people do not want high-density development.

With each new residence, and particularly with each new apartment building, we find ourselves locked permanently into a new shortfall of property tax revenues which should pay the cost of maintaining water and sewage systems, streets, police services, and other things. These costs invariably exceed the tax levies and increase as density mounts. Each shortfall must be made up from other sources.

If the tax from residential property is a great way to meet city expense, then why—in a residential town like Belmont—does the Federal government allocate \$2 million this year (against \$100,000 that we contribute) to rebuild our water mains?

Open space, on the other hand, creates relatively little burden. Once obtained—and the tax load of purchase is really not so great—the cost of maintaining it can be kept small. And the resource of open space is needed.

It is true that commercial property, if it is a type that generates a high volume of sales tax, might give our city

treasury a boost. But Mr. Armando's letter misleads his reader. The proposed development in Twin Pines is in no way commercial. What the owner proposes and is given permission to build, if the bond measure fails, is apartments. This can even become a tax-free enterprise, and the property thus taken from the tax rolls. This is about the worst kind of structure we could have in terms of paying its way in city costs.

Special problems in Belmont require that we keep our population density as low as we can, while exercising a fair and reasonable policy toward new construction. For example, if we cannot check the increasing flow of traffic on Ralston Avenue, we might soon have to place a traffic control light in front of the Twin Pines exit—by no means an insignificant expense. Or worse, we could be pushed again for an overpass of Ralston across El Camino and the railroad—a project that would be both esthetically wrong and very costly.

These are some of the reasons why open space at Twin Pines is really the cheap way to go. Let's approve proposition G!

**John B. Miller**  
Sunnyslope  
Belmont

## Councilors Fulfilling Promises

### Editor:

At the last council meeting, the new councilpersons were accused of not keeping campaign promises. They were accused of deliberately raising our taxes by urging us to vote yes on Proposition G.

It seems to me that what they are doing is allowing us, for once, to decide not only whether we are going to raise our own taxes by \$5.70 a year for an \$80,000 home, but exactly how that money will be spent.

They are also keeping their campaign promises to try to reduce construction and encourage retention and acquisition of open space. For less than the price of one movie a year, we can buy open space and flat, recreationally-usable, wind-free land for us to use now and for generations to enjoy.

**Sue Teising.**

## Land Is Not Worth Price

### Editor:

Along with many other Belmont citizens I signed the petition to acquire the additional parcels of land adjacent to Twin Pines Park long before all financial facts were known.

The price we are now asked to pay is approximately \$140,000 per acre for three plus acres; this is not a bargain price by any yardstick. Assessable land of this great value within the narrow tax base of Belmont belongs on the tax rolls!

Many needs (such as children's parks, Belameda Pool, tennis courts) tug at our property tax dollars. With 19 acres of park at Twin Pines it seems we have more than satisfied the need for open space. An additional three plus acres of more of the same strikes me as a loss of our sense of priorities.

I urge the citizens of Belmont to vote No on Proposition G.

**Charles W. Paetzke**  
Carmelita  
Belmont

## Figures Misleading in 'No' Pamphlet

Editor: BEL COUR. 2/23/77

I have just read the pamphlet that will be enclosed with the Sample Ballots for the March 8 election which contains the official arguments for and against public acquisition of the remaining undeveloped acreage adjacent to Twin Pines Park. Fearing that this brief pamphlet may be the sole basis for decision on the part of many voters, I feel compelled to raise some questions regarding the argument against as stated therein.

To begin with the argument, whose signers purport to have done extensive studies of the land under consideration, states the acreage to be 2.5 acres when it is, in fact, 3.27 acres.

Then the voter is advised in boldface, no uncertain terms that acquisition of the land will cost "well over \$1 million." But, except for the basic price of the land, the figures cited to arrive at the over \$1 million." But, except for the basic price of the land, the figures cited to arrive at the over \$1 million sum are all either mathematically incorrect, misrepresented, or both. In the first place, the bond interest at full 20-year amortization would be some \$326,000 not the \$400,000 as the bonds could conceivably be amortized in less than 20 years.

Also included in the argument's total figure is a "loss of taxes, both property and sales, from the proposed developments." Since the major portion of the proposed development is a 94-unit Senior Acute Care Center and the remainder is a 50-unit Senior Care apartment building, likelihood of its generating much sales tax revenue seems rather remote. The statement that the loss in property taxes on the 50-unit apartment building alone would be \$6,000-\$8,000 a year is again mathematically incorrect since, in fact, the property tax income to the city on the entire \$2.5 million, 144-unit development calculates at roughly \$5,000 a year at the present .81 Belmont tax rate.

However, the even more important question should be, what would be the net revenue to the city after city services are provided to the development? An extensive study commissioned by the city of Palo Alto in 1970 to shed some light on this very question showed that of 22 developments of various kinds and densities studied, none yielded a positive net cash flow to the city.

And there is yet another ticklish question relative to what property tax revenue this particular this particular development might or might not generate. According to the tax assessor's office, all present senior care facilities in San Mateo County are non-profit and therefore tax exempt. Although this development as presently planned is a taxable entity, the developer, when asked, could not guarantee that it would not become non-profit at some future date.

Back to the Palo Alto study, there was a further conclusion that relates to the dollar-and-cents theme of the Argument Against Proposition G. Namely, that in terms of increasing the capacity of and maintaining public facilities to accommodate a development, the cost to the taxpayers in the long run was from 50 percent (one acre residential) to 150 percent (apartments) as much as the cost of purchasing the same land for open space through 30 year bonds at 6 percent. In other words, the community's commitment to the bonds is relatively short lived, but its commitment to the sewers is forever. And yes, I purposely chose that particular public facility by way of example since we are currently footing the bill, \$350,000 worth, to replace that Belmont public facility known as the San Juan Sewer Pump Station.

Finally the argument against Proposition G advises us to vote no on this open space purchase because "our community has many other priorities you may need to vote on in the future." As I bear witness daily to the current building boom in Belmont, I pray that these "other priorities" will appear on a ballot soon so that I might have the opportunity to vote my tax dollars toward better library facilities, a community pool, a city-owned playing field, and the purchase of natural sanctuaries rather than toward stoplights, asphalt, and sewers.

"priority" that has made it to the ballot, and that not without a long and hard-fought battle led by the citizens of the McDougal area.

JoAnn Berridge  
Belmont Heights

## Council Shouldn't Take Sides On Issue

Editor:

The unmitigated gall of our Belmont City Council really takes the cake! Here they are, self righteous and self heralded as being the people's council, always being sympathetic to and ready to listen to their voices, and they have the nerve to brazenly come out and endorse proposition G.

Are they too dense to realize that they were elected by, and are therefore responsible, to all the people, those who might not think the purchase of additional property downtown a good idea as well as those who do? Don't they realize that common sense, good judgment and propriety dictates that they should remain neutral in this issue? Or are they so calloused and determined to obtain the acreage that they deliberately disregard their responsibilities as elected representatives and cast all caution to the winds?

If they were truly democratic in their actions, they would be sure that all arguments, both pro and con, were presented so the electorate would know exactly what they were voting on. Instead they unanimously cast their lot in with the side they obviously favor. And they dare criticize previous councils for their actions?

If this is another example of their conduct, then the voters of Belmont certainly voted in a fine bunch of people to conduct the affairs of the City.

Henry Wiesman  
Irwin Street  
Belmont

## A 'Yes' Vote Is Only Way

Editor:

The most precious commodities are those that are found in very limited quantity. Today in Belmont, vacant, green land accessible to all its citizens both young and old, is such a commodity. On March 8, we have an opportunity to help alleviate that shortage by voting yes on Proposition G. If this land is not acquired three-story apartments will rise and forever ruin the serenity and secluded atmosphere of Twin Pines Park.

The cost is fixed and minimal in comparison to the value that will be derived. Voters should consider this an an investment, consider it as part of your deed, an extra piece of land for your use. In an overcrowded world, we can all use a little more space, not another apartment building.

We the citizens must vote yes on those measures that will preserve the quality of our environment. It is evident that we are the only ones that can. Government certainly will never do it.

We must preserve what little open space we have. This is our last chance, the time for voting grows short. But not nearly as short as we find ourselves on green space. As a wise man said, "Not blind opposition to progress, but opposition to blind progress."

A yes vote on G is the only way.

Ronald M. Rosso  
Sunnysore Avenue  
Belmont

# Council Should Have Been Neutral

BEL. COUR. 2/23/77

Editor:  
At the last City Council meeting the Council passed a resolution supporting Proposition G, a measure allowing the purchase of 3.27 acres adjacent to Twin Pines for public use. This resolution is a policy statement from your elected officials recommending that you purchase 3.27 acres for aprox. \$900,000, principal and interest. This same Council vigorously attempted to purchase this land through other means (i.e. selling Belmont Marina Park), and therefore avoiding a bond election. Their endeavors failed and have now resorted to a bond election.

The use of the 3.27 acres was a part of a study reviewed by both the Park & Recreation and Planning Commission for several months and conducted several public hearings for public input. the study entitled, "Twin Pines Specific Plan," included all of Twin Pines Park and adjacent areas. Both Commissions recommended that the 3.27 acres be used for elderly housing and for commercial use that would be compatible to the park. The plan has not been discussed at a public hearing at the council level. The council is aware of the plan and the actions taken by both Commissions. With this knowledge the Council passed judgment, without review of the plan and without considering the Park & Recreation and Planning Commissions recommendations.

This kind of action is a bias approach to the decision making process, and is detrimental to the welfare of our community. A Council must review the facts, examine the documentation and solicit public comment, prior to making a major decision. Instead your council waived this process and made a decision based on their own special interest and the advise of a special interest group. The council should have remained neutral in this matter and allowed the Citizens of Belmont to decide at the polls on March 8.

Lawrence W. Stueck  
Lake Road  
Belmont



# 'Yes' on Prop. G In Belmont

*S.M. 71985 2/26/77*  
In a special municipal bond election March 8, Belmont voters will decide on Proposition G which calls for the city to purchase the last remaining land, about three and one-quarter acres, not already included in the original purchases for Twin Pines Park.

Approval of the ballot measure would have the City of Belmont incur a bonded indebtedness in the principal amount of \$485,000 to acquire this land adjacent to the easterly boundary of Twin Pines Park. The Belmont City Council formally expressed its strong support for Proposition G at its February 14 meeting, stating it is vital to complete Twin Pines Park which "94 per cent of the Belmont voters started in 1972."

Belmont has already made a substantial investment in Twin Pines property, purchasing 17 acres in 1972 and an additional two and one-half acres in 1974. This proposed purchase would increase by 50 per cent the

level, recreationally-usable land of Twin Pines. Under the circumstances, we believe this is clearly a desirable move and that Proposition G should be approved.

The cost of this land purchase to the residents of Belmont has been estimated at approximately \$5.70 a year for the owner of an \$80,000 house. Since this is the last open space resource in this area, we think it is worth it in terms of benefits to present and future generations. The alternative is to lose this valuable open space to apartment development and thus seriously diminish the usefulness and value of Belmont's present investment in Twin Pines Park.

The Times believes that this proposition is clearly in the best interests of Belmont residents, and well worth the proposed cost. We recommend a "Yes" vote on Proposition G in Belmont on March 8.

**\$485,000  
bond issue**

**on ballot**

*RED FOR 7/1/77*  
A \$485,000 bond election on March 8 will result from official acceptance last night by the Belmont City Council of a modified purchase agreement by the city with owners of property.

The bond issue will be to purchase 3.27 acres of property adjacent to the easterly boundary of city-owned Twin Pines Park. The city wants the property for open space, park and recreation use.

Options to purchase other portions of property previously had snagged proposed agreement. An agreement of the city and property owners was necessary for an election to take place.

The election will be consolidated with the San Mateo County Board of Education general election.

## Belmont's Measure G worth the investment

*R.C. TRIBUNE 2/14/77*  
Belmont voters will decide a bond proposal (Measure G) at the March 8 election, which, if passed, would preserve 3.27 acres in the heart of the community for open space.

At first glance the cost of the proposal may seem unduly steep: \$485,000. But put in perspective for each property owner in the community it would mean an additional cost of \$5.70 a year for 20 years for the owner of an \$80,000 home.

Property in question is named Twin Pines for a rest home which occupied part of the land in past years. The city in 1974 obtained 2.5 acres and now seeks to obtain the remainder of the land for recreational and governmental use.

Belmont does not have an overabundance of open space. The city suffered considerably in the late 1950s and 1960s when there was a rush to construct multiple dwelling units that have taxed the city's streets causing traffic problems.

Now, there is a desire among

many in the community to slow construction of apartments. These people want to preserve the beautifully landscaped area along Ralston Avenue for public use.

Current owner of the property has plans for a three-story, 144-unit senior citizens housing development if the city does not purchase the land. Such a project could cause further traffic problems and eliminate one of the last available open spaces in the community available for the public.

Another factor is the critical point to which Belmont has arrived in providing sewage and water services for its residents. There is a serious danger of overloading both if further growth is permitted.

With open space becoming more scarce, the Twin Pines property seems a logical addition for Belmont. The cost for each taxpayer is insignificant when one considers the potential benefit.

The Tribune recommends "Yes" on Measure G.

## If Park Bond Fails, Money Not Budgeted

*BEL. COUR. 1/26/77*

If the bond election to purchase additional land in Twin Pines park fails, the city council has not budgeted for some election expenses, according to City Clerk James McLaughlin.

Provisions have been made to pay for the bond council fees, printing costs and other election expenses if voters decide to purchase the 2.27 acres for \$470,000, said City Manager James DeChaine.

The city should pay the legal expenses, bond council costs, the price of ballot materials and a pro

rata share of the election, costs of which are being shared with the Belmont School District, Mr. DeChaine said.

If the election fails, the bond council will charge "not any less than \$1,100," Mr. DeChaine outlined.

According to Mr. McLaughlin, the council did not set aside any money for election costs when adopting the budget last August.

"If it fails, they have to get the money from somewhere," he summarized.

## City Councilors Call for Meeting

*BEL. COUR. 1/5/77*

A special meeting of the Belmont City Council was called for 6 p.m., Jan. 6 to ratify the agreement between Dr. Albert Voris and the council to sell the 3.27 acres adjoining Twin Pines Park.

With Jan. 7 set as the deadline for Dr. Voris to

return the agreement, he told the Belmont Courier-Bulletin that he needed two more co-owners' signatures.

If all eight owners agree to sell the property to the city, there will be a March 8 bond election.

If Dr. Voris does not get the approval or the bond issue fails, the city is working on a plan to purchase approximately 1/2 acre which sits astride an access road to Ralston Avenue which the police department has been using.

Belmont has the option to buy one or more of the four small access parcels, explained City Manager James DeChaine.

If the park purchase fails, Dr. Voris has plans to build a 54-bed senior retirement home on the property.

At the 6 p.m. meeting, which is open to the public and to be held in the study chambers, councilors will discuss ratifying the agreement and plans for the election.

At the Dec. 13 city council meeting it was estimated that passage of the bonds to buy the \$470,000 property would add about four cents to the present city tax rate of \$1.80 per \$100 of assessed valuation.

Dr. Voris' attorneys did redraft the language in the agreement concerning parcels that may be acquired, but those changes did not worry City Attorney Ken Dickerson.

## City Manager Outlines Park Bond Issue Plans

*BEL. COUR. 1/19/77*

If Belmont voters accept the Twin Pines Park Proposition G, it will cost the city \$470,000 to purchase approximately 3.27 acres and \$15,000 for election expenses, said City Manager James DeChaine.

Two parcels of land may be bought from Dr. Albert Voris and seven co-owners.

One parcel will be devoted to open space and the other to park and recreation purposes, open space and "uses related to the foregoing," the manager said.

It has been estimated, Mr. DeChaine continued, that it will cost the owner of an \$80,000 home another \$5.70 in taxes per year.

The original 17.12 acres for the park purchased in 1972 after a bond issue. It cost \$650,000 for the land and \$30,000 in improvements, expenses and election costs, said Mr. DeChaine.

Another 2.5 acres was added on in 1974 when the city council used \$350,000 in revenue sharing funds to buy the land, he added.

If citizens do not agree to purchase the land, Dr. Voris has announced plans to build a senior care complex on the property.

In the arguments for and against the bond issue for the March 8 election, Densel Lawhern, a Belmont planning commissioner, Stella O'Donnell, Floyd E. Sampson, Lawrence W. Stueck and Edward Cunningham signed the No on Proposition G. Donald Armstrong, a former planning commissioner, Jane Curry, Robert Hoffman, Frank O'Neill and Susan Teising signed the Yes on Proposition G.

# Belmont Park Purchase

*DEL COURIER 2/23/77*

As the two sides view it, the Twin Pines issue is the age-old problem of development butting heads with open space needs. And that issue will be thrown in the laps of Belmont residents on March 8, when they will decide whether to spend \$485,000 to purchase 3.27 acres adjacent to Twin Pines Park.

If the bond issue, Proposition G, does not pass, owner Dr. Albert Voris has announced plans to build a three-story, senior-care facility on the property.

The original Twin Pines park was purchased in 1972 when residents voted to buy the 17.12 acres for \$650,000. An additional \$30,000 for election costs was added on, according to City Manager James DeChaine.

In 1974, the city council voted to spend \$350,000 to purchase an additional 2.5 acres.

**\$812,00**

If it takes 20 years to pay off the bond, interest will

amount to \$327,000, with the total purchase costing approximately \$812,000.

According to city officials, this will mean \$5.70 per year for an \$80,000 home, assessed valuation.

One side says the city would lose tax money if the facility is not built while the other side claims the county would not tax the senior care center.

According to Al Flanagan in the San Mateo County Tax Collectors Office, the owner of a senior-care facility would have to file for an exemption on property taxes, which would then have to be approved by the county and state officials. Until such an exemption is approved, property taxes must be paid, he added.

## LINES DRAWN

Now, the battle lines are drawn. Those urging a yes vote on Proposition G say it will complete the park, provide

# Heading for Polls

flat land for playing and save rare open space from development.

Those urging a no vote on the proposition claim the city can use the tax money from a senior care facility, that slightly under \$1 million will be spent in the next 20 years for the two parcels and that money is needed for other priorities.

The city council has come out for the purchase, squaring off against the parks and recreation department and the planning commission.

## TO BUY PARCEL

If the bond issue fails, the city has, according to some, agreed to purchase part of one parcel for \$85,000 to ensure a parking lot for the police station.

"Belmont has other priorities in the city that we need to deal with, it's about time we did," said Densel Lawhern,

chairman of the No on G committee and a Belmont Planning Commissioner.

He claimed purchase of the land could cause a loss of \$6,000 to \$8,000 in taxes if a senior care facility is not built.

And, Mr. Lawhern claimed, purchase of the land will cost slightly under \$1 million.

## FLATLAND

According to Meg Buckley, a member of the Yes on G committee, the purchase will give the city flat land to build a playground on and additional open space.

Those urging a yes vote also feel the possible senior care facility will increase traffic and require more maintenance and protection costs and said the facility may be tax-exempt.

The purchase will increase the "level, recreationally usable land of Twin Pines" by over 50 per cent, according to a Yes on G flyer.

S.M. Times 3/17/77

# Funds Provided for Old Belmont Lodge

An extra \$4,912 was approved for remodeling of the old Lodge Building at Twin Pines Park Monday night, the Belmont City Council sending the figure to the architect for his concurrence.

Ken Wilks, a spokesman for the contractor, W.A. Moroney, Inc. of San Mateo, told the council his crew had determined that the current remodeling project could use another \$13,456 worth of work. Moroney presently is working under a \$78,450 contract for refurbishing of the building for community use.

Most of the proposed new additions to the worklist are minor, such as additional tiling, carpeting and some partition changes, but Wilks emphasized the \$4,912 item for demolition

of part of a wall to eliminate dry rot.

The next most costly item was a net \$1,559 for sanding, staining and refinishing of the hardwood floors, but that along with the other items was put over until money could be found, perhaps in next year's revenue-sharing funds.

The council would make a "loan" of \$4,912 from the Belameda Pool building fund, which came from this year's revenue-sharing money, to be paid back later.

In other business the council:

- Approved two new stopsigns on Elmer Street at the southeast and northwest corners of O'Neill Avenue.

- Authorized investment of city money in a Local Agency Investment Fund.

- Approved a new City Hall telephone system.

- Upheld a Planning Commission denial of a variance for Richard Gaspar, for more floor area than permitted by ordinance on a lot at 1803 Hillman Avenue. A petition with 86 signatures opposed the variance.

- Adopted an ordinance allowing bingo games for charity within the city.

- Appointed W. Howard Mann, a former planning commissioner, to the new Citizens Advisory Committee.

- Appointed Elizabeth Oldt, a former City Hall secretary, to the city Personnel Board.

- Continued until April 11 a public hearing on a plan by Gilbert T. Armando to subdivide a 2.2-acre parcel at 1801 Ralston Ave. into six lots, five without access to a public street.

S.M. Times 2/7/77

# Arts Council Opens Gallery at Twin Pines

A gallery shop for year-round browsing, displays of pottery, jewelry, poetry books, art post cards, and sales has been opened by the San Mateo County Arts Council at the Twin Pines Cultural Center, 1219 Ralston Ave., Belmont.

Hours are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, and from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday.

Sales proceeds go to the artist with a small portion to the mini-gallery project.

On exhibit are pottery by Mary Hammond and Bonney Goldstein of San Mateo and Lynn Maddox of Portola Valley; poetry books by James W. McLaughlin, Belmont, Jose Antonio Burciaga, Menlo Park, and Bernice Zamora of Stanford; ceramic jewelry by Ludmilla Tichy of San

Mateo, and reproductions of paintings by Toby Judity Klayman.

The shop is run by Mar-ion Mendelson, gallery coordinator for the San Mateo County Arts Council, a nonprofit organization.

S.M. Times 2/8/77

# Belmont Bond Foes To Meet Wednesday

Some 30 Belmont residents opposed to acquisition by a bond measure of an additional 3.27 acres of land at Twin Pines Park met last week in an effort to map strategy to defeat the ballot measure.

Appointed general chairperson of the group was city Planning Commissioner Denny Lawhern. Larry Stueck was named publicity and speaker chairperson, Stella O'Donnell treasurer and finance chairperson, Kirsten Anderson signs chairperson and Rose Oswirk precinct chairperson.

The group discussed what they considered the best uses of the land, the need for senior housing, revenue considerations and land use planning.

The committee is to meet again Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. at 1241 Hiller St., Belmont. Persons interested in helping to defeat Proposition G or in making a financial contribution are invited to attend.

## Voris Moving Ahead To Develop Land

*BEL. COURIER 3/16/77*  
The fate of the 3.27 acres of land that some residents wanted the city to buy and add to Twin Pines Park now rests in the hands of owner Dr. Albert Voris.

And, Dr. Voris told the Belmont Courier-Bulletin, he and the other seven co-owners are getting final plans ready to submit to the Belmont Planning Commission Board of Design.

He estimated that it will take about two months to finalize plans for a 141-bed senior care center, which they plan to build.

The owners received a use permit in December, 1976, to develop the property off Ralson Avenue and the city has an option to buy four sub-parcels, totalling about one-half acre.

The city cannot exercise an option to buy the 22,500 square feet for approximately \$84,150 until Dr. Voris has the building permit "in my hands."

According to City Manager James DeChaine, the city council can decide whether it wants to buy one or all of the four subparcels at the north end of the property, some of which may provide an access road for the police station.

"It will take a while before the council fully comes to grips with what we are going to need, now or later," the manager said.

## *S.M. Times 2/16/77* **Belmont Council Backs Park Bond**

The Belmont City Council has unanimously passed a resolution of support for Proposition G, the March ballot measure that would allow a bond issue for the purchase of an additional 3.27 acres at publicly owned Twin Pines Park.

The measure was tacked onto the end of a lengthy agenda at the request of Councilman Walter Worthge Jr., an active supporter of the bond measure.

Mayor William Hardwick was absent from the meeting but later said he "certainly would not oppose such a measure."

"It would be beneficial to the community, if that's what the people want to do," Hardwick said. "It would be a definite addition to the park."

The resolution passed by the council concluded "... be it resolved that the City Council of the City of Belmont strongly supports Proposition G ... on the March 8, 1977 ballot and urges a YES vote from all Belmont voters."

## Art Classes Held At Twin Pines Park

*Bel. Cour. 9/7/77*  
Peninsula Art Association, with many local residents, is sponsoring a 10-week session of art classes and a poetry class, beginning Sept. 13, and on varying following dates, at the association's studio in the Mansion at Twin Pines Park, 1219 Ralston Ave., in Belmont.

A life-drawing workshop, using professional model, begins the session. Three classes in all-media painting for beginning to advanced students, a class in drawing, in watercolor, in anatomy for artists, in sculpture, in poetry, and a Saturday class for talented children begin on following dates; in addition, an all-day critique for artists and craftsman, working in all media is scheduled for Oct. 15.

Award-winning artists,

and trained teachers who will instruct classes are Earl Pierce, Charlotte Pribuss, Lorraine Schreiber, Helen Morrison, Nancy Sully, Sheila Dorman, Rose Roskin, James Smyth, and Leonard Breger.

Four 10-class sessions are scheduled for the year fall-77 to fall-78. Classes are small and early registration is advised in order to secure a place in class. Fee are prorated for late entry in classes while space remains.

Class schedules may be secured by calling for them in person at the San Mateo Arts Council office, or at bulletin boards in the public libraries, or by phoning Mrs. Wm. Page Wilson, Mrs. N. D. Jacobson, or Helen C. Morrison.



IT WAS A BUSY DAY at Twin Pines Park last Sunday. Allen Miller (left) a geology student and an amazingly talented novice potter, opened a two-week Raku pottery exhibit at the Manor building, while Councilwoman Pam Ketcham served up a plate of hot spaghetti in a public spaghetti feed at the Lodge building. Miller, whose work looked consistently seasoned and occasionally spectacular, has thrown pots for only 11 months.

*BEL. COUR. 5/10/77*

— Charlie Hall photos

# Council Permits Spending For Lodge Building Repair

*BEL. COURIER 3/30/77*

A total of \$19,811 was borrowed from the dwindling Belameda Pool Project fund to pay for additional work required on the lodge building in Twin Pines Park at the March 28 Belmont City

Council meeting.

Councilor Pam Ketcham cast the single no vote against appropriating the money.

Councilor Bob Jones was not present.

According to Ken

Wilkins, president of W.A. Moroney, Inc. in San Mateo, the contractor in charge of the project, the additions were necessary.

The council had approved spending approximately \$4,000 to repair extensive dry rot damage in the building at the March 14 meeting.

Ath the meeting, the council approved spending \$2,216 for handicapped facilities in the bathrooms, including grab bars and lighting.

An additional \$1,801 was approved in the furnace room to prevent damage from possible flooding.

Councilors also decided to spend \$1,518 for repair to the dining room ceiling and \$1,559 to uncover and renovate a hitherto undiscovered hardwood floor. Another \$875 was allocated for staining beams in the dining room and \$188 will go into cutting an opening

(Continued to page 6)

## -Rates-

(Continued from page 1) between the kitchen and dining room.

The lodge building will be used by various city and private groups.

The council decided that the lodge building could do without carpeting in the multipurpose room and a gas fireplace, thereby cutting out \$1,134 from the proposed change order.

The money taken from the pool project will be repaid by the city.

As Councilor William Hardwick saw it, the council "is committed to" the lodge building.

"I am beginning to see this as a kind of 1/4 inch ester house," Councilor Ketcham countered.

## Builder Seeking Money for Lodge

*BEL. COUR. 3/16/77*  
Unforeseen problems may add another \$13,456 to repair and renovate Twin Pines Lodge, reported Ken Wilkes, the contractor with W.A. Moroney Corp.

Mr. Wilkes informed the Belmont City Council at the March 14 meeting that dry rot, floor problems and changes in the sprinkler system will require the additional money.

The council authorized the expenditure of \$4912, to come from the Belameda Pool Project fund, to repair dry rot in the walls.

The money spent will be returned to the fund, Mayor Hardwick told the

audience, but the work is necessary and cannot be delayed.

The city staff was directed to look into the figures prepared by Mr. Wilkes, and if there is no problem, W.A. Moroney may go ahead to remove the dry rot and repair the roof.

The staff and council will look into the other changes before the March 28 meeting.

W. A. Moroney won the contract with a bid of \$78,450 on Jan. 25.

# 30 Conditions on Twin Pines Changes

S.M. TIMES 9/20/77

The Belmont Planning Commission Monday night agreed to recommend a use permit be issued to the San Mateo County Arts Council for improvement of the Twin Pines Manor building, but tied the recommendation to about 30 conditions.

A principal condition was that the lease agreement between the council and city must be reviewed at the end of one year to determine if the conditions have been fully complied with.

Other conditions will be reviewed within the next few days by the chairman of the Planning Commission, John DeFelice, and put into a final draft.

Seven conditions were asked by the city building inspector. Nine conditions resulted from a visit of the commission to the building.

Ten conditions were formulated by Planning Commissioner Densel Lawhern. These include specific requests on variances to be sought, loading and parking supervision, duration of the use permit, regulation of sales and subleasing,

traffic control, bans on night accommodation, and supervision of employes working on the manor building by the Park and Recreation Department.

Commissioner Steve Vartan offered several on safety.

Vartan also requested that a plan be presented delineating historic areas of the manor building, including fixtures and artifacts.

The commissioners indicated support for, but took no direct action on, a proposal by Eve Sterry, a former City Council member, that a historic element be added to the city's General Plan, presently under review by the City Council. Mrs. Sterry also asked that an overseeing committee for the historic element be established.

Votes on the project were unanimous.

## Arts Use Permit Subject to Rehearing

S.M. TIMES 9/27/77  
The use permit granted a week ago to the San Mateo County Arts Council for its facilities at Belmont's Twin Pines Park was subjected Monday night to a full City Council rehearing Oct. 12.

Vice Mayor Walt Worthge made the motion to review the action of the city Planning Commission, citing a law which allows the council to so act within 10 days of a planning commission decision.

The council voted unanimously to hold the rehearing.

Worthge moved to review the action "relative to...conditions."

The Planning Commission, in granting a use permit to allow continued occupancy of the city-owned Twin Pines manor building, had attached about 30 conditions to the permit.

Some had been requested by city authorities to guarantee that city standards would be met, while others involved safety and still others preservation.

The council has the authority to remove any or all of the conditions.



# Whats Your Opinion?

BEL. COURIER 2/23/77

## Figures Misleading in 'No' Pamphlet

Editor:

I have just read the pamphlet that will be enclosed with the Sample Ballots for the March 8 election which contains the official arguments for and against public acquisition of the remaining undeveloped acreage adjacent to Twin Pines Park. Fearing that this brief pamphlet may be the sole basis for decision on the part of many voters, I feel compelled to raise some questions regarding the argument against as stated therein.

To begin with the argument, whose signers purport to have done extensive studies of the land under consideration, states the acreage to be 2.5 acres when it is, in fact, 3.27 acres.

Then the voter is advised in boldface, no uncertain terms that acquisition of the land will cost "well over \$1 million." But, except for the basic price of the land, the figures cited to arrive at the over \$1 million." But, except for the basic price of the land, the figures cited to arrive at the over \$1 million sum are all either mathematically incorrect, misrepresented, or both. In the first place, the bond interest at full 20-year amortization would be some \$326,000 not the \$400,000 as the bonds could conceivably be amortized in less than 20 years.

Also included in the argument's total figure is a "loss of taxes, both property and sales, from the proposed developments." Since the major portion of the proposed development is a 94-unit Senior Acute Care Center and the remainder is a 50-unit Senior Care apartment building, likelihood of its generating much sales tax revenue seems rather remote. The statement that the loss in property taxes on the 50-unit apartment building alone would be \$6,000-\$8,000 a year is again mathematically incorrect since, in fact, the property tax income to the city on the entire \$2.5 million, 144-unit development calculates at roughly \$5,000 a year at the present .81 Belmont tax rate.

However, the even more important question should be, what would be the net revenue to the city after city services are provided to the development? An extensive study commissioned by the city of Palo Alto in 1970 to shed some light on this very question showed that of 22 developments of various kinds and densities studied, none yielded a positive net cash flow to the city.

And there is yet another ticklish question relative to what property tax revenue this particular development might or might not generate. According to the tax assessor's office, all present senior care facilities in San Mateo County are non-profit and therefore tax exempt. Although this development as presently planned is a taxable entity, the developer, when asked, could not guarantee that it would not become non-profit at some future date.

Back to the Palo Alto study, there was a further conclusion that relates to the dollar-and-cents theme of the Argument Against Proposition G. Namely, that in terms of increasing the capacity of and maintaining public facilities to accommodate a development, the cost to the taxpayers in the long run was from 50 percent (one acre residential) to 150 percent (apartments) as much as the cost of purchasing the same land for open space through 30 year bonds at 6 percent. In other words, the community's commitment to the bonds is relatively short lived, but its commitment to the sewers is forever. And yes, I purposely chose that particular public facility by way of example since we are currently footing the bill, \$350,000 worth, to replace that Belmont public facility known as the San Juan Sewer Pump Station.

Finally the argument against Proposition G advises us to vote no on this open space purchase because "our community has many other priorities you may need to vote on in the future." As I bear witness daily to the current building boom in Belmont, I pray that these "other priorities" will appear on a ballot soon so that I might have the opportunity to vote my tax dollars toward better library facilities, a community pool, a city-owned playing field, and the purchase of natural sanctuaries rather than toward stoplights, asphalt, and sewers. Meanwhile, I will vote Yes on Proposition G, the only "priority" that has made it to the ballot, and that not without a long and hard-fought battle led by the citizens of the McDougal area.

JoAnn Berridge  
Belmont Heights

## Council Should Have Been Neutral

Editor:

At the last City Council meeting the Council passed a resolution supporting Proposition G, a measure allowing the purchase of 3.27 acres adjacent to Twin Pines for public use. This resolution is a policy statement from your elected officials recommending that you purchase 3.27 acres for approx. \$900,000, principal and interest. This same Council vigorously attempted to purchase this land through other means (i.e. selling Belmont Marina Park), and therefore avoiding a bond election. Their endeavors failed and have now resorted to a bond election.

The use of the 3.27 acres was a part of a study reviewed by both the Park & Recreation and Planning Commission for several months and conducted several public hearings for public input. The study entitled, "Twin Pines Specific Plan," included all of Twin Pines Park and adjacent areas. Both Commissions recommended that the 3.27 acres be used for elderly housing and for commercial use that would be compatible to the park. The plan has not been discussed at a public hearing at the council level. The council is aware of the plan and the actions taken by both Commissions. With this knowledge the Council passed judgment, without review of the plan and without considering the Park & Recreation and Planning Commissions recommendations.

This kind of action is a bias approach to the decision making process, and is detrimental to the welfare of our community. A Council must review the facts, examine the documentation and solicit public comment, prior to making a major decision. Instead your council waived this process and made a decision based on their own special interest and the advise of a special interest group. The council should have remained neutral in this matter and allowed the Citizens of Belmont to decide at the polls on March 8.

Lawrence W. Stueck  
Lake Road  
Belmont

## Committee Urges No Vote on G

*BEL. COURIER 2/23/77*

Editor,

On Tuesday, March 8 we, the citizens of Belmont will decide whether or not the City will purchase the 3.27 acres located on the east and south of Twin Pines Park. Citizens should look at both sides of the issue before they cast their vote. What are they?

If you vote No, a private housing development for the elderly of our City, which will not be tax exempt, will be constructed on the southerly portion of the property.

It will provide accommodations for the elderly adjacent to transportation and to the downtown area for shopping. Minimum requirements for city services: police, fire, water, schools, etc.

It will increase our tax base. The new facility will have an assessed evaluation of \$2 million, and the estimated property tax alone will be between \$6,000 and \$8,000 a year.

The city will have four options under which we can purchase some or all of the remaining property. The cost for the entire parcel is \$35,000. The amount we purchase can be used for any purpose: a site for a future community building, a parking lot to supplement the city owned property, or anything we may decide upon.

If we don't exercise any or all of our options, it will be developed commercial to augment our downtown business area and will further increase our tax base.

If you vote Yes, we will purchase over three acres of undeveloped land which can only be developed for the city's use, whether a portion of it be a parking lot (for which there is currently much talk), a site for a community building, or just plain open space.

Cost? Not \$485,000, but over \$1 million over the twenty year period of the bond issue!

a. Bond cost of \$485,000 (\$470,000 for the purchase and \$15,000 for the City's initial cost).

b. Bond interest of between \$400,000 and \$450,000 over the 20 year period of the bond.

c. Costs to develop and maintain the land.

d. Loss of taxes, both property and sales, from the proposed developments. We haven't attempted to figure the total amount, but the property tax from the housing for the elderly alone represents a loss of between \$120,000 and \$160,000 over the 20 year period.

Simply put, do you want to spend over \$1 million for land, a good portion of which could very well become a parking lot? If we need a parking lot, and indicators are we do, we can exercise our options and obtain the land for about \$170,000 (principal and interest assuming a bond) or less.

Do we really need the balance of 2½ acres adjacent to the 19½ we already own? That's land that could remain on the tax rolls and add to the city's tax base.

Our city has many other priorities upon which you may need to vote in the future: Funds to develop the open space we already have, such as Twin Pines park itself, the purchase of open space in other parts of the City, or to replace Belameda Pool with a new aquatics facility that will serve the entire city.

Before you decide how you will vote, we urge you to go see what you are being asked to purchase for \$1,000,000, go to city hall to look at the plans for the proposed housing for the elderly, ask questions of city staff and check our figures, and consider carefully the ramifications of your decision. Then cast your vote.

**Committee Against Proposition 'G'**  
Denny Lawhern, Chairman

## Council Shouldn't Take Sides On Issue

Editor:

The unmitigated gall of our Belmont City Council really takes the cake! Here they are, self righteous and self heralded as being the people's council, always being sympathetic to and ready to listen to their voices, and they have the nerve to brazenly come out and endorse proposition G.

Are they too dense to realize that they were elected by, and are therefore responsible, to all the people, those who might not think the purchase of additional property downtown a good idea as well as those who do? Don't they realize that common sense, good judgment and propriety dictates that they should remain neutral in this issue? Or are they so calloused and determined to obtain the acreage that they deliberately disregard their responsibilities as elected representatives and cast all caution to the winds?

If they were truly democratic in their actions, they would be sure that all arguments, both pro and con, were presented so the electorate would know exactly what they were voting on. Instead they unanimously cast their lot in with the side they obviously favor. And they dare criticize previous councils for their actions?

If this is another example of their conduct, then the voters of Belmont certainly voted in a fine bunch of people to conduct the affairs of the City.

**Henry Wiesman**  
Irwin Street  
Belmont

## A 'Yes' Vote Is Only Way

Editor:

The most precious commodities are those that are found in very limited quantity. Today in Belmont, vacant, green land accessible to all its citizens both young and old, is such a commodity. On March 8, we have an opportunity to help alleviate that shortage by voting yes on Proposition G. If this land is not acquired three-story apartments will rise and forever ruin the serenity and secluded atmosphere of Twin Pines Park.

The cost is fixed and minimal in comparison to the value that will be derived. Voters should consider this an investment, consider it as part of your deed, an extra piece of land for your use. In an overcrowded world, we can all use a little more space, not another apartment building.

We the citizens must vote yes on those measures that will preserve the quality of our environment. It is evident that we are the only ones that can. Government certainly will never do it.

We must preserve what little open space we have. This is our last chance, the time for voting grows short. But not nearly as short as we find ourselves on green space. As a wise man said, "Not blind opposition to progress, but opposition to blind progress."

A yes vote on G is the only way.

**Ronald M. Rosso**  
Sunnyshore Avenue  
Belmont

# Debate Begins on Fut

By LIN DAY

The future of historic Twin Pines Park and buildings was probed only lightly Thursday night during a special Belmont City Council meeting called to gather ideas on what to do with the cultural center and park.

It became apparent during the course of a long evening before a packed turnout that spilled into several rooms of the old manse that Belmont today is preoccupied with attempting to overcome an intense wave of vandalism that ripped the buildings during the time of acquisition.

Dozens of artists and cultural organization leaders were on hand as spokesmen spelled out their battle to restore the various buildings to a condition suitable for a combined city and county cultural center.

They told of shattered walls, windows and ceilings, knobless doors, leaking roofs, useless bathrooms and other inconveniences taken on by the artists.

It became clear that both leasing and renting area organizations and many individual artists had contrib-

uted hundreds of hours of work to rebuild the vandalized premises, and that more work is ahead.

Under terms of the lease arrangement — the San Mateo County Arts Council wants its lease extended to 1980 — both the council and its sublease artist and cultural office tenants paid current bills, such as utilities, and set aside a portion of the total rents for purchase of needed supplies for renovation.

Additionally, \$1,000 was paid into the city general fund.

Most of the rent money, however, has been tapped to fix the windows, walls, ceilings, roofs and other problems.

At the point in the meeting where individuals and associations were to offer recommendations for future uses of Twin Pines, only vague suggestions emerged.

Some felt that all the buildings and grounds purchased by the city the past few years should be used by Belmont residents. The specifics of how and what generally were lacking.

## ure Use of Twin Pines

Arts Council and other cultural leaders pointed out that facilities in the buildings are open at all times to public attendance and that the community is welcome.

The council works closely with the new Belmont Arts Council, with students and others, it was noted.

More and more Belmont gatherings are expected to be held at Twin Pines, one speaker said.

When one resident wondered whether taxpayers are paying the salaries of the Arts Council staff, a nonprofit organization that is county supported, it was pointed out that private gifts and donations amount to much more than the county tax assistance, and that government grants in which the Arts Council has participated dwarf the countywide tax monies.

Frank Balante, city recreation and park director, told of Belmont uses of the room in the manse reserved specifically for this. He told of the expenditure of \$31,500 for lighting, yet to be done.

Parking is a problem, he said.

Belmont residents are becoming aware of the park, he said, and more and more are using it. Belmont gets first priority, he said. He noted that the lodge building of the former Twin Pines Sanitarium is strictly for the community and is geared to handle Belmont groups.

Spokesmen for the lessees said that when they moved in there were about 75 problem areas to be taken on. About half have been resolved, they said.

In the Twin Pines Art Center in old Rebec Hall, 33 artists now have set up individual studios, it was said. Each has redecorated and restored his or her area.

Pat Rianda, past president of the Belmont Arts Council, said that the cultural atmosphere of the new setup resulted last year in 83 artists from Belmont participating in a show, and that the number grew to 93 this year.

Ruth Waters, director of the Rebec Hall Twin Pines Art Center, declared that "hundreds of hours of blood, sweat and tears of the 33 artists had put the building back into good condition."



## Takin' the Load for Free

*BEL. COURIER 2/16/77*  
KURT IBSEN was one of eight Boy Scouts from Troop 305 who asked the city for a service project and were assigned to clearing a trail in Twin Pines Park on Feb. 5. The Ralston seventh-grader is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Ibsen of Belmont. Other boys participating in the project included Guy Purcell, Pat Coyle, Victor Ibsen, Jason

Lawhern, Craig Miller, Jerry Vincent and Danny Burke. They were supervised by Junior Assistant Scout Master Terry Hedlund. They worked most of the day cleaning brush, weeds, leaves and dead wood from the paths and widening the trails.

—Photo by C.J. Marrow

# Studio Tours at New Belmont Art Center

A consortium of 33 artists have created an Art Center out of a derelict building in Belmont's Twin Pines Park. The new Twin Pines Art Center at 1221 Ralston Avenue will officially open on July 24, from noon to 4 p.m. The artists extend an invitation to all interested people to visit the Art Center and tour their working studios and view their projects in progress. The artists will be in their studios during the grand opening.

The Twin Pines Art Center will be open daily from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sundays from noon to 4 p.m., following the opening.

The main building and the studios along the creek are owned by the City of Belmont. Dilapidated and in complete disrepair only four months ago, the buildings were rented by artists who converted what was a patients' residence hall and maintenance shacks.

The artists include painters (all media), sculptors (wood, metal, glass, ceramic), jewelers, stained glass, batik, potters, printmaker, woodworker and weaver. Classes in stained glass, Indian Folk pottery, and sculpture are already being held in the Art Center.

Nicolai Larsen, painter; Grant Larson, sculptor; Docey Lewis, weaver; Sergei Lub, jeweler; Mary Beth Mejer, potter; Sandy O'Gorman, lead sculptor; Zona O'Neal, painter; Judy Pisano, stained glass; Gertrude Reagan, batik; Henry Rianda, jeweler; Iris Sea, painter; Hal Shepard, woodworker; Ruth Silnes, painter; Kay Stringari, potter; Colleen Vescia, potter; Robert Wait, painter/sculptor; Sharon Wallach, painter; Ruth Waters, sculptor; and Nancy Wirth, potter.

The land was originally inhabited by the Costanoan Indians. Early explorers of this area were Captain Fernando Rivera and Father Francesco Palou. It was part of a land grant to Don Jose Arguello in the 1790's and was owned in the 1850's by Joyn McDougal, California's second governor.

In the late 1800's Carl Janke, an early Belmont resident, turned it into a private picnic area and amusement park where families gathered to buy taffy and pink lemonade or visit the ice cream parlor, ride the merry-go-round, and dance in the pavillion, crossing back and forth on the footbridges that laced the creek where the Creekside Studios are now.

residence hall of the sanatorium, built in 1939 by Dr. Rebec, is now the main building of the Twin Pines Art Center.

In 1972 Belmont voted to buy Twin Pines Park from

Dr. Albert Voris for the enjoyment of future generations, and shortly thereafter the city also purchased the Art Center site.

Twin Pines Park was

dedicated March 8, 1975, by the Belmont City Council, Ferdinand J. Guiliani, mayor. Information on this history was taken in part from the Belmont Library papers by S. Sampson

(7/8/75). As Sampson says, "If there is any romance to be found in this history, it may be in the knowledge that this property has long been used for those seeking restoration in body and mind."

Ruth Waters, director of the Twin Pines Art Center, started working on plans for the Art Center a year ago with Frank Billante, Belmont's director of recreation and parks.

In the interest of time and lack of money, the building has been refurbished and repaired with material available. Windows with small holes are patched with marbles and colored plastic designs. The smallest of rooms are organized and enlarged with mirrors. Carpets have been patched in designs to direct traffic.

The Twin Pines Art Center is located little more than one block west of El Camino Real at 1221 Ralston Avenue, Belmont, in Twin Pines Park. It is the one-story building complex just beyond the two-story Manor House (home of the San Mateo County Arts Council, Belmont Arts Council, Peninsula Art Association, and Belmont Police Department). Directly east of the center is the meadow where the park concerts are held, and to the west are the Belmont Recreation and Park Department office and the lodge.

The artists in residence are: Doris Arrington, painter; Virginia Bell, ceramic sculptor; Marilyn Bennett, Ceramic sculptor; June Blumenfeld, stained glass; Don Blumenfeld, painter; Elizabeth Diamond, glass sculptor; Lynn Gallion, painter; Flo Ray Harmon, painter; Georgia Harrington, painter; David Harris, painter; Andrea Hendrick, painter/printmaker; Richard Inman, jeweler/painter;

The George Center Mansion was built in the early 1900's and was recently declared an historical landmark (it is now commonly referred to as the Manor House and houses the San Mateo County Arts Council). In 1925 the property was purchased by Doctors Schaller, Mehrtens and Godbrath. It was established as a psychiatric hospital on April 21, 1925, and named Twin Pines for the pine trees at the current entrance to the park. In 1931 the property was acquired by Dr. Rebec. The

BEL COURIER 5/25/77

# Series of Concerts Set at Twin Pines Park

Art and business worlds join to bring San Mateo County a series of five musical concerts in May and June, ranging from Dixieland jazz and bluegrass country music to symphonic variety.

Sponsors include Fidelity Savings and Loan Association, Music Performance Trust Funds of the Recording Industries through local 6, American Federation of Musicians, Belmont Park Boosters,

the San Mateo County Arts Council and the Belmont Recreation and Parks Department.

Performances will be given Sunday afternoons from 2 to 4 p.m. at Belmont's Twin Pines Park, 1225 Ralston Ave.

May 29 a variety show by "America is Us" Academy will present a variety of songs and dances entitled "Serendipity '77" directed by Bob Bentley of Belmont.

June 5 Turk Murphy will

bring his famous eight piece Dixieland Jazz Band from Earthquake McGoons to perform old favorites.

June 12 Country Western and Bluegrass Music will be played by the "Back in the Saddle" and June 19 the San Carlos Symphony will perform Symphony Pops music conducted by James Tippey.

All concerts are on Sunday afternoons from 2 to 4 p.m., free and open to the public.

BEL COURIER 2/16/77

## Fidelity Will Sponsor People's Art Festival

Plans for the Peoples Participation Arts Festival to be sponsored by Fidelity Savings and Loan Association as a fund raiser for the San Mateo County Arts Council were formed Tuesday evening at Twin Pines Cultural Center in Belmont.

Marjorie Mandanis with the Belmont Chamber of Commerce and Rose Roskin, Arts Council vice-chairman were named co-chairmen of the event.

The Peoples Participation Arts Festival to be held June 5, is an all day event to take place at the Twin Pines Park and the Cultural Center.

During the day people from throughout the County of San Mateo are expected to join in the fun of participating in such events as painting murals, creating a sculpture, pot-throwing, glass blowing, acting in a play, dancing to both folk and modern music, and even blowing a bagpipe.

These are only a few of the activities to be going on from mid-morning to 5 in the afternoon. Phil Durnell who is a member of the board for the San Mateo County Arts Council was named performing arts chairman. Others present were, David Lucas, representing College of Notre Dame, Ingrid Worthge of Belmont, Marion Mendelson and Joyce Golding of San Mateo, and Bill Nemoyten, executive director of the Arts Council.

The Arts Council expects its 50 member organizations to become involved in the festival as well as many individual artists in the county.

BEL COURIER 4/27/77

## 'In Touch Through Art' Shown

Variety in viewing is offered during April at the Twin Pines Gallery, 1219 Ralston, Ave., Belmont, headquarters of the San Mateo County Arts Council in Twin Pines Park.

The exhibit, "In Touch Through Art", was organized by Belmont resident Doris Arrington with the assistance of Sue Ann Eslinger of Sacramento and Evelyn Virshup of Los Angeles County.

The three organizers are art therapists who have been gathering the show for over a year. After

leaving the Twin Pines Gallery the show will be on exhibit at the Octagon Gallery, Daly City in June and the Corridor Gallery, Redwood City July 12 through August 27.

The works on exhibition at Twin Pines Gallery were produced by a variety of sources, according to Doris Arrington, "children, the aging, the handicapped, the drug abuser, the mental patient, the prisoner, and the rest of us."

"Art experiences reflected in the show tell how the artists see the

world. It is a visual demonstration that we are all artists who can draw, paint and sculpt our dreams, fantasies and nightmares," she said.

Some of the works on view are from local rest homes on the Peninsula, some are from Folsom Prison, some from people in mental institutions as far away as Tarzana.

Gallery hours at Twin Pines are Monday through Friday from 9 to 5 p.m. and Saturday from 1 to 4 p.m. No admission will be charged.

BEL COURIER 5/25/77

## PAA Announces Summer Program

A ten-week summer session of art classes, sponsored by Peninsula Art Association, will be offered at Twin Pines Park, 1209 Ralston Ave., Belmont, beginning June 1.

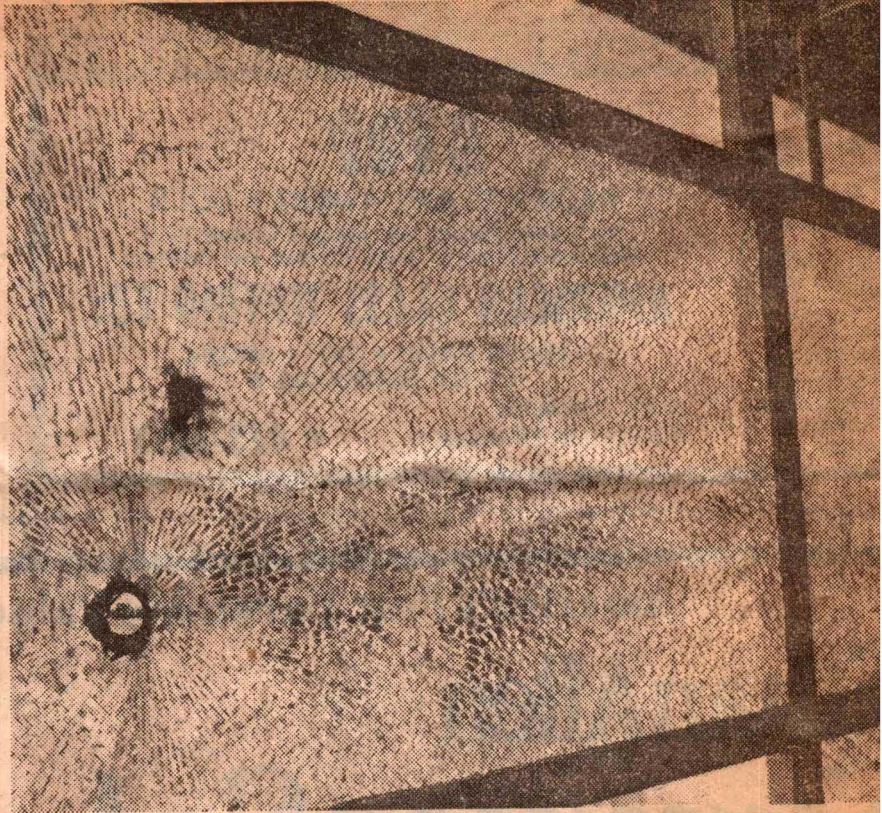
Classes are open to beginning and advanced students. For pre-enrollment, call the teacher in charge. Enrollment at a class session is acceptable. Classes begin June 1, with Earl Pierce's abstract and traditional painting, meeting Wednesday from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Other classes are: Beginning and intermediate painting, with Charlotte Pribuss, Thursday, 9 a.m.-noon, beginning June 2, Poetry Workshop, with Nancy Sully, 10-noon, Fridays, Sculpture, with Helen Morrison, 9 a.m.-noon, Fridays, Art for talented children (ages 7 through teen), with Sheila Dorman, Saturdays, 9 a.m.-noon. Also, on Saturday, 9 a.m.-noon, Sculpture, with Ruth Waters, is limited to six students.

In addition, a Life Drawing Workshop, is offered Monday from 10 a.m. till noon.

# A Face Lift at Twin Pines Park

S.M. TIMES 8/19/77

What better luck could befall a derelict and dilapidated building than to have its face lifted by a team of talented artists and craftsmen? Such was the happy fate a group of deserted dwellings in Belmont's Twin Pines Park which have come to life thanks to the efforts of 33 people willing to create a cultural haven for themselves and the community. Christened Twin Pines Art Center, the former residence hall for sanatorium patients and maintenance shacks now house a conglomerate of artists involved in all media of painting as well as craftsmen committed to stained glass, pottery, woodworking, printmaking, sculpting, jewelry, weaving and other creative endeavors. Art seekers are welcome to tour the working studios, browse at the ongoing projects and, if interested, enroll in the classes being offered there. The new center is open Monday through from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 4 p.m. It is adjacent to the San Mateo County Arts Council headquarters, an historical landmark which served as the George Center Mansion in the early 1900s.

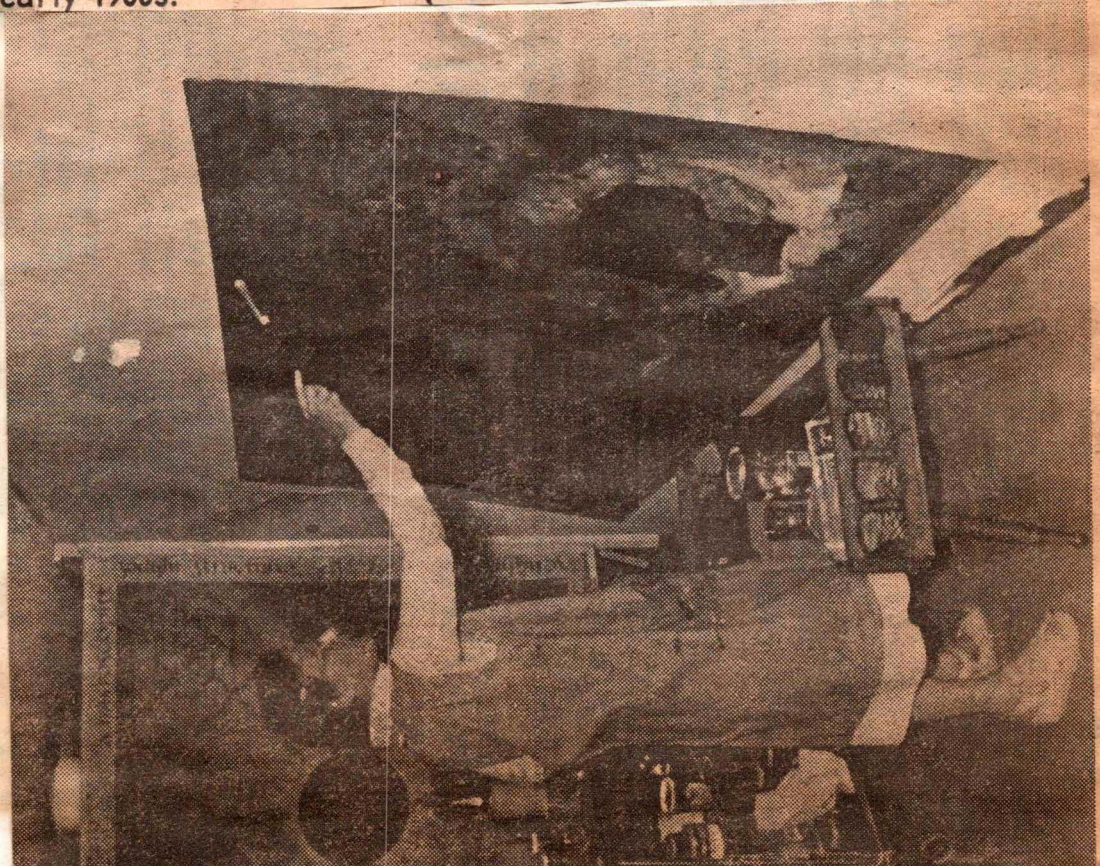


## RECYCLED WINDOW

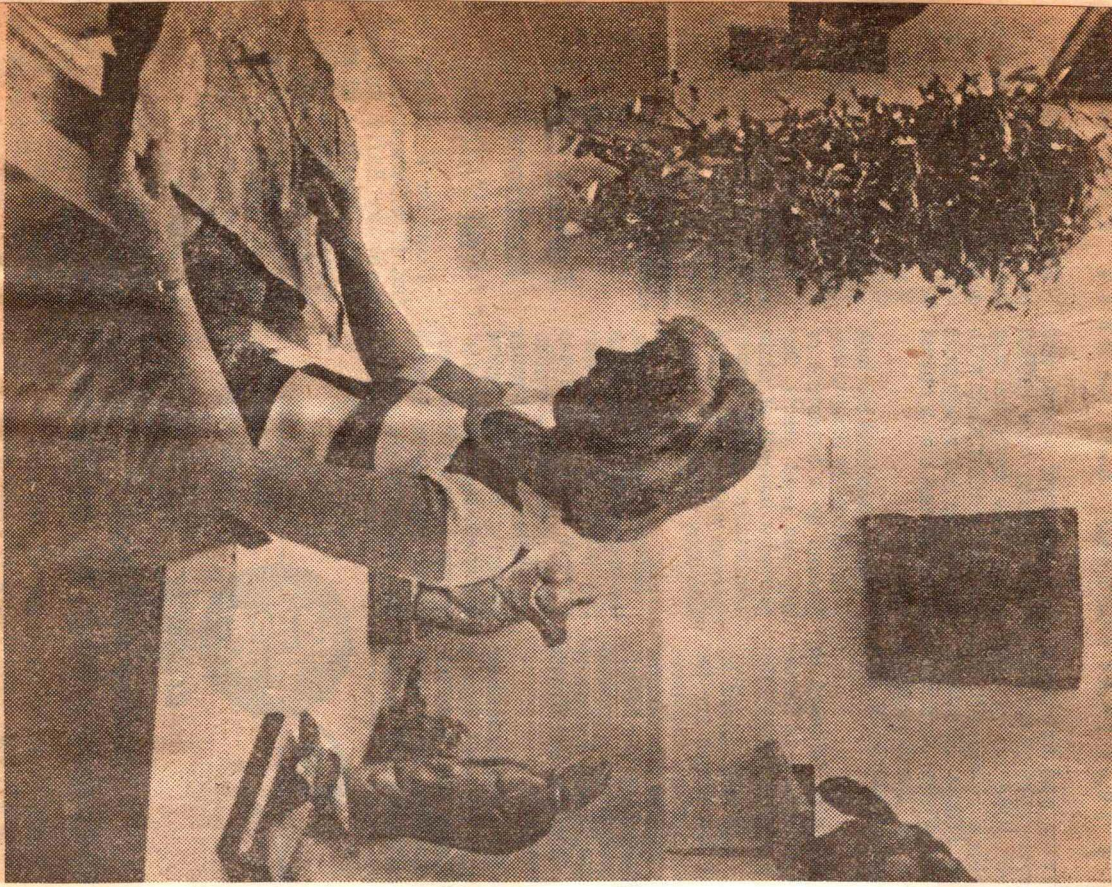
Although this window at the Twin Pines Arts Center was shattered by BB shot, the artists who reno-

vated the building saw beauty in the ruins and, using more glass, turned it into an art form.

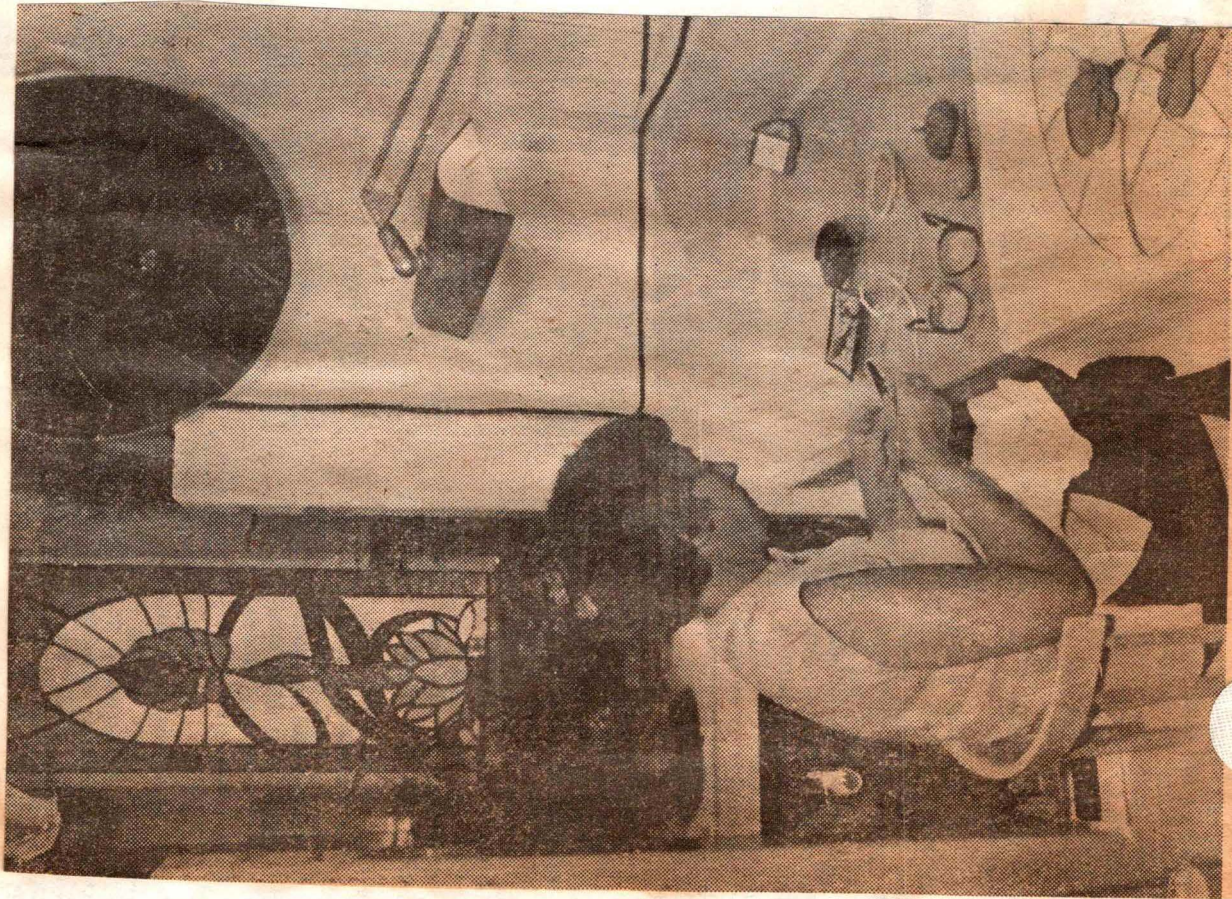
(Times Photos By Ray Zirkel)



RUTH SILNES  
Artist in Her Studio



**SANDY O'GORMAN**  
She Works With Metal



**JUNE BLUMFELD**  
Stained Glass Is Her Medium

S.M. ES  
8/19



## Blue Grass At Twin Pines

*BEL. COURIER 6/18/77*  
Footstomping, hand clappin' music from the roots of America's country and western past will echo through Belmont's Twin Pines Park June 12 from 2 to 4 p.m.

A variety of down-home numbers ranging from "Fox on the Run" to "Jumbalaya" will be played by a new group of talented young performers called "Back in the Saddle." Admission is free.

This is the fourth in a series of public Sunday concerts in the Belmont Park sponsored by the San Mateo County Arts Council and funded by Fidelity Savings and Loan Association, Belmont Park Boosters, the Music Performance Trust Funds of the Recording Industries through local 6 with the cooperation of the Belmont Park and Recreation Department.

"Back in the Saddle" is led by Tom Rigney, of Walnut Creek, a genius with the fiddle as well as arranger for, and singer with the group.

The lead vocalist, Peggy Logomarsino, of Marin County specializes in plaintive mountain melodies as well as raucous honky-tonk tunes.

Authenticity is provided by the banjo pickn' of Derek Krogh of Palo Alto and the mandolin pluckin'

of Sausalito's Dick Somers. Rhythm is carried by guitars in the capable hands of Tony Tichenor of Menlo Park and Frank Cefaw of an Francisco, who also sings with Tom and Peggy.

Blended together by Tom Rigney, the group creates well-orchestrated music in a variety of country and western musical styles.

Durin the afternoon, the Belmont Park Boosters will serve hotdogs and beer in the old west tradition for a small fee.

Come with your lunch or buy it there, bring a blanket or lawn chairs and enjoy the afternoon of "Back in the Saddle" with the most delightful sound on the Peninsula.

## Coordinator Named For Art Galleries

*BEL. COURIER 8/13/77*  
Shella Wynn Dorman has been named interim gallery coordinator for the San Mateo County Arts Council, at Belmont's Twin Pines Park.

Miss Dorman, a resident of San Carlos, is a native Californian. She received a BA at San Francisco State University in art and behavioral science and holds a secondary teaching credential in art education and learning disability for educationally handicapped.

Currently she is teaching interior design for an adult education program and art classes for the exceptionally talented child. She is also exhibit chairman for the Peninsula Art Association.

She replaces Marion Mendelson, who was gallery coordinator for the Arts Council the last two years. Ms. Mendelson resigned to move to Philadelphia.

Miss Dorman will coordinate exhibits in Twin Pines Gallery and the three mini-galleries operated by the San Mateo County Arts Council.

## Open Poetry

### At Twin Pines

*S. H. TIMES 10/22/77*  
Open poetry readings for all residents of San Mateo County will begin Oct. 27 at the Twin Pines Cultural Center in Belmont.

"It's open to everybody, and we encourage poets to join us and read their poetry to us," said Eileen Maline, Daly City, one of the coordinators of the program.

The open readings will begin at 7:30. Wine and cheese will be served.

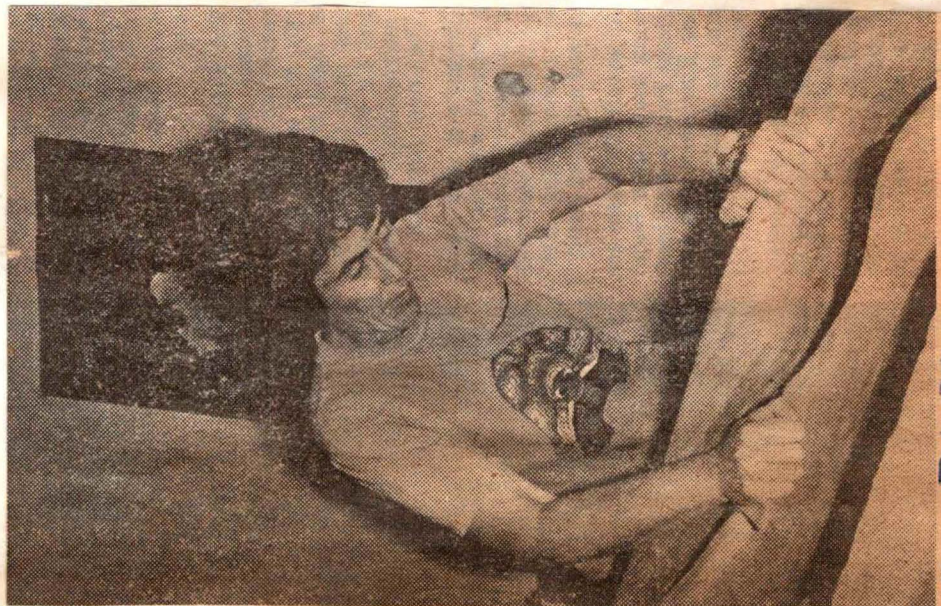


BELMONT'S DOCEY LEWIS looks up from her loom at the recent opening of Twin Pines Art Center. A weaver, Docey is one of over thirty artists in residence at the center.

BEL. COURIER 6/8/77



FOOTSTOMPING MUSIC will be the order of the day when "Back in the Saddle," a high-flight blue grass group, plays at Twin Pines this Sunday, starting at 2:30 p.m.



S.M. TIMES  
8/19/77  
RUTH WATERS  
and Sculptures Her Specialty

# Art Center Taking Shape

BEL. COURIER 8/10/77

By CHARLIE HALL

After four months of cleaning, painting, and rebuilding, the artists at the new Twin Pines Art Center might expect a reprieve, but for Ruth Waters, the center's director, and the 34 artists at Twin Pines, the work is far from over.

The group had refurbished Rebec Hall to such a degree that most visitors at the center's opening day two weeks ago marveled at the improvements made on the once dilapidated building, but even now says Ruth, the list of projects approaches the infinite.

Oh, there's nothing major, just a roof that leaks at the first sight of a

dark cloud, a heating system that doesn't heat, and five-studio structure in the back that doesn't have any electricity.

But with a minimum of money and their own labor, says Ruth, the center's artists will attempt to attack each problem as the time and resources become available, ultimately whipping the building completely into shape.

The inconveniences still facing the artists and their response to them are typical of the sort they've encountered ever since they moved in, and the irrepressible outlook they've taken to

(Continued on page 3)



**BELMONT'S RUTH WATERS sands a piece of wood. An accomplished wood sculptress, Ms. Waters is the volunteer director of the new Twin Pines Art Center.**

(Continued from page 1)  
their new quarters.

## UNINHABITABLE

The building was "uninhabitable," when the artists first took over, recalls Ruth. "It was totally gutted. About the only thing that didn't happen to it was that it didn't burn," she remembers.

In four months of effort, the main hall has been totally cleaned up, and in many studios the walls relined.

The artists have shown a unique adaptability in taking to their new quarters, especially one who works in a very thinly disguised former bathroom. The artist, unperturbed by the bathtub that lines one wall, has simply filled it with cushions to form a couch.

But if Rebec Hall was no palace when they got it, neither Ruth nor her fellow artists are complaining, for it gives them a unique place to produce and display their work and be with other artists.

## LENGTHY SEARCH

Ruth says she searched seven months for a place to build an art center, and the abandoned building was her choice. She says she got the

idea when she lived in Alexandria, Virginia, and some local artists banded together to convert an abandoned torpedo factory into an art center.

"It was an ugly building, but when the artists were finished with it, it was absolutely beautiful inside," she recalls. In addition, it was a tremendous success with the community, she remembers, drawing large crowds to

the building.

After setting her sights on the Twin Pines structure, she contacted Belmont Parks and Recreation Dept. Director Frank Billante. His response was enthusiastic, and the project was underway.

Ruth says she feels an art center can be uniquely accessible to a suburban community. "Some people who'd never walk into a gallery, because of its formality and its heavy orientation toward selling, will come in here to an art center."

The center tries to tone down some of the pressure on visitors by downplaying the emphasis on selling—artists must display two new pieces a month, but only a few of the items exhibited have price tags—and by making the artists accessible at regular intervals.

The center is open seven days a week, and while crowds admittedly haven't been breaking down the doors, Ruth says the influx of visitors has been "steady."

## CLASSES OFFERED

In addition to offering displays for visitors, another major function will

be to provide classes. "We're hoping we can be a resource for the community," comments Ruth.

But if Belmont residents are likely to gain, the artists themselves are the biggest winners. Not one of the center's artists supports him or herself solely by selling art, and in a world where galleries are closed to many artists, just having a place to exhibit their work is a major blessing.

A wood sculptress for 20 years, Ms. Waters has her work displayed in San Francisco and Palo Alto

galleries, but for many of the artists, the center is their only access to the public.

In addition, it gives artists a chance to provide sympathy and occasional commiseration during moments of depression, according to one artist at the center, painter Ruth Silnes.

"I used to get to the point where I just wanted to hear myself talk and I'd grab anybody. But they wouldn't know what I was talking about, and they'd be as bored with me as I was with them," she says.

# Charges Made in Twin

S.M. TIMES 8/30/77

By LIN DAY

Several Belmont residents charged at a meeting of the city Planning Commission Monday night that city codes and procedures have been ignored in the unique city program of having the San Mateo County Arts Council restore the Twin Pines mansion and buildings.

The commission adjourned the public hearing, held to determine whether or not to issue a use permit to the Arts Council, to its Sept. 28 meeting.

Commissioners also asked the city staff to supply basic facts, including an environmental impact study and possibly a general plan for Twin Pines development.

Meanwhile, issues pinwheeled about, ranging from making electrical repairs and closing walls without inspection, to providing only one public toilet for thousands of park visitors.

Before the hearing began, City Clerk James McLaughlin swore in new Planning Commissioner Steven Vartan.

Vice-chairman Bart Keavney, presiding, then called for the public hearing, but Commissioner Alexander Fletcher interposed, demanding to get a few facts straight before the discussion began.

Fletcher wanted it set clear as to what conditions of use were put on the manor property. He was informed that whereas the bond issue to finance buying most of the property carried conditions, the buildings were purchased with revenue-sharing funds for "municipal and public purposes."

Applicant William Nemoiyten of the Arts Council said the council had been for a year in a program designed to make more rooms available for the public.

When finished, he said, there will be four large rooms available, two of which will be available for the public 100 per cent of the time, and two available 60 to 80 per cent of the time. At another point, he said that funding developed by the Arts Council means that \$8,000 a month will be spent for improvements for the next year.

Commissioner Densel Lawhern then interrogated Nemoiyten, asking first if a permit had been obtained for \$1,300 in electrical repairs which had been reported.

Nemoiyten responded that "nobody had said anything. It was done when we first took it over."

Lawhern then brought up the point that there had been \$2,300 spent for other repairs, again without permit.

Lawhern said he understood when a Planning Commission group toured the building recently, it was not allowed to see one studio.

Nemoiyten said that the studios are the domain of the artists who rent on a private basis. He noted that no planning commissioner had actually asked to see the studio mentioned. There is no evidence at all, he added, that anyone is cooking or living in a studio, adding he was sure there wasn't any such thing going on.

Vartan wanted to know if there were specific hours the rooms would be open to the public, and was told the hours of the Arts Council are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Vartan asked how traffic is handled and was told that it is "spread out" by the Arts Council, with different groups of visitors paced through the day to reduce parking pressure.

Lawhern asked what kind of activity the artists themselves generate. Nemoiyten replied that an average day saw one or two visitors to most of the artists, and that some days saw almost none.

Henry Wiesman, who said he was on the commission tour, declared, "We were not permitted to view the basement or third-floor areas, in addition to the one studio."

Wiesman read aloud the lease agreement, which allows city inspection with or without notice.

He noted that additional lighting was added and no inspection made before walls were closed in.

Former city Councilwoman Eve Sterry noted that there is only one public toilet in the entire facility and

## Pines Restoration

that it is sometimes closed, although as many as 3,000 persons might go to the park for a special occasion.

She told of people milling around the one toilet, and said that when one youngster asked to use the Arts Council restroom, the child was refused, finally going to the nearby police station.

Use of the Police Department restrooms by all those using the park could "get to be ridiculous," she said.

She wondered, "if we have to resort to this sort of thing because of the uses brought in by the Arts Council?"

At this point, Lawhern asked if the use permit falls within a general plan of functions of the park area.

Floyd Sampson, one of several critics who spoke at the meeting, declared that "it is obvious that planning for the entire Twin Pines facility should be considered as a unit."

"This piecemeal shot we are doing is ridiculous," he declared. "Park and Recreation should come up with an overall plan. This approach is a ripoff to the taxpayers of the city."

He added that any contract should require that work done in violation of lease or city codes would terminate the lease.

"We should tighten up. We should at least know what is going on in our own buildings. We should be able to get in and see..." he said.

Mrs. Pat Rianda, who identified herself as a member of the Belmont Arts Council and of a liaison committee on the project, said Nemoiyten and his staff more than cooperated with the city.

Fletcher questioned whether the committee actually existed. She was the first member he had seen, he said.

(The City Council has not acted on a committee to be set up by the lease arrangement, but several staff and Arts Council people had met as the committee.)

Hank Rianda claimed he had been hearing "nit-picking. We must consider that a lot of people come down for open space and use the street for parking," he said. He suggested allotment of parking space.

He credited the Arts Council with securing funds for the needed restoration that might not have been obtained otherwise.

Meg Buckley told the commission that she was "glad the Arts Council is in there, but I do feel concern about due process, and I think the Belmont people feel the same way."

A parade of supporters then endorsed the council program.

Nemoiyten said several city inspections had been made.

Commissioners agreed that there seemed to be a need for tightening up, such as requiring inspections and observing codes. They postponed closing the hearing until the Sept. 28 meeting.

## Twin Pines Offers Art Instruction

*S.M. Times 9/15/77*  
The Twin Pines Art Center at 1221 Ralston Ave., Belmont (in Twin Pines Park), is offering small classes in the various arts with individualized instruction.

Weekend workshops in mini-paintings for Christmas presents will be conducted by Flo Ray Harmon.

Gertrude Reagan will conduct design workshops, using patterns in nature and the tools of math and science, as well as abstract drawings and easy crafts.

Painting in oil, acrylic and watercolor will be taught by David Harris Saturdays 10 a.m. to noon and Tuesdays 3 to 6 p.m.

Classes in Indian pottery; pinch, coil and slab construction; wheel throwing; ancient Indian black firing, and raku firing will be taught, on Thursdays from noon to 3 p.m., starting tomorrow, by Marilyn Bennett and Virginia Bell.

Judy Pisano and Joan Harned will instruct a beginning class in stained glass for six weeks on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, three hours each class.

Doris Arrington will conduct weekend workshops on Art and the Inner Experience.

Watercolor workshops with Dick Inman will include weekend sketching and painting of boats and seascapes.

Sculpture in hardwoods, and classic carving and finishing techniques, are scheduled for Tuesdays 9 a.m. to noon. Ruth Waters is the instructor.

Additional information may be obtained at the Art Center.

# Office Uses at Twin Pines Protested

*S.M. Times 9/15/77*  
By LIN DAY

A former Belmont councilwoman today asked the city Planning Commission, which is considering renewing the San Mateo County Arts Council's tenure at the Twin Pines cultural center, to consider phasing out what she called "inconsistent uses."

A continued hearing on a use permit application by the Arts Council will reopen Monday night.

Eve Sterry, in a letter to the commission, reminded it that when the electorate voted to buy the park through a bond issue, its uses were specified in election information as limited to park, recreation and open space, with improvements limited to picnic spots, nature trails and small play areas.

Office building and zoning would be eliminated, she said. Instead, she added, "private and corporate offices and even buying and selling is actually being allowed." She warned that unless these are phased out, the city could be vulnerable to an initiative procedure.

Mrs. Sterry suggested that "all inconsistent uses could be phased out on the basis of a specific timetable controlled by a use permit procedure, subject to periodic review in public hearings by the commission and the City Council."

Essentially, that appeared to mean that the use by the Arts Council of the manor building and any other buildings it might seek would be reduced year by year until it ended, if

this plan was followed.

Mrs. Sterry also asked that a committee be established to oversee preservation of historic artifacts, inventory the building to see what they are and to secure specific plans, budgets and project time-frames as well as to implement restoration of the mansion landmark.

She suggested that the committee could also "preserve our historic heritage through restoration of place names and street-naming."

She expressed the hope that the entire 20 acres of Twin Pines, which would include the acreage acquired later by the city on which the buildings stand, could be established as an historic site.

Landmark status, she

said, could "produce considerable financial assistance from a number of sources to provide badly-needed manpower, improvements and urgently-needed facilities for the park visitor."

Among the types of things Mrs. Sterry suggested should be inventoried are mirrors, fireplace mantels, lighting fixtures, bathroom, cabinet, kitchen and other fixtures.

Asked today what prompted her concern for inventory, Mrs. Sterry said that a proper approach to any landmark building should include inventory of

what it contains. While admitting that vandals had injured the building before its present use, she said she feels there may have been improprieties since.

This, she said, is no way to treat an historic landmark, which, she added, is what the City Council designated the manor building some years ago.

Nor is there, she said, under the present city plan to allow the Arts Council to control and restore the manor building, any reassurance that historic integrity will be preserved, nor even that any records will be kept to allow finding out

if they are being preserved.

Instead, she said, there is every possibility, unless stringent conditions are placed in the use permit, that instead of restoration, the city will find its historic building renovated to office use that is compatible to a many-years tenure by the countywide facility but of little value to the Belmont citizens who are buying and paying for the acreage and buildings.

Mrs. Sterry charged that city overseeing of what has been going on, in the light of long-range planning, is less than adequate and in fact amounts to near chaos.



**SINGING OUT  
FOR BELMONT**

Belmont residents join in a song of welcome to announce a community songfest and dance at Twin Pines Park Lodge at 1 p.m. Sunday. Left to right, Emma Boyington, Lillian Currere, Ernest Boyington, Mac McQueen, Dorothy McQueen and Jack Bernal.

*Sing-Along, Dancing, Tours Slated*

**Twin Pines Opens for Fall**

A Belmont community sing-along and dancing will be held from 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday at Twin Pines Park Lodge to open the fall season of Belmont community events. It is free, with refreshments, and open to all.

All ages groups will be welcomed, although the event originally was planned as a seniors get-together before it widened into a full community

activity supported by seniors, youth groups, clubs and churches.

Playing for dancing from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. will be the San Carlos Seniors "Fun Band." Additionally, those attending will be able to tour the refurbished Twin Pines buildings and walk in the city's largest park.

The event also introduces a program of greater senior involvement in the life and affairs of the city. Its

sponsors hope to establish a "drop-in Sunday" program at the park.

It also will set the stage for another Belmont community event, a pancake breakfast from 11 a.m. to 2

p.m. the following Sunday, Sept. 18, provided by the Belmont Rotary Club in a drive to raise funds to buy a "Jaws of Life" rescue tool for the Belmont Fire Department.

# Belmont Furor Over Twin

S.M. TIMES 10/26/77

## Pines Use Permit

By LIN DAY

An effort by Belmont Vice Mayor Walt Worthge to strike out a number of conditions placed on the use of Twin Pines Manor and Rebec Hall at the city-owned Twin Pines Park by the San Mateo County Arts Council created a mild uproar at the City Council meeting Tuesday night.

One woman in the audience declared that an initiative petition would be circulated if the Arts Council lease is extended beyond the current lease.

Councilmen themselves demurred at some of Worthge's suggestions, particularly one in which he said there was no need for "panic hardware" on the front door of the Twin Pines Manor building, occupied by the Arts Council and used by the public.

Mayor Frank Gonsalves said that the hardware would not hurt the door of the building and pointed out

that state law requires such an escape ability in a public building.

William Nemoyten, Arts Council head, asserted that when he toured the building recently with Fire Marshal Richard Cooper, the marshal indicated there was no need for the panic hardware.

The council appeared surprised. It finally compromised that such a decision would be up to a written opinion of the fire marshal.

Worthge then demanded that the council strike a time limit placed by the Planning Commission on installation of a number of fire and safety precautionary items in the building.

At this point, Denny Lawhern, a member of the Planning Commission, reminded the council that the planning group had placed the time limit in the conditions to remove the city's liability in case of a

disaster at the historic building.

When Worthge asked for a compromise of 90 days, Lawhern asked the council to send the matter back to the Planning Commission. He felt there were too many changes, he said. (Worthge insisted on going through every condition, asking that several be struck.)

Worthge won deletion of a condition which would have required that all historic features of the historic building be delineated. (At one point prior to the Planning Commission insertion of this condition, some Belmont residents had indicated there was no room-by-room listing of just what historic features are in the historic building, and that therefore changes might not be detected.)

Worthge also won striking of a provision that

would ban use by the Arts Council of the property for events on Saturday and Sunday, although Councilwoman Pam Ketcham reminded that those were days when the people of

Belmont might be using the park.

The vice mayor said that such matters could be taken up when the council discusses a parking policy for Twin Pines.

He won deletion of controls on subleases as asked by the planners. When Worthge asked, however, that a paragraph allowing review by the Planning Commission annually of the

subleases be removed, the commission leader pointed out that the commission had asked review to assure compliance with its conditions.

Worthge won deletion of a provision that banned sales on the city property except for those in the Arts Council gallery.

Among other items deleted in either the manor or Rebec Hall conditions were:

- That a variance on parking be required.

- That the Arts Council maintain the historic character and exterior of the buildings and protect it from change or abuse not authorized.

- That an electrical contractor do wiring. (This was changed to merely require wiring to be conforming with the uniform electrical code.)

The council did not go along on a request to delete a demand that the Board of Design see that signs did not exceed other sign limits in the city; but after an appearance by Alex Fletcher, chairman of the board, agreed to modify the condition so that a present sign could be looked at.

Rose Ozwirk, a longtime member of the Homeview Association, first raised the issue of what happened to the \$100,000 which she said Worthge had promised

would be available by the San Mateo County Arts Council for improvements, according to a newspaper.

Worthge responded that he had been misquoted.

Mrs. Ozwirk then asked disqualification of Worthge from voting on the conditions since, she said, his wife had worked for the Arts Council.

She also asked that Councilwoman Pam Ketcham be disqualified because she had appeared with Worthge before the Board of Supervisors to ask for funds for the Arts Council.

City Attorney Ken Dickerson said the state law directs itself to the future personal gain of a council person and thus did not apply. Worthge interposed that his wife no longer worked for the Arts Council and would not be doing so in the future.

Henry Wiseman, also a longtime Homeview member, declared that the park bought by the citizens for open space had been taken over by the cultural group. He said nothing was being done for the lawn and sprinkler system. He asked the lease be terminated at the earliest possible date.

Later, Mrs. Ozwirk said that if the lease were continued beyond the present limit, an initiative petition would be circulated to "get them out."

## Twin Pines Hearing

### Continues in Belmont

*S.M. TIMES 10/25/77*  
The Belmont City Building Liaison Committee, meeting at 7:30 tonight, will continue its hearing on a council-originated appeal of a Planning Commission grant of a use permit to the San Mateo Arts Council for use of the Manor Building at Twin Pines.

A second hearing similarly will "consider decision and conditions" imposed upon a use permit for the Twin Pines Art Center (Rebec Hall).

Extension of the lease to the Arts Council for use of the Manor Building is on the agenda, as well as designation of responsibilities and appointment of Patricia Rianda, Joseph Price and the recreation and park director as Belmont representatives on the Twin Pines Manor

Building Liaison Committee.

Revision of the lease agreement also is before the council.

Other items include discussion of removal of earthen material dumped on East Laurel Creek Road near the pump station, discussion regarding a proposed residency subdivision in the Sunnyslope Avenue-Chestnut Street area, and discussion of revised qualifications for the Citizens Advisory Committee.

Several hearings are scheduled, including extension of an interim zoning ordinance for the Plateau, Skymont and San Juan Canyon neighborhoods, and one on merging of substandard properties in the San Juan Canyon and Plateau and Skymont neighborhoods.

# Twin Pines Center Receives Use Permit

*BEL. COOR. 101*  
The Belmont Planning commission voted unanimously Monday night to grant a use permit to the group of artists forming the Twin Pines Art Center.

The commission approved the use permit with several conditions, voting to grant a variance exempting the arts center from normal parking requirements; to require

*5777*  
that several suggestions from recent fire and building inspections be implemented; and that several safety conditions be met.

The vote followed a brief discussion in which citizens complained that Belmont artists should be given priority to the art center's studios.

Belmont artist Hank Rianda, who has a studio at the center, defended the right of non-Belmont artists to work there.

Noting that they had taken part in the building's cleanup and renovation, Rianda said it would be unfair to ask them to leave now in favor of Belmont artist.

In other actions, the commission unanimously denied a request from George Bralye to exempt him from having his two substandard lots merged.

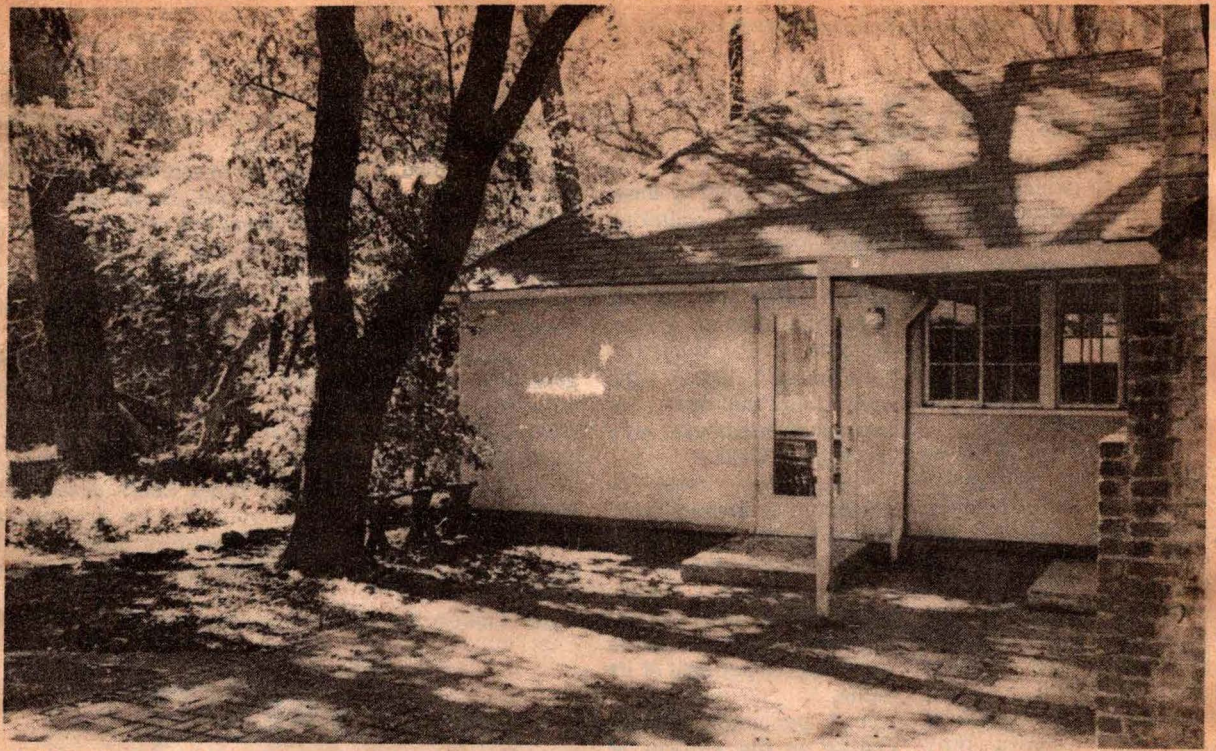
The commission, which has been empowered to approve such mergers since the Subdivision Map Act was amended at the start of the year, voted

unanimously to deny Bralye's appeal for a variance.

The commission also voted to approve a request from Antonio Ruiz to rezone his Sterling Downs

property to commercial usage and granted a variance allowing Michael Griffin and Gayle Kershaw to reduce their front setback at 1220 North Road from 20 to 10 feet.





**COMMUNITY CENTER**— Dedication ceremonies for the newly-renovated Twin Pines Community Center will be held Sunday from 2 to 4 p.m. Mayor Frank Gonsalves will preside assisted by City Manager James De Chaine, Frank Billante, Parks and Leisure

Services Director; and Dick Gay, chairman of the Belmont Parks and Recreation Commission. The public is invited to attend the ceremonies which will be followed by a tour of the facilities.

—Photo by Catalina Guevara

## TWIN PINES

# Center To Be Dedicated

*BEL. COUR. 10/19/77*  
Dedication of the newly-renovated Twin Pines Community Center will be held Sunday, Oct. 23, from 2 to 4 p.m. at Twin Pines Park, Belmont.

Civic and community officials led by Mayor Frank R. Gonsalves, City Manager James DeChaine, Frank Billante, Parks and Leisure Services director; and Dick Gay, chairman of the Belmont Parks and Recreation Commission, will preside.

The invocation will be delivered by the Rev. John J. Kenny of Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church and the Rev. John Daley, formerly of the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, Belmont.

Pat Rianda of the Belmont Park Boosters is chair-

man of the dedication. Community organizations assisting are the Belmont Garden Club, Belmont Newcomers Club and Belmont senior citizens.

A tour of the facilities, refreshments and entertainment will follow the dedication.

Renovation of the facility was begun in March and included a new roof, new flooring plus work on the electrical, heating and plumbing systems.

The structure has four activities rooms, a lounge area with a fireplace and a modern kitchen.

W.A. Moroney of San Mateo was the contractor for the project completed in June. Cost was \$82,174.

# Twin Pines Plan

## Hearing Set on

BELMONT COURIER  
10/19/77

# Environmental Report

By Mavis Davies

A sizeable agenda and some complaints at the non-attendance of the City Engineer and the Building Supervisor at Monday night's meeting kept the Planning Commission busy for the full three hours.

The meeting opened with the swearing in of two Commissioners, Robert H. Chang and Robert H. Hoffman. The minutes were approved and the meeting got underway.

In the absence of Chairman DeFelice, Commissioner Fletcher presided.

Variance approvals were given to, Anton Buljan for construction of a single family home at 1823 Hillman Ave. and to Douglas G. Stroh for construction of a garage at his home at 1826 Hillman Ave.

Due to deficiencies in application procedures public hearings were reset for November on a parking variance at Manor Building, Rebec Hall and Twin Pines Art Center as well as a minor subdivision at 1720 Hillman Ave.

Request for an excavation and hauling permit at 1200 Chula Vista was removed from the agenda with the recommendation for redesign.

One of the longest discussions centered around partially constructed fence and brick pillar at 2303 Wooster Ave. which obstructs the view on approaching

the street from the driveway. City Planner Martin recommended that the partially built fence and pillar be relocated three to four feet back for safer sighting. Commissioner Lawhern, made the motion for approval with Commissioner Moore seconding. The motion did not carry due to 3-3 tie. A discussion ensued on the legalities and how to exercise control over encroachments. Pro Tem Chairman Fletcher said, "People must find out what they can and cannot do regarding encroachments." It was decided to hold over this application until the next meeting and it was suggested that the applicant and the planning staff get together to come up with a better solution.

In the absence of the City Engineer, due to illness, and the Building Inspector whose advice was necessary on many occasions, the application for encroachment permit to construct a driveway at 2323 Coronet Blvd. was not granted. Fletcher requested a continuance to the next meeting.

A request for a public hearing on the Twin Pines Specific Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report was made by Fletcher with the suggestion that it be made the number one item. It was unanimously agreed to hold this public hearing on Nov. 3.

Deficiencies in application resulted in removal from public hearing of the Twin Pines Manor building

drawings which were incomplete and electrical work was not finished. The hearing was re-scheduled for Nov. 7.

The final map for the Chateau Apartments was accepted for transfer to the City Engineer as was a final map for subdivision at 1801 Ralston Ave.

In deference to the new commissioners it was suggested by Vartan to hold over, for discussion on Nov. 21, the three options for the Ralston, Chula Vista, Belmont Hills Sanatorium area. It was also deemed necessary to inform the property owners in the area of the options. It was suggested that notifications be sent out directly with the information that these options are for one quarter, one half, and one acre lots respectively. This was unanimously agreed to.

Chang, Hoffman and Vartan were appointed by Fletcher to take on the San Juan study which had dragged on too long. He recommended they choose a chairman for the Ad Hoc Committee.

Fletcher proposed a possible meeting between the Finance and Planning Commission saying it would be fruitful. Somehow he would like to see \$8000 allocated from somewhere for a study of the San Juan area.

It was pointed out that City Council receives copies of the Planning Commission minutes before they have been approved. Martin suggested marking the copies

going to the City Council 'Preliminary minutes'. Fletcher recommended that a Planning Commissioner be present, on a rotation basis, at all City Council meetings to defend decisions made by the Commission. Lawhern agreed.

The Commissioners agreed to hold a study session for the benefit of new as well as old Planning Commissioners on Thursday evening, Nov. 3.

Some light-hearted discussion followed on whether Tattoo Parlors are desirable on El Camino. It was stated that the Planning Commission decided if they are acceptable.

Review of a dance permit for the Stella Blue restaurant at 1410 Old County was held over until Nov. 7 for public hearing discussion.

John Stoddard, representing the Cipriani Homeowners Association, informed the panel that they were against variances for the reasons that they led overloading the sewer system and resulted in decrease in the quality of life. He would like to see the commission take a long, hard look at the new laws.

The meeting adjourned at 11 p.m. and will reconvene on Nov. 3 at 8 p.m. with a study session at 7 p.m.

S. M. TIMES 11/15/77

## Arts Council

# Finds a Home

By JANET PARKER

The San Mateo County Arts Council was finally assured Monday night that it will have a home for the next five years despite the persistent protests of a group of Belmont residents.

The City Council unanimously adopted a resolution supporting an extension of the Arts Council's lease of the historic Manor Building in Twin Pines Park.

The opponents of the lease — who say that the council has taken over one of Belmont's few city parks — made one last, desperate attempt to push the arts group out of town but failed.

But both the Arts Council supporters and the opponents who have been arguing for months cheered as their representatives paraded before the City Council, explaining their positions for more than an hour.

One of the opponents — Rose Ozwirk — has said in the past that she will circulate an initiative petition that would place the lease question on a ballot if the City Council decides to continue the agreement.

She said early today she has been advised by her attorney that such an initiative effort would not be legally possible. However, she is ready to thrust her energy into a recall effort against Councilman Walt Worthge.

Worthge was again asked by the lease opponents to abstain from the vote since his wife had worked for the Arts Council and he had appeared before the Board of Supervisors seeking funding for the organization.

The council must still formally sign the lease which will make the arts group's presence in Belmont official until 1983.

The county Arts Council — a private organization — already has been operating in the Manor Building for about a year.

"We want that building back," Mrs. Ozwirk told the City Council Monday night. The Belmont taxpayers have been sold "quite a bill of goods" in accepting the benefits of the arts group, she said.

Long-time opponent Mabel Jent said the Arts Council is in control of Twin Pines Park. It is no longer Belmont's building, she related.

"The people of this city resent this," she said. "Let the citizens have their park back again."

"I love art," she said. "I am an artist. But I don't think I need a big building down here to do my art."

She complained that visitors to the arts building are monopolizing the parking places. Senior citizens, she said, are finding it difficult to get to the lodge building in the park where many of their activities are held.

"Give us back our park, so we, the citizens, can enjoy it leisurely, with pride and dignity," she said.

But, supporters were well prepared to present their case, too.

One resident, artist Joe Price, said the council's opponents are yet to show how the building can better be used without digging into local tax dollars.

"The citizens of San Mateo County continually forget that art is for all mankind, not a few," Price said.

"I consider the Arts Council a tremendous asset to the city of Belmont," said Sadie Jacobsen. She said she visited the old building before the Arts Council moved in and found it in great disrepair — nearly unusable.

"It was a mess — a complete mess," Mrs. Jacobsen said. "It was absolutely distressing to walk into it."

"I've been able to observe the weekly improvement in this building," she said. She was "astonished," she said, to learn that the lease might not be renewed.

Arts Council Executive Director William Nemoyten said the extension of the lease is crucial in the organization's ability to take advantage of a \$10,000 grant from the San Mateo Foundation over a three-year period to restore the Manor Building.

He said that six rooms in the building will be available for use by Belmont residents from 30 to 80 percent of the time — a total of 1,900 square feet. The benefits of the council have been overshadowed by a "number of emotional issues," he said.

"Our goal is to make believers, supporters and friends out of the handful of people who oppose this program," he said.

City Manager James DeChaine said the monthly base rent for the building is \$100. However, the use of adjacent studios increases the rent. The total October fee was \$302, he said. From that, the cost of utilities is subtracted.

Several council members pointed out that the City Council can terminate its lease agreement at any time in the next five years if necessary.

Worthge called the Arts Council a "viable, exciting, interesting facet of our community."

Councilwoman Pam Ketcham said the length of the lease — five years — came as a surprise.

# Surprise in Parking Plan

S. M. TIMES 11/22/77

The need for more parking to accommodate visitors at busy Twin Pines Park in Belmont was expressed by several speakers and commissioners at the Planning Commission meeting Monday night.

After two hours of discussion, however, commissioners were surprised to learn that the City Council took action of its own just last week toward improving parking in the area.

As a result, the commission delayed action on agenda items concerning Twin Pines so it can get more information on the council's intentions.

Discussion of the parking situation — called "horrendous" by one city official — was sparked by hearings concerning the proposed Twin Pines specific plan and a parking variance for Manor and Rebac halls.

The specific plan designates the best use for each of the buildings in the park which are presently used by the county Arts Council, the city Parks and Recreation Department, senior citizens and the Police Department.

Parks and Recreation Director Frank Billante explained his commission had reviewed the plan and had several concerns about parking. The recreation commissioners offered a list of potential parking standards, including the need to ban parking on the path which enters the park and loops in front of Manor House Hall and to prohibit public access by car on the path which joins the parking lot to the recreation office — except for loading and unloading, maintenance vehicles and handicapped persons.

In the second hearing, the city itself was asking that the parking requirement of from 18 to 36 spaces for the two halls, which house the Arts Council and the arts center, be lifted and a maximum of six spaces required.

The reason, City Planner Neal Martin explained, is that a large parking facility on the parksite would detract from the beauty of the park and its buildings.

Construction of additional parking areas on the site would "have a detrimental effect on the trees and park-like environment," he said.

He noted that the city has an option to buy 22,500 square feet of property owned by Dr. Albert Voris adjacent to the park. Another alternative to solve parking problems, he said, would be to construct a small parking lot along the west side of Manor Hall, which would still cause the removal of a significant planted area.

Dean McHan, chairman of the Chamber of Commerce Committee for Business Development, explained what the overflow parking from Twin Pines is doing to the downtown business area.

He objected to statements that visitors to Twin Pines could park outside the facility on the street, rather than build more lots within the boundaries of the park.

That already is happening, he said. As a result, local merchants don't have enough parking places for their customers.

"We believe it is grossly unfair to put the burden of parking for the Twin Pines area on an already overburdened downtown area," McHan said.

The city has to bite the bullet, he said, and agree that more parking is needed — even if it means purchasing more property to turn into parking lots.

He noted that the City Council last week told its staff to come up with cost estimates for the purchase of nearby property and a plan to form a parking assessment district.

To allow the parking variance now would increase downtown parking turmoil and conflict with the council's work toward alleviating the parking problem, McHan said, adding that the Planning Commission and council should correlate their work.

Commission Chairman Alex Fletcher said he felt like he was caught flat-footed in not being aware of the council action.

Commissioners agreed a joint meeting with the council would be beneficial in resolving the parking problems.

Commissioner Bob Hoffman said it would be defeating the purpose of a park to pave it over with parking lots.

He suggested posting signs in the business parking lots warning motorists their cars will be towed away unless they are shopping. He said that might force some visitors to Twin Pines to do something totally new to them — walk.

Commissioner Densel Lawhern said a foot path from the Ralston Avenue parking lot to the buildings would encourage persons to park there.

Only Hoffman voted against continuing the public hearings on the variance and the specific plan until Dec. 19.



## Can This House Be Saved?

THE HILL HOUSE, vandalized to the point of uselessness, will be destroyed in the near future unless some community group can suggest a use for it and is willing to spend the time and money to renovate it. Anyone with ideas for the house, which is located in Twin Pines Park, should contact Mayor Frank Gonsalves, care of Belmont City Hall, Fifth and Broadway.

*Bel. Cour. 10/12/77 (see back)*

—Catalina Guevara photo

# Twin Pines Structure

## Belated Appeal Made

BEL. COUN. 10/12/77

## to Save Hill House

An appeal has been made to Belmont civic groups to offer ideas and manpower to save a historic Twin Pines building that has sunk into a state of dilapidation in recent years.

The fate of the building, known as the Hill House and located behind the site of a proposed rest home, must be settled before construction on the rest home begins. Councilman Walt Worthge estimated that a decision on whether to save the building must be made in the next few weeks.

### DEMOLITION URGED

Noting that the Park and Recreation Dept. had urged the city to demolish the building, Worthge called on interested community groups to come forth with ideas for its use.

"Before we go ahead and destroy this building, I just want to make sure we've explored all possible alternatives, that there isn't some possible use for it," he commented.

Worthge warmly praised the building's secluded location, saying that "it's like being in the Santa Cruz mountains."

"It's going to take some time, and a few bucks, but if someone's willing to put in the effort, it could make a really beautiful meeting place," he added.

Worthge said that all possible ideas for using the Hill House should be sent to Mayor Frank Gonsalves, care of City Hall, Fifth and Broadway. He said that if a group's idea were accepted and the group provided the money and labor to refurbish the structure, it would gain free use of the house.

Worthge noted that since the house is located in the 17 acres bought by the city in the 1972 Twin Pines acquisition bond, any proposal for it must envision a park or recreational use.

### MEETING SITE

That category could include such uses as being a meeting house for local cub scouts or other groups.

Although an appeal is being made for its salvation,

many obstacles still loom for the Hill House. First, because the building's demolition would be severely hindered once Dr. Albert Voris begins construction of his proposed rest home directly in front of the Hill House, a decision on whether to renovate it must be made in the very near future.

Second, the house has been a victim of repeated vandalism, deteriorating severely since it was abandoned in 1971, and doubts exist over whether its reclamation is worth the trouble.

In addition, there is a question of whether the city would remain liable, since it owns the house, for any injuries

that might occur after the building is renovated.

Indeed, the question of liability was one of the two main reasons that the house's demolition was first proposed, according to City Manager James DeChaine, who said that the city could be sued if any accidents occurred at the site.

### FIRE HAZARD

DeChaine also said the house, in its present state, could be a fire hazard. "I could see the house catching fire and sending the whole park up in flames," he said.

The appeal for suggestions for using the house isn't the first effort to reclaim the structure, which was built as a single family residence in 1936.

At one time, the city offered to let a nearby resident live in the house for a year or two without rent as repayment for its renovation. The resident agreed, but later backed out over doubts about the house's foundation.

DeChaine said that the foundation shows some signs of shifting, but added that the City Building Inspector would inspect all work on the building to make sure that it would be safe for any community group to occupy.

DeChaine also suggested that any local groups willing to aid in the building's demolition should contact City Hall.

# Arts Council Permit Gets Boost

BEL COV. 9/2/77

The Belmont Planning Commission voted Monday night to grant a use permit allowing the San Mateo County Art Council to remain in the Twin Pines Manor Building, but added a series of restrictions which would prevent the Council from altering the building or subleasing to new tenants without city approval.

The commission also imposed a condition prohibiting overnight occupancy of the building under any circumstance.

The commission's vote was merely a recommendation to the city council which must be ratified by that body, but little objection to the use permit is expected.

The commission's vote was unanimous.

The Arts Council has occupied and renovated the Manor Building for the past year, but accusations that artists had been living in the building and that it shouldn't be leased to a non-Belmont organization as well as several other concerns had prompted the City Council to apply for a use permit for the building.

## AIR CLEARED

And while the chances of the Arts Council being turned out were minimal from the start, Monday's

meeting cleared up several previously unestablished points.

Demands for a restriction on sleeping in the building, already in the arts council's lease, gained added fire last month when several rooms remained locked during a Planning Commission tour of the building in August. Several citizens had conjectured that the rooms might have contained bedding and other signs of living in the building.

County Arts Council Director William Nemoyten has vehemently denied any knowledge of artists living in the building.

The prohibition on altering the building without prior approval from the city had also been in the council's lease with the city, but it turned up at a recent City Council meeting the the arts council had made numerous renovations on the building without permission.

## UNAWARE

Nemoyten said at the time that he had not been aware of the provision.

The other restrictions included provisions that flammable materials be stored, that proper fire exits be established, and that complete liability insurance be obtained.

The commission also asked the staff to establish guidelines for the use of the building's parking facilities. The commission made the use permit's length concurrent with the arts council's lease.

The vote followed a statement from Nemoyten in which he said the arts council was proceeding in its attempt to build ramps

for the handicapped. He also said that a fire sprinkler system could be activated.

## SUPPORT

Several residents expressed their support for the arts council. Bob Brewster stated his belief

that the artistic environment generated by the council would help the business climate, while Wayne King, newly elected president of the Belmont Park Boosters said his group couldn't have run its series of public concerts in

the park without the arts council's help.

"The benefits of the arts council and the things they've done for the building are amazing," he added.

Speaking in opposition to the arts council's presence

was Eve Sterry, who urged that the building's historical character be preserved.

The commission delayed action on a similar use permit request for Rebec Hall, which is occupied by the Twin Pines Art Center.

Until August, 1983

# Park Manor Building Lease Extended

BY M. E. DAVIES

The San Mateo Arts Council (SMAC) lease agreement of the Manor Building at Twin Pines was amended by City Council and extended to Aug. 31, 1983 at Monday night's meeting. The Council also was presented with ten copies of "Heritage of the Wooded Hills" by the Wadsworth Publishing Co. Inc.

In a unanimous vote the Council cleared the way for the San Mateo Foundation to give the Arts Council a donation of \$10,000 for further repairing and renovating of the Manor. This donation was dependent upon the lease being extended to 1983.

To date the SMAC has spent \$30,000 in rehabilitating the Manor and other buildings with a further \$10,000 spent on goods and services.

Countering arguments that the Manor is no longer open to the public, William Nemoyten, director of SMAC, said that an active program encouraging the public to visit and use the manor is in force and six different rooms will be available 80 per cent of the time to the public.

Nemoyten assured the Council that meticulous care was being taken of the historical aspects of the Manor

but voiced concern about parking problems suggesting that visitors come in car-pools.

Joe Price, 2031 Belle Monti Ave., member of SMAC, stated that the opposition to the SMAC's use of the Manor and other buildings had failed to present an alternate use which would not dip into taxpayer's funds. Price pleaded with those who oppose SMAC to come together to create what is natural for mankind.

The Belmont Arts Council also uses the Manor as does the Peninsula Arts Association who have painted their own rooms and pay for janitorial services.

Tom Hunter, 1919 Bayview, said he had missed art and culture in his life and for the sake of his children he was in favor of extending the lease. "It makes life a little better for all of us."

Kirsten Andersen of the Homeview Homeowner's Association said the SMAC was sponging off our taxes and claimed that Vice Mayor, Walter Worthge had done little for Belmont and should disqualify himself from the vote.

Councilman William Hardwick agreed that parking is a problem, and something will have to be done. "Leadership brought in the Arts Council and we did not have the money to fix it up. I think it is beneficial and if

the Arts Council does not live up to its part of the lease agreement we have a lease option of 30-90 days."

Worthge said, that while he has taken the brunt of the criticism, he is proud of what the SMAC is doing. "It is in its infancy and I hope we can look back and say, "isn't it great."

Mayor Frank Gonsalves, while he acknowledged the oppositions views did not share them. "My family has enjoyed SMAC and I think the majority wants them."

The Council was presented with 10 copies of "Heritage of the Wooded hills" by the Wadsworth Publishing Co., Inc. Gonsalves in turn presented two copies each to Ria Elena Dewing, author of the book, and to the City Clerk, James McLaughlin.

Gonsalves then declared by proclamation that the week of Nov. 14-21 be Heritage Awareness Week.

Resolutions of appreciation were expressed to; Ria Elena Dewing for her beautifully written book; to Herbert Garcia of the San Mateo County Historical Association for his assistance as content editor; to the Wadsworth Publishing Co., Inc., for their production assistance, and to Eve Sterry for coordinating the historical heritage of Belmont.

Bettie Anne Nicewonger received a resolution of

appreciation for her faithful public service and devotion to responsibilities and for outstanding service as a member of the Belmont Board of Design.

Edward Morey, chairman of the Peninsula Water Agency gave a color slide show on the future of water resources management planning for San Mateo County with emphasis on conservation, reclamation, and construction. "We hope to keep setting back the year when we may need to invest in another pipeline from Hetch Hetchy reservoir. It will take more concerted efforts in the months ahead but, only time will tell," said Morey.

The Raker Act gave San Francisco the right to build the Hetch Hetchy system which now supplies 60 per cent of water outside San Francisco County. According to Morey, San Mateo County, Santa Clara County and Alameda pay a different differential and they feel that in 50 to 60 years, by this differential, they have paid for Hetch Hetchy and have part ownership. San Francisco disagrees and it is now in the courts.

Kenneth Dickerson, city attorney, was reluctant to comment but thought there is a law in San Mateo's favor.