

The

BASS LAKE BULLETIN

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BASS LAKE ROAD PROJECT FINALLY GETTING IN GEAR?

The 2003 Engineering and Traffic Study for Bass Lake Road indicates that the alignment of Bass Lake Road has essentially remained unchanged since its beginnings as a county wagon trail in the 1850s. After 150 years, it appears that Bass Lake Road may finally be improved.

Last month we reported that there were conflicting statements as to when and how the road improvements between Bass Lake and Highway 50 would be done. Based on a conversation we had with Jim Ware, the Bass Lake Road project manager at the county Department of Transportation, as of mid-July DOT was still talking to the designers of the road, and the project had not yet been put out to contract. However, Ware anticipates that the road improvements will be completed by next summer, and he anticipates that they will work through winter to meet that deadline. Though originally presented as a two-step project, indications are that the road improvements and realignment will be done all at once.

The Proposed Capital Improvement Program prepared by DOT indicates that the project funds for the Bass Lake Road Project from Bass Lake to Highway 50 (DOT Project 71353) will be expended in the fiscal year that runs from July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005.

A related project is the one that will widen and improve Hollow Oak Road (a section of which used to be called Stone Hill Road) from its intersection with Bass Lake Road near the fire station up and over the hill to the Hollow Oak housing development. Work began recently at the western end of the road, and it looks like the contractor is having rough going in rocky soil.

Also in the works is the realignment of Bass Lake Road north from Bass Lake, through what will be the Silver Springs

housing development, to connect with Green Valley Road just east of the new school, and the installation of a traffic signal at that intersection (DOT Projects GP004, GP004A and GP038, respectively). We understand that the builder is anxious to break ground for Silver Springs early next summer. The new Warmington Homes' Travois housing development, located on the north side of Green Valley Road, will also be asked to share the cost of those latter projects. ☞

BOS BALKS AT EDH CITY BOUNDARY

In a move perceived by many as sour grapes, a majority of the members of the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors refused to endorse the tentative city boundary for El Dorado Hills. In refusing to vote on the issue, Supervisors Helen Baumann, Rusty Dupray, and Jack Sweeney voiced concerns about including the business park in the city limits. Supervisors Charlie Paine and David Solaro urged their fellow supervisors to approve the tentative boundary and continue the process, but to no avail.

The tentative city boundary must be set so that the appropriate land parcels can be included in the financial study required by LAFCO to determine if a city of El Dorado Hills would be economically viable. As the nominal lead agency in the incorporation process, the approval of the BOS was solicited so that the study could proceed. By not approving the map, the responsibility for setting the city boundary for study purposes presumably passes to LAFCO.

The three dissenting supervisors all were concerned about the inclusion of the business park south of highway 50 in the city boundary, generally fearing that the county would lose property tax revenue. Supervisor Dupray's reluctance is puzzling because in the last week of June he attended a LAFCO meeting where the present tentative city map was drawn up,

and consensus on the boundary was reached by all parties present, according to information furnished to BLAC.

Their reluctance is even more puzzling given that the supervisors must be aware that if EDH should become a city, for a period of time the city will have to reimburse the county for lost property tax revenues under a formula mandated by LAFCO. This reimbursement, called equalization, will be based on the study to be performed using the tentative boundary map. So any property tax revenue loss incurred by the county would be mitigated by the equalization process. In addition, in the upcoming cityhood hearing process, any landowner may appeal the tentative city boundary line as it applies to the inclusion or exclusion of his or her property.

The tentative El Dorado Hills city map may be viewed at the cityhood website edhcity.org or there is a link on the BLAC website. ☞

BLAC JOINS OPEN GOVERNMENT GROUP

Bass Lake Action Committee has become a member of the California First Amendment Coalition, a public benefit nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting and defending the people's right to know. CFAC focuses on assisting people having difficulty participating in their government. The membership was made possible through a donation by a member of BLAC.

CFAC activities include maintaining a hotline legal service for journalists, civic activists, and public officials seeking advice about open government law, the Ralph M. Brown Act, and the California Public Records Act.

CFAC also provides legal assistance through a network of attorneys specializing in First Amendment rights, furnishing assistance to local groups to provide increased public access to local government. ☞

SO. CALIFORNIA HOMEOWNER SUES FOR PEACE & QUIET

In 1992, Agoura Pony Baseball built four baseball fields, bleachers and a snack area at Lupin Hills Elementary School in Calabasas with approval from the Las Virgenes Unified School District Board of Education.

From the beginning, several homeowners complained about noise, possible loss of property values, parking problems and other nuisances associated with baseball at Lupin Hill. Pony Baseball games are played by youngsters for several months of the year, and nearly every day during spring baseball season.

In 1998, Calabasas resident Dr. Martin Atkinson-Barr sued the Agoura Hills baseball league, the city of Calabasas, and the Las Virgenes Unified School District, claiming among other things that raucous parents at the four baseball diamonds create such a racket that he has suffered great mental, physical, and nervous pain and suffering and has lost value on his home.

The lawsuit alleges that the stadium results in noise among other things (loud shouting, cheering, screaming, clapping, foot stomping and other raucous noises). Atkinson-Barr also alleges that use of the baseball stadium complex results in traffic conditions that block ingress and egress to his property. He also cites baseballs flying from the fields onto neighboring property, public urination, foul language, tailgate parties, and other lewd and obscene conduct.

Atkinson-Barr alleges that property values in the neighborhood have decreased since the ballpark moved in and that he's lost about \$30,000 in value to his home. He said he's lost a total of more than \$250,000, which includes wages lost because of the noise and the cost of soundproofing his house from the chants on the fields. It's money he'd like to be reimbursed for, in addition to punitive damages for his pain and suffering. Atkinson-Barr said his lawsuit has forced the league to quell its noise and the situation is better, but he still wants satisfaction. An apology for the years of torment would be good, too, he said.

The lawsuit has been upheld by two appellate courts and was to go to trial in August. The latest word is that the law-

suit may be near a settlement. However, who will pay the tens of thousands of dollars of outstanding legal bills of the city, the school district and the league is unknown, since their insurance carrier that covered litigation went bankrupt several years ago. ❧

EDH PARK OVERUSE AND NEW PARK PLANS SPUR COMPLAINTS

El Dorado Hills residents who live near existing Kalitheia Park and the proposed Promontory Park have voiced anger and dismay over what they consider inappropriate uses, or prospective uses, of those parks.

Kalitheia Park

At a recent EDH Community Service District board meeting, Ridgeview Village resident Clay Heil asked the CSD to take remedial action concerning Kalitheia Park. Heil complained about non-stop noise on the weekends, inadequate parking, intensive park rentals, and youth sports using the park for practice and games. He contended that such use is contrary to the CSD Master Plan, the Promontory Specific Plan, and the El Dorado County zoning ordinance, since Kalitheia park is designated as a "neighborhood park" and is located in a residential area. Heil also stated that he and his neighbors were prepared to get an attorney to look into the matter, but hoped that a satisfactory solution could be arrived at by the CSD board.

Sympathetic board members suggested limiting the park usage, reducing the number of participants at any one event, and eliminating Sunday rental of the park, but deadlocked 2 to 2 over a ban on Sunday park rentals. Board members Norb Witt and Connie Wyatt were in favor of the measure but Joe Chinn and Justin Masters were opposed (Larry Brilliant was absent). However, it emerged during the discussion that since the CSD has little or no authority to enforce any rules or regulations that it might impose on the use of parks run by the CSD, any action the board might take would have little effect on activities in the park.

Promontory Park

At a recent scoping meeting for the proposed Promontory Park, several Promontory residents objected that the

community was not properly notified about the plans for the proposed park.

Park plans include two lighted ball fields, an adult soccer field, a batting cage, a community center, a children's play area, two tennis courts, some walking trails, and parking for 110 cars. Alcohol will be permitted, especially at the park's community center, which will be rented out for events. The park would be used as late as 10:00 PM to accommodate adult ball players, and the only time the fields will not be in use will be two weeks in December. The park will be monitored by private security after hours to prevent crime. The cost of park is estimated to be \$4.8 million.

Dee Olberding and Andi Stuchell, BLAC Public Affairs Committee members in attendance, reported that the meeting attendees included more than twenty soccer and softball enthusiasts and only three Promontory homeowners. The homeowners complained that they were not informed of the proposed park prior to purchasing their homes, and that they are very concerned that the value of their homes will deteriorate because of the light and noise generated by the park.

The next Promontory Park scoping meeting will be held Tuesday, Aug 10, 7:00 PM at the CSD Pavilion on Harvard Way.

The objections voiced by the homeowners about both Kalitheia Park and the proposed Promontory Park are strikingly similar to those of BLAC with respect to the proposed Bass Lake Regional Park: lights, noise, traffic, and parking. ❧



View of Kalitheia Park



"Never believe that a few caring people can't change the world. For, indeed, that's all who ever have."

— Margaret Mead



THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Hello to All,

The 105 acre triangular piece of property bordered by Iron Point Road, East Bidwell and Broadstone Parkway in Folsom will soon be the home to an open air, pedestrian-oriented shopping center called Palladio fronting Bidwell and a Kaiser Medical Center on the west side. The Palladio Shopping Center will be anchored by two major department stores and will include a 16-screen cinema and about eighty shops. Following the trend away from enclosed malls to what are called "lifestyle centers", the 930 thousand square foot center will be characterized by upscale tenants and one- and two-story buildings.

Featuring a curved Main Street configuration with plazas, outdoor cafes, parking at the storefronts as well as two-story garages, substantial landscaping and architectural treatment, shoppers will get a new view every 150 feet, and retailers will get more visibility. Landscaping and a water feature will connect the shopping center to the Kaiser facility. Construction is planned to begin in the spring of 2006 and the opening is slated for the fall of 2007.

As noted in many newspapers recently, new home sales in the four-county Sacramento region have increased dramatically. The only thing that seems to be holding the local housing market down is the availability of new homes, as inventories have dropped substantially since last year. A recent visit to the new Serrano Village J developments showed that substantially all of the released homes were sold, and the remaining unreleased lots had long waiting lists.

Production home costs average around \$500,000, while custom homes cost about \$1.5 million. Jill Shannon, director of sales and marketing for Parker Development, stated that infrastructure improvements are making Serrano more desir-

able. Shannon specifically referred to the construction on Bass Lake Road which will create another access to Highway 50 for Serrano residents.

Enjoy the Dog Days of August!

Kathy Prevost

President

Bass Lake Action Committee



BOS DROPS TERM LIMITS END RUN

Last month the *Bulletin* reported that the El Dorado County charter review committee, all the members of which were appointed by the board of supervisors, had recommended asking voters to eliminate term limits for the board members.

In the face of opposition from the public, the supervisors decided unanimously on July 13 to drop the term-limit question from the November ballot, saying the issue had become highly politicized.

Supervisors currently may serve no more than two consecutive four-year terms. ☺

MOUNTAIN LIONS AND RATTLESNAKES, OH MY!

A mountain lion was reportedly spotted recently by two residents of Bridlewood Canyon. They were returning home around 8 PM, and as they pulled through the gate, they were startled to see the mountain lion walking up the street. All parties left the scene in a hurry.

A Serrano resident reports that when she found a two-foot rattlesnake curled up on her patio, the animal control folks referred her to Ramirez Rattlesnake Removal, whose business is the removal of rattlesnakes and other common snakes. Proprietor Len Ramirez was happy to come out and capture the snake, which he said he would release in the mountains to help counteract the burgeoning rodent population. Len can be contacted at 530-889-2775. ☺

COMMUNITY ASBESTOS MEETINGS SET BY EPA

The US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) will hold community meetings on August 18 and 19 on naturally occurring asbestos (NOA) in El

Dorado Hills. On the 18th, an Asbestos Science Seminar, followed by an informal discussion period, will be held beginning at 5:30 PM. On the 19th, a presentation covering NOA Assessment Strategy is scheduled for 6:30 PM. Both meetings will be held in the multi-purpose room of Rolling Hills Middle School, 7141 Silva Valley Parkway, El Dorado Hills (at the south end of Silva Valley Parkway almost to Highway 50).

A copy of the USEPA meeting announcement is available on the BLAC website by clicking on the References link, then the Facts and Information link, and going to the EPA Region 9 heading "August 2004" link in the "Soil May Contain Asbestos" section. ☺

MINI-STORAGE FOES SLATE FUND-RAISER

Foothill Residents for Appropriate Land Use (FRALU), a grassroots non-profit organization, will hold an auction/dinner fund-raiser on August 28 to help them continue their legal fight against a planned mini-storage development in their neighborhood.

FRALU is opposed to a mini-storage development project that was approved by the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors earlier this year. The development project would occupy 6 acres of a 17-acre property approximately 800 feet west of the intersection of Green Valley Road and Francisco Drive. The most recent approval of the project by the BOS was in the form of a settlement prompted by a threatened lawsuit by developer Peninsula Capital Group Inc. As part of the settlement with Peninsula, the BOS indemnified Peninsula against legal costs arising out of the settlement. So FRALU in effect had to sue both the county and Peninsula in an attempt to rescind the project approval.

An unexpected declaration of bankruptcy by Peninsula stayed the lawsuit at the last minute. In the meantime, FRALU and the county have been locked in negotiations. FRALU wants the land rezoned to residential use, as it was originally designated prior to the 1996 and 2004 county general plans, but to no avail.

To donate services or items, or for up-to-date information about the fund-raiser, visit the FRALU website at nostorage.org or email laura@nostorage.org. ☺

CHP, SHERIFF REPS ADDRESS CRIME ISSUES AT BASS LAKE

On July 15, more than a dozen Woodridge and Sierra Crossing residents interested in setting up Neighborhood Watch committees hosted a meeting with representatives from the Sheriff's Department and the California Highway Patrol on the lawn of Paul Wong's home in Woodridge.

Sheriff's Deputy Scott Crawford, a Woodridge resident, kicked off the session by saying that the most common types of crime around Bass Lake are car and garage burglaries. To avoid being a victim of crime, Deputy Crawford advises residents to put valuables kept in a car out of sight, to leave lights on around the house, to keep the garage door closed, and to lock the side doors to the garage.

CHP Public Affairs/Community Outreach Officer Craig Beckley then talked about the major traffic complaint from Woodridge residents, speeding on Summer Drive. He said that CHP Officer Brian Hernandez has been assigned to the area and will respond to specific reports of speeding activity. Officer Beckley is stationed in Placerville and may be reached at (530) 622-1110.

Walt Narr and Cliff Barsley of the El Dorado County Sheriff's Team of Active Retirees (S.T.A.R.) then conducted the part of the meeting dealing with Neighborhood Watch. They advised forming groups of 7-10 contiguous houses because neighbors need to get to know each other, what kind of cars they drive, when they are on vacation, and how to get in touch with each other at home and work if necessary. They should read the official Neighborhood Watch brochure, form a neighborhood group, and create a map of each neighborhood with street addresses, names and contact information for the residents. Narr and Barsley advise keeping that information list close to the telephone, to make it easy to report suspicious activity to the Sheriff's Department.

For routine matters or events not currently in progress, call 530-621-6600. For emergencies, dial "911" if calling from your home phone, and 530-626-4911 if you are calling from a cell phone to report an emergency in El Dorado County.

Persons wishing more information about forming a Neighborhood Watch

group can contact the El Dorado Hills S.T.A.R. office at (916) 941-8298. ☞

ASBESTOS FOUND AT NEW FOLSOM SCHOOL

Soil samples taken at the site of the proposed new Lago Vista High School have shown dangerous amounts of naturally occurring amphibole asbestos. Amphibole asbestos is a highly toxic fibrous mineral that has been linked to mesothelioma, an often fatal form of cancer.

School officials have stated that the presence of the asbestos will probably delay the opening of the school until 2007. The soil testing for asbestos was required by a recent law that requires testing at school sites, but not at public park sites.

The proposed high school site is located at Broadstone Parkway and Golflinks Drive, near Sacramento County's eastern border and not far from El Dorado Hills.

Though Folsom city officials, school administrators, and the developers' representatives expressed surprise at finding asbestos at the site, the property is but a few miles from an area in El Dorado Hills that the state Department of Conservation identified in 2000 as likely to contain asbestos.

Folsom Cordova Unified School District administrators said they have decided to undertake a multimillion-dollar cleanup of the potentially hazardous material. Folsom Cordova Deputy Superintendent Debbie Bettencourt has been quoted as saying that the costs of the school site cleanup, estimated between \$2 million and \$3 million, will be absorbed by developer fees and state reimbursement. A similar cleanup of nearby Oak Ridge High School has cost the taxpayers \$1.6 million to date.

Bass Lake Action Committee
1080 Jasmine Circle
El Dorado Hills CA 95762

The discovery at the Folsom school site has prompted calls for soil testing at other construction sites in Folsom and eastern Sacramento County. In the meantime, construction projects are being urged to water earth-moving sites to prevent the stirring up of potential hazardous asbestos fibers. ☞

SEPTEMBER GENERAL MEETING SET

A reminder to BLAC members that a general membership meeting will be held on September 13, 2004, at the home of Kathy and Herb Prevost. An agenda and meeting information will be sent out to all members prior to the meeting. ☞

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John E. Thomson, Ph.D., Editor
530-677-3039

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The Bass Lake Action Committee is a group of concerned homeowners from the communities adjoining Bass Lake. Our purpose is to provide a voice for Bass Lake community homeowners in dealing with the county and other community organizations and agencies.

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For information, see our website
or call

Kathy Prevost - 530-672-6836

or

David Glazier - 530-677-5371