

News - March 28, 2014

New 177-unit, 4-story apartment complex OK'd

Housing project located on West Las Positas across from Hart Middle School

by Jeb Bing

The Pleasanton City Council has approved a developer's plan to build an apartment complex on West Las Positas Boulevard across from Hart Middle School with 177 units and buildings as high as four stories on the 6-acre site.

SummerHill Apartment Communities also will tear down a vacant one-story building now on the site that was built in 1984 and most recently occupied by clinical laboratories for SmithKline Beecham.

The site is located at 5850 W. Las Positas Blvd.

Kevin Ebrahimi, SummerHill's vice president of development, said the four buildings planned in the high-density housing complex will feature "Spanish colonial style" architecture with soundwalls and two rows of trees on the backside along the Arroyo Mocho. The heavy screening is being included as part of the development to shade the apartments from homes along the other side of the arroyo.

Councilman Jerry Pentin cast the only vote against approving the development after others on the council refused to go along with his request that tenants in the apartment complex eventually be allowed access to the arroyo if a hiking trail is built on the SummerHill south side. Currently, there's a trail on the north side and several nearby homeowners objected to giving the hundreds of tenants of the SummerHill complex access to arroyo across the way.

Besides being located on a heavily traveled thoroughfare, the new development will also be served by two Wheels bus stops in front. It will also feature recreation areas and open space for tenants, including a pool, spa, seating areas, a barbecue area and a children's play area with playground equipment.

Ebrahimi said the complex will feature a large water fountain display on Las Positas, although, given the current drought situation, Mayor Jerry Thorne suggested holding that display off until better water conditions return.

Although the complex should have 27 affordable housing units, SummerHill has the option of paying \$2,300 per unit into the city's affordable housing fund instead of actually providing such apartments.

Ebrahimi said that all of the multi-story buildings will have elevators and that all of the ground-floor units will be constructed for access by disabled tenants, including those using wheelchairs.

A total of 304 resident and guest parking spaces will be provided on the site, including 130 in apartment building garages, 124 in covered carports and 50 in outdoor parking spaces.

At a Planning Commission public hearing on the project, attorney Patrick Kernan, a former Pleasanton school board member who was representing the district, said the school district and SummerHill had reached an agreement on payments the company will make to the district.

James Paxson, general manager of Hacienda — the business and residential property where the SummerHill apartments will be located — praised the design standards to be used in the project.

"This is a project we're very proud to see," Paxson said. "It follows on the heels of other good projects and

will be an excellent addition to the (business) park."