

COUNCIL OF NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS

"TO LET THE NEIGHBORHOODS KNOW WHAT'S COMING DOWN BEFORE IT LANDS ON THEM"

Newsletter No. 7

September, 1976

Berkeley, Calif.

HEARINGS, HEARINGS...

We hope citizens, staff, and councilmembers got rested up in August because it looks as though the fall political season will have an uproar of public hearings.

Four TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PLAN hearings are scheduled for Sept. These will be followed by a fifth meeting on Oct. 5 to take actions on modification of the TMP.

The city is to be complimented on putting out a citywide mailer to let everyone know the hearings were coming up. However, it would have been useful if there were a set of staff evaluations, recommendations, and alternatives to respond to. There is no structured context in which to prepare testimony.

Perhaps Council and staff should be working up a set of recommendations for an ongoing procedure to resolve controversial TMP changes. Perhaps continued use of the circulation committee of the Planning Commission or by referring these unresolved problems to the new Transportation Commission.

Also, there will be a public hearing on a proposed CONFLICT OF INTEREST CODE for City Council members at 7:15 p.m., Sept. 14, in Council chambers. Copies of the proposed code are in the City Clerk's office.

And there will be a hearing on revision of the city's AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN at 7:30 p.m., Sept. 22, in Council chambers. Copies of the revision are at the Personnel Dept, 2100 Grove.

WHERE, OH WHERE IS THE ECONOMIC PLAN?

The Aug. 18 Daily Cal reported that the "comprehensive economic planning guide" for Berkeley would be released in a week. It still hasn't appeared. The Daily Cal reports that it is (or was) a doom & gloom report. Berkeley's economy is in an apparently terminal condition requiring subsidies and flexible zoning to encourage businesses to locate here. Also recommended is (or was) an apparently sizeable new set of city agencies to ladle out the subsidies.

The DC says the report "indicates that Berkeleyans buy most of their groceries & general merchandise outside the city". It seems unlikely that most grocery shopping is done outside Berkeley and since we do not have full-scale department stores it may have been true for a long-time that general merchandise purchases are made outside the city. The first finding may be wrong and the second insignificant.

There should be a full examination of this report and the true state of the economy before we are pushed into eroding our tax base with unwise concessions or increasing our tax costs with expansion of the city bureaucracy.

COPY DEADLINE for the next newsletter is Sunday, Sept. 26.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

In the interest of accuracy, may I correct serious errors in the article "The Bicentennial Bulldozer Rolls On" in the August CNA Newsletter.

In granting permission to the Graduate Theological Union to build a library, the City Council hedged that permission with detailed provisos re-enforcing the GTU's own policy of no-growth. Those council members who voted against permission added provisos of their own, thus reducing their grounds for objection.

Some other facts are: 1) At least one extensive poll, taken last spring, indicated that a large majority of neighborhood residents either favored or were indifferent to erection of the GTU library. Those opposed were a small minority. 2) Weeks were spent in revising the plan finally presented to the Council, in response to neighborhood input. 3) Two committees have been formed, with members from both the GTU and the neighborhood, to deal with various aspects of future cooperation. 4) Unlike the Barker House, whose demolition was a blow to Berkeley esthetically and historically, the Wilson House had little to commend it on either ground. 5) If the GTU had been unable to place the library on its property, a block of student housing--which requires no city permission--would probably have been built there instead.

I write this as a long-time resident of this neighborhood, connected with the GTU by no ties whatever. May I comment that the CNA appears to be developing as a center for the gathering and distribution of valuable and dispassionate information. It is to be hoped that the Newsletter, also, will reflect the CNA's ideals.

---Elton Davies
Daley-Scenic Park

THE DOOR CLOSES

On August 16 the City Clerk mailed letters to citizens who receive copies of the City Council agenda announcing that, if they wish to continue receiving them, they will have to pay a \$10 annual fee.

It used to be the case that not knowing what the City Council intended to do with our tax money would be costly. That's still all too true--but now, knowing what they intend to do will also cost money.

Why not charge for commission agendas, too, and make sure that lots of citizens will be kept in the dark?

CEDAR/ROSE PARK UP-DATE

The situation remains substantially the same. A private party still owns half the land that was going to be a park in the NOBBS area and still plans to build a large private school there. However, the city is--at least--no longer talking of trading another piece of NOBBS, use-permit-guaranteed, to the person for the park land. The word from a Highly Placed Source in City Hall is that the city is determined to regain the land with no concessions and without said private party getting a hefty profit (as was the case with the last-minute new owner of Elm House).

This calls for guarded optimism--"guarded" since no one can guarantee that city government will act efficiently and sensibly this once. NOBBS is fully geared up to turn aside any use permit application on the present site and is fully alert to the sudden appearance of any other "deals" like the short-lived trade idea.

--Glenn Harris
NOBBS