

The

BASS LAKE BULLETIN

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The Voice of the Bass Lake Community

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BASS LAKE PARK DEIR DELAYED AGAIN

The Draft Environmental Impact Report for the proposed Bass Lake Regional Park will not be ready at the time previously announced. In a discussion with BLAC President Kathy Prevost last week, Mike Gray, El Dorado County Parks Manager, said that a number of loose ends had to be finalized before the DEIR would be issued. He estimates that the DEIR date will be pushed out a month or so.

“We are extremely interested in seeing what the DEIR has to say,” said Prevost. “We want to see how the county is proposing to mitigate the adverse environmental impacts of the lights, noise and traffic generated by the park as designed.”

BLAC is representing local residents opposed to the building of an adult sports park at the site, the design of which is in stark contrast to the passive neighborhood park that they were led to believe would be built next to Bass Lake. ☞

EDH CSD REJECTS PROMONTORY PARK LIGHT COMPROMISE

Attempts to work out a compromise on the stadium lighting at the proposed Promontory Park sports fields was effectively blocked last week by the El Dorado Hills Community Services District.

Promontory residents proposed a meeting with the youth sports leagues and the CSD in hopes of initiating a dialog that would avoid confrontation and contention over the field lighting scheduled for the park. The youth sports groups (Little League baseball, Soccer, and Softball leagues) agreed to meet with the residents to put together a combined proposal for the CSD.

However, CSD Planning Manager Dianna Hillyer disagreed. She told the parties: “The design process is NOT a

negotiation process, but one of identifying community recreational needs and how to best serve those needs. Further, in making a decision on a final design plan for a community facility such as a Community Park, the board of director’s role is to weigh all the data—including public comments received at community workshops—place that information in the context of the needs of the entire 31,000 people living in EDH and then make an educated, objective decision. At this time we see no benefit of having two of the user groups—park neighbors and youth sports—meet collectively on the draft design.”

Park neighbors are upset that park plans call for more than a dozen seventy-foot-high stadium light poles to light the two baseball fields and the adult soccer field. Additional night lighting is provided on the proposed tennis courts.

The park was originally contemplated to be smaller as set forth in the Promontory development map and EIR. However, a land swap enlarged the park to its present 18.7 acres. This move was consistent with the CSD’s policy of combining acreage set aside for smaller neighborhood parks into active sports parks.

Earlier this year, neighbors’ complaints about overuse of Kalithea Park had to be addressed by the CSD because Kalithea was designated a neighborhood park in the EDH Specific Plan. Neighborhood parks are supposed to contain only swings, slides, tot lots, and play equipment, turf areas, paved areas for court games and wheeled toys, benches, walks and landscaping. Only community parks may contain, among other things, multi-use athletic fields and swimming pools. So the CSD takes the land set aside for neighborhood parks and combines the acreage into larger “community” parks with athletic fields, so the nearby residents find it harder to complain.

For example, the Specific Plan for Bass Lake Hills calls for several small neighborhood parks scattered about the com-

munity. However, the CSD’s master plan for parks contemplates combining these smaller neighborhood parks into a larger sports complex of about 20 acres. ☞



BASS LAKE ROAD-SERRANO PARKWAY WORK BEGUN

Motorists along Bass Lake Road south of the lake have noticed that the grading work on the intersection of the realigned section of Bass Lake Road and Serrano Parkway has begun. Our readers will recall that the developers of the new Hollow Oak housing development have the responsibility for improving and realigning the road from Highway 50 to its new intersection with Serrano Parkway. In addition, Serrano has agreed to complete Serrano Parkway east to the new intersection, complete the new intersection of Bass Lake Road and Serrano Parkway, and to extend the realigned Bass Lake Road northward from there to the vicinity of the entrance to the El Dorado Irrigation District’s facility at Bass Lake.

BLAC has received assurances from county DOT that both of the road work projects would be completed at the same time, thereby avoiding a dramatic increase of traffic emerging from Serrano onto an unimproved Bass Lake Road. However, the county Board of Supervisors was still approving right-of-way agreements for the Hollow Oak portion of the realigned Bass Lake Road late in September. It remains to be seen if the work will be completed as promised. BLAC remains on record as being opposed to any increase in traffic that further endangers drivers on Bass Lake Road. ☞

CSD STATUS OF BELL WOODS, SILVER SPRINGS IN LIMBO

Any decision on the fate of Bell Woods, a proposed 34-acre development in the Bass Lake Hills Specific Plan, has been indefinitely deferred by LAFCO. Bell Woods is in effect an orphan parcel served by neither the Cameron Park CSD, nor the El Dorado Hills CSD. It lies between the two CSDs on the eastern edge of the Bass Lake Hills Specific Plan. District One Supervisor Rusty Dupray urged the deferral until the issue of access to the property was resolved.

A proposed development map drawn up by developer Norm Brown was presented to the Area Planning Advisory Board some months ago, but APAC declined to approve the plan because it split the triangular parcel in two by permitting access from both El Dorado Hills and Cameron Park, and there was no through access because of a large open space down the middle of the property.

In a similar action, LAFCO deferred a decision on Silver Springs until it could decide whether the planned development should be in the Cameron Park CSD or the El Dorado Hills CSD. Silver Springs straddles the right of way of what will become New Bass Lake Road when the road is extended northward from Bass Lake to Green Valley Road. The new road will connect with Green Valley Road just east of the new Pleasant Valley middle school. *✍*

EDH CITYHOOD EFFORT DEALS WITH SETBACKS, RECORD COSTS

Our readers may be interested in why the Promontory development in El Dorado Hills, and other areas, were left out of the current LAFCO map setting forth the proposed boundaries of the city of El Dorado Hills.

Recall that in November of 2003 the El Dorado county Board of Supervisors restarted the incorporation project as a result of a lawsuit settlement agreement between LAFCO and the Cityhood Incorporation Committee (CIC). As part of the Board's restart resolution package, CIC submitted a map very close to the preferred map that is on the cityhood web site (see www.edhcity.org).

However, LAFCO rejected the map because it did not have a legal boundary description that, according to LAFCO, was a requirement to restart the project. The only map with a legal description that came close to the boundaries the CIC wanted for the new city was the Fire Department map. This map had not been updated to include the Promontory Specific Plan, but the Committee was given a one-week deadline to submit the new map with the legal description to keep the incorporation project on schedule. So that is why Promontory is not on the current LAFCO incorporation project map. Interestingly enough, it was later found out that the map did not require the legal description and the CIC map would have been acceptable.

As part of the settlement agreement, LAFCO has hired a project manager to run the incorporation project. The CIC has made considerable progress, and the cityhood election should be held in November of 2005.

BLAC understands that the current map that leaves out Promontory will be replaced around the first of the year when the LAFCO maps are updated. BLAC also understands that the CIC map on the cityhood website is the map that major stakeholders (including LAFCO and the county Board of Supervisors) previously all agreed on.

So far, the cityhood effort has paid over \$400 thousand in fees, costs, and other charges to LAFCO. That is about four times as much as any other city has ever had to pay for an incorporation process in California.

A recent incorporation effort of Minifree Valley in Riverside county is expected to cost only about \$85 thousand, which is being paid by the Chamber of Commerce. Also in Riverside county, the proponents of cityhood for the community of Cabazon expect to pay \$75 to \$85 thousand for cityhood studies. In San Diego county, La Jolla cityhood proponents expect to pay about \$100 thousand for studies for its proposed city that will have a population of 30,000. *✍*

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

— Margaret Mead



THE POPULAR HISTORY OF HALLOWEEN

Much of the history of Halloween wasn't written down for centuries, and some of it is still sketchy and subject to debate. But the most plausible theory is that Halloween originated in the British Isles out of the pagan Celtic celebration of Samhain, which goes back as far as 5 B.C. It was believed that spirits rose from the dead and mingled with the living on this day. The Celts left food at their doors to encourage good spirits and wore masks to scare off the bad ones.

Many centuries later, the Roman Catholic church, in an attempt to do away with pagan holidays such as Halloween, established November First as All Saint's Day in celebration of all the saints who do not have their own holy day.

It is also believed that the Christian practice of celebrating the evening before a holiday, such as Christmas Eve, New Year's Eve, etc., influenced the continuance of the Halloween celebration on the prior evening. In any case, the celebrations on the eve of All Saint's Day continued to grow and change, and old traditions tended to linger on.

The modern name, Halloween, comes from "All Hallows' Evening," the eve of All Hallows' Day. "Hallow" is an Old English word for "holy person," and All Hallows' Day is just another name for All Saints' Day. Eventually, the name became abbreviated to "Hallowe'en" and then "Halloween." *✍*





THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Happy October!

The frost isn't quite on the pumpkin yet, but the shorter days and the changing angle of the sun makes fall feel like it's definitely here! In the Midwest, the leaves would already be turning by now, and the crisp, cool, clear days are never long enough. Here in the foothills, we are usually blessed with a wonderfully long fall to enjoy until the rains start!

A TJ Maxx store is slated to open in Placerville in early October with over 22,000 square feet of fashions and home accessories in the new Missouri Flat Village Shopping Center. The store is expected to employ roughly 75 full- and part-time employees who will be hired locally. Also opening in Missouri Flat Village will be a 24-hour Safeway superstore and several small retail stores.

The Mountain Democrat recently reported that the average price of a resale home in EDH was \$623,487 in August 2004, and in Cameron Park, the average was \$397,028. In August 2003, the average resale price for Cameron Park was \$356,518, and EDH resale homes averaged \$496,196 the previous year. These numbers do not reflect Serrano's new construction homes, which start at about \$400,000.

It was further reported that, overall, annual sales in the state market are expected to increase by 2 to 3 percent over last year's record level. The statewide median price is expected to climb to just over 20 percent from last year. In the second quarter of 2004, the California housing market had its highest quarterly sales performance on record.

Closer to home, it appears the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the proposed Bass Lake Regional Park is expected to be delayed to allow time for the county to make some revisions. Obviously, this should change the projected

timetable relayed to us by the EDC Park's Department. We will keep you informed of the new release date and the availability of the DEIR, which we hope they will place on the County website.

It is anticipated that the first phase of the park will encompass a parking lot, entrance (which will be across the road from Madera) and one ball field. To begin construction of phase one the County has requested \$100,000 from the General Fund for permits and construction and they expect to have a little over \$500,000 from State Proposition 12.

They had requested \$72,496 for the Master Plan/EIR Phase I in this year's budget.

If you have not seen the plans for the proposed regional park, you may go to the Bass Lake Action Committee website to familiarize yourself. If the Bass Lake Road area develops the way it is intended by the Specific Plans, we ultimately will have an 8-plus acre active sports facility closer to Highway 50 beside a school site; an active sports site at the corner of the realigned Bass Lake Road and Serrano Parkway, and a Regional Park at Bass Lake. The proposed high school adjacent to the current middle school on Green Valley Road also has sports fields. There are no expectations that the road will be widened to more than two lanes in the near future. In fact, we have been told by the County that they will not be widening Bass Lake Road to the previously expected four lanes because it will not be necessary.

To date, despite our expressed concerns about Bass Lake Road between the EID entrance and Hill Road where it will be realigned to Green Valley Road, we have not found any money budgeted to include needed turn lanes, sidewalks, or stop signs. Silver Springs Development, which will be driving the improvement of the road from Hill Road to Green Valley Road, anticipates starting development by next summer, which will further generate increased traffic to our area.

On that note, I hope to enjoy the new carvable fake pumpkins this year, ones that will last more than a few days!

Kathy Prevost

President

Bass Lake Action Committee



CFAC BACKS OPEN GOVERNMENT MEASURE 59

The California First Amendment Coalition (CFAC) is a public benefit nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting and defending the people's right to know. They focus on assisting people having difficulty participating in their government. BLAC was recently pleased to become a member of CFAC and has benefited from CFAC's advice in obtaining government documents and access to government meetings.

CFAC is backing Measure 59 on the November ballot, which would amend the California State Constitution to provide citizens with a right of access to meetings of government bodies and writings of government officials. Provisions like these are usually referred to as "Sunshine Laws" because they shed light on government affairs. Legislative statutes such as the Brown Act currently provide access to government activities, but Measure 59 would make the access principle a state constitutional right under the California Constitution. *ℵ*

CSD SPORTS FIELDS, LIGHTING DISCUSSED AT CANDIDATES NIGHT

Four of the five candidates for the two open seats on the El Dorado Hills Community Service District Board of Directors answered pointed questions concerning their stance on sports fields and night lighting posed by CSD board member Justin Masters and BLAC Secretary Fran Thomson at the Candidates Night held on September 30th.

Larry Brilliant wants more ball fields, well-balanced, with something for everyone. He feels that there were good disclosures at Promontory, and they put the park next to a greenbelt and commercial property to lessen the impact. In his opin-

(continued next page)

CANDIDATES (from page 3)

ion, it was a model of how things should be done.

Rhonda Haberman sees the need for lights. She suggested that parks be put in prior to homes being built so that people can make a choice whether they want to live nearby. She also favors the new directional lights, and feels that parks should deliver what communities need and be balanced for various needs.

Dave Trapani said that lighted fields are good in the appropriate place. One must be sure disclosures are complete, and suggests that the CSD should approve the disclosure statement. He favors getting homeowners and sports teams involved with the planning. He said that putting a lighted sports park in the middle of a neighborhood is bad, and that there is nothing wrong with putting lighted fields for profit in an industrial area. He used the example of a privately-funded sports complex in Santa Clara. He asked, "Why aren't parks being put out where they won't create problems?"

Norb Witt is for more lighted fields; however, he said that if the community does not want lighted fields, there is a need to get more sports fields in general to allow more daylight play. ✍

EDH CSD BOARD TO VOTE ON PROMONTORY PARK PLAN

Opponents of a lighted sports complex planned for the Promontory housing development are expected to enliven the meeting of the Board of Directors of the El Dorado Hills Community Services District that will be held on Thursday, October 14, at 7 o'clock at the CSD Pavilion on Harvard Way.

The Board is scheduled to vote on the controversial project plans for Promontory Park, a sports park developed on 18 or so acres of parkland located on Alexandra Way off Sophia Parkway in the Promontory. The original conceptual design included several lighted sports fields, a community building, tennis courts, basketball courts, and a parking lot. Construction is scheduled to begin in Spring 2005.

The residents are objecting to, among other things, the dozen or more 70-foot stadium lights to be erected on the park's ball fields, which are across the street

from their neighborhood. They are also concerned that much of the park is devoted to day and night organized sports, while the local neighborhood community is left with only a parking lot, a tot lot, and a community center, most of which lies under the power lines that cross the park.

Sports advocates are expected to attend the meeting in an attempt to influence the CSD Board to proceed with the park as planned. ✍



The Birthday Cake

BLAC MEMBERS CELEBRATE FIRST YEAR

Members of the Bass Lake Action Committee held a birthday party for their organization in September in celebration of their first year in existence.

A number of the members and their honored guests attended a potluck dinner on September 18th at the home of John

and Fran Thomson in Woodridge. A cocktail hour and a delicious dinner preceded the cutting of the celebratory cake, pictured nearby.

The decision to organize BLAC came from advice given to the then fledgling grass-roots group by Supervisor Rusty Dupray when he met with them over a year ago. "You folks need to get organized," Rusty said at the time.

"We will always be grateful to Rusty for his good advice," said BLAC President Kathy Prevost, as she cut the cake to the enthusiastic applause of the party-goers.

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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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