

Date: January 23, 2006

Time: 7:00pm

Location: 2280 Kenwood Ave., corner of Monroe

Who wants to develop the property?

Currently, the State of California is in contract with two parties: SummerHill Homes and the City of Santa Clara. SummerHill is looking to purchase ten acres and Santa Clara is looking to purchase six acres. One acre is being looked at (not guaranteed) for a park.

What uses are being planned for it?

SummerHill Homes is looking to build 110 single family homes on the land, most with no land, just plot houses. The houses would be close to 40 feet tall and each would have a two car garage. These homes would be in the \$1M dollar range.

The City of Santa Clara is looking to build a high density, 165 unit senior home. At one point it was being looked at for very low and low income seniors, but it is unclear if that is still the plan.

What plans have been approved, and by whom?

No plans have been approved yet as there are many steps that need to occur first. Currently, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is being created. Any significant development requires that an EIR be created to address any local environmental concerns, including transportation/traffic, hazardous materials, land use, air quality, etc. There are 15 categories that are addressed in the EIR. More on this in a minute.

There was some effort in Sacramento last year to stop the development; what was that about and what happened?

In mid-2004, SB-1102 was passed by the State of California. It basically stated that any state land labeled as "surplus" (which BAREC is) needs to be sold at fair market value. Since the City of Santa Clara was in the process of trying to purchase six acres at a discount (below fair market value), this halted the sales process. The City of Santa Clara scrambled to find a way to allow City to buy the land a below market rate. The city manager even sent letters to various state officials to encourage them to let their deal go through.

The City of Santa Clara convinced Senator Elaine Alquist to create a bill, SB-472, that would allow the six acres to be sold to the City of Santa Clara for a reduced price (roughly \$1M per acre). The bill barley got out of the senate and we were in there every step of the way. We spoke three times in Sacramento and were

ready to continue to fight the bill in the Assembly. The good news is that we put up a lot of hurdles and delayed the vote as long as possible. The bill was eventually pulled as it was no longer needed for the sale to occur since the original bill SB-1102 had a sunset clause for the fair market value stipulation. This happened on July 1, 2005. Since then, the deal is back on.

What alternate plans for the property have Save BAREC and others proposed

There are many options on the table, ranging from complete open space, to a park, to a working farm. SaveBAREC is proposing a sustainable living solution, based on urban agriculture techniques. It is a proven financially stable option for the land based on what UC Santa Cruz's Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems (CASFS) has done with a similar parcel of agriculture property. The land/facility would be run by a community focused non-profit, not a university, not the city, and not the state. We are suggesting that the soil be cleaned naturally and completely using proven natural techniques (living organisms, plants, and biology) to certify the soil as organic. When completely cleaned, the land could then be organized after the UC Santa Cruz model, where there are set plots for fruit orchards, row crops, dense biointensive farming, dedicated children's learning center, landscape training for professionals and the community, a native plant garden/botanical gardens, yurt housing for apprentices in agriculture that will work the land, and a visitor's center/museum that would capture the rich history of this land and the valley. It would be a public community asset.

There are also many opportunities for technology here, e.g., solar, that could power the facility and most of the surrounding neighbors and businesses. The possibilities are endless.

What's happening now -- what is the next decision point?

The EIR is still being created (it was due over 18 months ago). Once the EIR is created, it is published as a draft to the public. There is then a 45 day public comment period.

The EIR preparation agency then takes all the feedback and answers each question or comment.

The final EIR is then created and presented to the Santa Clara City Council. The council then votes on whether or not they want to accept the EIR. If they do, the EIR becomes the document that is used when discussing the proposed development. One of the options in the EIR is "no project," meaning that the project would not proceed.

The following was stated as next steps the City would have to do:

- Review the EIR
- Review General Plan Amendment for SF and Park
- Review Planned Development Zoning for SF and Park
- Review R3 Zoning for Senior Project
- Review Tentative and Parcel Maps
- Review Development Agreement
- Review Loan Agreement

Then, the City Council has to vote on the various things, including zoning changes. Also worth noting, Jamie McLeod's domestic partner is affiliated with Charities Housing, the proposed developer for the senior portion of the development. Because of this, she has recused herself from any and all meetings regarding BAREC. This means that there are only six council member that can vote on the project. If just three council members support keeping the land zoned agriculture, the deal is dead.

The state's consultant, Dan Potash, told me directly that the state can only sell the land, not determine its use. He further stated that the City of Santa Clara has complete control over what happens to the land via zoning. He said if the City does not want the land to be developed, they do not have to change the zoning. It's just that simple.

How can interested neighbors get involved?

Read our website: <http://www.savebarec.org>. There are news paper articles and PAC*SJ recently highlighted BAREC in their winter news letter. We were also interviewed by ABC 7 News a couple of months ago. All of this and more are on our web site. Look under the Current Affairs link and find the April 26, 2005 Santa Clara City Council Meeting link. That page has video clips and quotes from citizens and Council members...some very interesting.

We need your help. Please spread the word that it is not a done deal and get your neighbors to sign our petition.

We attend a Farmers' Market every Sunday at Santana Row, where we have an information booth to help educate the community on what is just a ten minute walk from where they are standing. Most people have no idea the land is even there and don't believe me when I tell them. We have a one sentence petition that we ask people to sign supporting this effort. We have over 3,000 signatures so far. If you have any time, we could sure use it.

We need funding. All of the materials we use is paid for by our volunteers.

We need political people with influence.

We need a web master and database administrator. Our website, while functional, could use some help.

Data entry. We need to enter names and email addresses into our database so we can add people to our mailing list.

Walking the neighborhood. At some point, we might have to do a referendum (if the City of Santa Clara decides to go through with this project). We will need help getting the needed signatures around the Santa Clara neighborhood to get the people to vote on this. There is overwhelming support for this land to be preserved...we can prove that. We continue to challenge the City Council to prove that it is in the community's best interest to develop this land.