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Saranap Village goes to county Planning Commission

By John T. Miller

A Contra Costa County Planning Commission Hearing, inviting public comment for the Saranap Village project proposed by Hall Equities Group (HEG), will be held June 28 at 7 p.m., at 651 Pine Street, Martinez. Earlier this week, a hearing was held to review the final Environmental Impact Report. The zoning administrator with the County Department of Conservation and Development was expected to recommend approval. No public comments were taken at that time.

The project has gone through five years of presentations and overhauls; HEG has held eight open houses, along with many other public outreach programs, that resulted in with several rounds of design changes in response to public input.

David Dacus, president of the Saranap Community Association reported that their board unanimously recommended approval of the project, saying, "We believe it will be an asset to Saranap as a whole, providing needed services, upgraded buildings, calmer traffic, additional parking, and enhancements to a rundown area that has experienced few upgrades in the last 40 years."

The Walnut Creek Chamber of Commerce voted 13-to-1 to endorse the project, while the Contra Costa Association of Realtors sent word to the Board of Supervisors that they feel this project offers advantages in meeting community goals for housing.

An HEG spokesperson said, "We are cautiously optimistic that the Planning Commission will recommend approval of the reduced-height version of the project. We believe this development will be an asset to the community, transforming Boulevard Way into a vibrant neighborhood village."

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