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The Rockridge News

Sponsored by the Rockridge Community Planning Council, 6225 Ross Street, Oakland
– 658-9523 –

Agenda: General Meeting

Plan to attend the next General Meeting of the Rockridge Community Planning Council on Thursday, October 16, 1986, 7:30 pm, at the College Avenue Presbyterian Church. Speak your mind on the following Neighborhood issues on the Agenda:

7:30 pm Shell Oil's mini–market proposal

Mr. Gregory Shockey of Shell Oil's Marketing Department will discuss Shell's plan to build a mini–market at the current Shell station located at 5755 Broadway at Taft Avenue. Mr. Ted Radosevich and other Neighbors will present the Neighborhood's response to that plan. According to Mr. Radosevich, Neighbors have written more than 100 letters opposing the project.

Last month's Rockridge News cited Neighborhood concern about the possibility for increased crime at a store of this type located on a remote stretch of Broadway close to the freeway, and pointed out that a similar proposal was turned down about six years ago because of Neighborhood opposition.

Shell presents its request for a Major Variance to the Planning Commission Wednesday, October 29. The application number is VMD86–434.

8:00 pm Parking and Traffic in Rockridge

Vice–Mayor Marge Gibson and Mr. John Soderling, Oakland Department of Public Works, will discuss the City's approach to Rockridge/College Avenue traffic problems. See story, page 1.

8:30 pm Oakland Police Department Study

What kind of job are the police in Oakland doing? Here's your chance to express your opinion! Diane M. Alexander, J.D., of The Lattimer Consulting Group, Inc., will discuss the study her firm is conducting of the OPD and distribute questionnaires polling public perceptions of the Police Department.

Chariots of Ire?

Merchants and Neighbors Focus on Rockridge Traffic

Sometimes it seems as if, in some long–ago cloud studded aerie, a capricious and possibly vindictive Greek God made a gift of the Wheel to Humankind. Everything was fine until some mortal soul mated an internal combustion engine with the gift and created traffic jams.

College Avenue traffic fared pretty well, thank you, until increasing commercial success and BART brought traffic jams and parking crunch into our intersections and residential steets.

Many Neighbors today are angry because they are not able to park in front of or, in many cases, not even near their own homes. Merchants are concerned because their employees and customers have to walk several blocks across risky intersections to get to work or to shop. BART is upset because shoppers and nonriders take spaces meant for commuters.

According to Mr. John Soderling, Deputy Director of Oakland's Department of Public Works, the City is aware of all of these problems. Several existing City programs – such as the Residential/Preferential Parking Permit program, now ready to be implemented at the block level– may provide some workable solutions.

Construction of an off–street metered parking facility for College Avenue shoppers, merchants, and employees is being discussed as another possible solution.

The parcel of land now known as College Avenue Art Stone at 5372 College Avenue near the intersection of Manila, College, and Hudson Avenues has been proposed for acquisition by the City for use as a parking lot.

See Parking, Page 3

Dates Calendar Events Calendar Dates Calendar Events

Tuesday	**Oct 14**	**7:30 pm**	Redwood Heights Improvement Association to speak to the City Council concerning maintaining R–30 zoning in Redwood Heights.
Wednesday	**Oct 15**	**1:30 pm**	Planning Commission meeting: City Hall, Room 115.
Thursday	**Oct 16**	**7:30 pm**	RCPC October General Meeting, College Avenue Presbyterian Church.
Wednesday	**Oct 29**	**1:30 pm**	Planning Commission meeting: City Hall, Room 115. Shell Oil request for a Major Variance for a mini–market at Broadway and Taft.

Rockridge: The Early Years

By Andrea Gabriel

"Rock Ridge, where poppies bloom in November, where meadowlarks and quail announce the coming of the day, and the air has a woodsy odor."

Such was the inducement offered prospective buyers in the Oakland neighborhood of Rockridge (or Rock Ridge as it was known then) in 1910. Today, meadowlarks and quail vie for space and greenery, and the air has lost its woodsy scent. Apartment building, shops and highways crowd an area once covered with acres of fruit trees. Large, sprawling houses, squeezed tightly together dot the once bare and pristine rolling hills. But Rockridge today, as in the past, remains a charming and desirable neighborhood.

The upper and lower districts of Rock Ridge developed separately and for different reasons, but at one time the entire area was part of Rancho de Antonia, a large tract of land owned by Vincente Peralta, given to him by the Spanish government.



Broadway looking Northeast toward Rockridge Boulevard, about 1912. The sign high up on the hill says "Rock Ridge Properties".

Rockridge was "born" in 1879 when land owners Colonel John (Jack) Hays and Horatio and Charles Livermore (no relation to the Laboratory) filed a subdivision map in the office of the Alameda County Recorder. The name Rock Ridge originated with Mrs. Horatio Livermore because of a prominent rock formation on the Eastern side of her property. Another individual, Charles Hale bought five adjoining acres from Peralta. This property was later sold to James Treadwell and eventually became the location of the California College of Arts and Crafts. Members of the Claremont Country Club bought property in this area for a club house and golf links.

In 1906, much of the land East of Broadway — from Broadway Terrace to the South, and Ocean View on the North and East for about one and one–half miles — was purchased by the Laymance Realty Company of Oakland. Fred Reed, a young, enterprising agent with a Berkeley realty office foresaw great possibilities afforded by the beautiful Oakland hills. He conceived a notion of elegance and natural beauty captured in a well planned neighborhood development. The San Francisco earthquake and the growth of successful transportation routes further convinced him to explore his ideas. Reed proposed his ideas to Laymance, who placed the entire Rockridge project under his management.

Reed had traveled the Pacific Northwest and Southern California studying neighborhoods and what made them successful. His concept was to develop the tracts in a natural pattern following the graceful curve of the hills ridges and ravines. Building restrictions "...as to the character, value, use and position of the improvements to be placed on the lot" were imposed; no site was to be constructed with less than a 60 foot frontage. Reed's brother, Walter, designed the Italian stone pillars which still stand at Broadway and Rockridge Boulevard.

In 1909, Laymance Realty officially opened the tract for the sale of building sites. The Rock Ridge area was divided into three distinct sections: Rock Ridge Place, bordering Broadway, had property selling from $3,500 to $10,000; Rock Ridge Park, in the center of the hills to the East, sold lots up to $15,000; Rock Ridge Terrace lots, at the highest point of the property, sold to $20,000. Advertisements in a 1910 newspaper offered a fleet of motor cars available on Sundays to drive potential customers through the tract. Other ads, enticing buyers in Sacramento, offered "...a wonderful property beautifully developed with parklike roadways, gardened terraces, and surrounded by building restrictions intended to make home places there the most attractive in California". The development was a great success and lots sold quickly.

In 1906, the properties West of Broadway were used for truck farming and fruit orchards. Not long after Reed's success, residential and commercial areas West of Broadway developed along major transportation routes. Since 1892, a street car line had run along College Avenue to the University. A few years later, the Sacramento Northern Railroad began carrying passengers and freight between the Bay Area and Sacramento. This line ran along Shafter Avenue close to the present BART station. The station in those years was called College Avenue. Another transportation route ran down Claremont to the Claremont Country Club. Residences and businesses were built and filled the vacant land.

The company of Birdsall and Craig developed much of this area. Their first venture was to open up a piece of land bordered by Auburn, Claremont and College; the 25 bungalows to be built were sold before they were completed. The company then bought and developed an adjacent piece of land which extended down College to Shafter, originally Ghiglione Truck Farm. Major development continued between 1910 and 1935, and schools and churches were built. Homes in this area of Rock Ridge (originally part of a tract called Bay View Terrace) were less grand than those in upper Rock Ridge and typify what is now known as the California bungalow style of architecture.

To insure the success of the Rock Ridge district, the Vernon–Rock Ridge Improvement Club (later the Rockridge Improvement Club) was organized in 1910, its members committed to improving and maintaining the quality of their area. Streets were kept clean by a committee of weed pullers,

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Parking, from Page 1

The Boards of the College Avenue Merchants Association (CAMA) and the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) met October 1st to discuss the need for an overall parking strategy for Rockridge in general and the implications of locating a parking facility on the Art Stone property in particular.

The RCPC and CAMA Boards agreed that such a metered parking lot could relieve parking congestion in the immediate area of College and Manila, but that it could not be the single solution to College Avenue parking problems. Further, RCPC Board members are wary of the new parking lot becoming a springboard for new development before the needs of existing development are met.

Location of a parking lot fronting directly on College Avenue was not a popular idea with the Boards. However, there was strong support for development of the Art Stone property as a mixed–use project including a parking use and other uses such as a park, library, community center or retail frontage.

Each of the Boards formed committees to work on the problem. At a subsequent meeting Tuesday, October 7 with Vice–Mayor Marge Gibson, Mr. Soderling, Parking Administrator James Rice, and Steve Costa of the Bay Area Partnership, the CAMA and RCPC Parking Committees agreed the City should continue its attempts to obtain the Art Stone property with the understanding that development of the property would be preceded by a determination of the project feasibility and appropriate mix of uses for the site. CAMA and RCPC will work with the City to develop a Request for Proposal for the mixed–use project.

At the same time, Vice–Mayor Gibson will be working with Public Works and Bay area Partnership to develop a proposal for the City to fund a comprehensive look at overall parking strategies and solutions for College Avenue and the Rockridge Neighborhood.

Your ideas and feelings on parking issues and plans need to be heard! Come to the RCPC General Meeting Thursday, October 16, 7:30 pm at the College Avenue Presbyterian Church. Vice–Mayor Gibson, Mr. Soderling,. Mr. Rice and CAMA representatives will be there to discuss current proposals and hear your concerns.

Nominations Received For RCPC Board

Twelve nominations for the Rockridge Community Planning Council Board of Directors have been received. As discussed in last month's Rockridge News, names submitted in nomination will be published in the News as they are received. Please submit the names of nominees and your name as nominator to RCPC Nominating Committee, 6225 Ross Street, Oakland, CA 94618.

Current nominees are:

Mr. Mark Aaronson
Ms. Barbara Anderson
Mr. Marc Beyeler
Mr. Jack Brown
Ms. Nancy Dutcher
Mr. Barry Epstein
Ms. Annette Floystrup
Mr. Peter Goldsmith
Mr. Don Kinkead
Mr. Jack Nunberg
Mr. Ray Perman
Mr. Richard Smith

Early Years, from Page 2

electricity was put in, police and fire protection were secured, bus service was started, and wooden bridges over Temescal Creek were replaced by concrete culverts. Club members were social as well as civic minded – they organized turkey dinners, dances and whist parties.

Today there is no need to entice buyers into the dense and busy Rockridge Area; it is a popular place to live. The diversity of our Neighborhood is evident in its many restaurants and food stores, unique gift shops, convenient transportation, neighborhood businesses and services, and community action groups. Although the character of Rockridge has changed and developed over the years, it is this rich diversity which continues to nurture a strong community feeling and to make our area a pleasant place to live.

Information for this essay was obtained from clippings, photographs and articles on file in the Oakland History Room, Oakland Public Library.

Thank you for your continued support of the Rockridge Community Planning Council and The Rockridge News.

Suggested Minimum Donations: $10 per category.

Yes! Enroll Me as a Registered Member of the Rockridge Community Planning Council!
I have enclosed a check for my tax–deductible donation for a year's registration and other support areas I have checked off:

Name:_____

Address:_____

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Thank you!

Mail to: Don Kinkead
5626 Oak Grove Avenue
Oakland, CA 94618

Planning Commission Votes Support Rockridge Positions

Recent applications for variances for food–oriented businesses on College Avenue were heard by the Planning Commission at its October 1 meeting.

Applications for variances filed by Cybelle's Pizza and LeDuc Catering, businesses proposed for the new Rockridge Court building, were approved by the Commission with conditions for litter control, signage, and parking adopted as suggested by RCPC.

The fish restaurant proposed for the building next to McNalley's and strongly opposed by near–by Neighbors was not approved.

Bring in this ad to take advantage of our Hallowe'en Spirits Special!
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Good through November 15



Riviera Market

5316 College Avenue
at Bryant Avenue
10:30 am – 9 pm Sunday – Thursday
10:30 am – 11 pm Friday and Saturday

Beer– 12 Pack–12 oz..		
Budweiser, Coors		$5.28 + tax
Wine- 1.5 Liter		
Gallo Chablis, Red Rosé		2/$5.00 + tax
Hearty Burgandy, Rhine		
Champagne		
André	750 ML.	2/$5.00 + tax
Vodka		
Royal Gate	Liter	$5.79 + tax
Smirnoff	Liter	$7.59 + tax
Gin		
Bombay	750 ML.	$9.99 + tax
Royal Gate	Liter	$5.79 + tax
Scotch		
J & B	Liter	$14.49 + tax
Johnny Walker Black	Liter	$19.99 + tax
Johnny Walker Red	Liter	$14.49 + tax
Bourbon		
Jim Beam	Liter	$8.29 + tax
Kessler	Liter	$8.29 + tax
Brandy		
Korbel	Liter	$8.99 + tax
Rum		
Myers	Liter	$11.99 + tax
Tequila		
José Cuervo Gold	Liter	$10.59 + tax
Liquer		
Kahlua	Liter	$13.99 + tax
Cigarettes, Domestic	Carton	$8.49 + tax

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City Considers Stronger Demolition Permit Process

Revisions proposed for the City of Oakland Building Demolition Ordinance requiring all properties proposed for demolition to be posted for thirty days prior to issuance of a demolition permit, and stipulating that demolition permits could only be issued with a building permit for the replacement structure were set forth in a recent memo from Mr. Terry Roberts, Director of Public Works, to City Manager Henry L. Gardner.

Violators of the Ordinance would be subject to penalties of about $2,000 per unit, not a real deterrant considering the size of developments in the Rockridge Area.

RCPC Secretary Annette Floystrup wrote a letter to the City on behalf of RCPC supporting the proposals and calling for a four–fold increase in the penalties and denial of all future demolition and/or building permits for violators of the Ordinance.

The Public Works proposals will be submitted to the City Council for consideration after a public testimony and review process.

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