

## **Without police and community commitment crime in CV will continue to rise**

I hope everyone in Carmel Valley paid attention to the (April 13) article (in this newspaper) by editor Lorine Wright ("CV residents voice concern over number of auto thefts, auto and home burglaries"). Ten years ago, my husband and I moved our family here from University City (cited in the article as one of the two areas with, at least thus far, a higher auto theft rate than CV) when a middle of the night car theft turned deadly. A block from our home, a UCSD graduate student came out to his driveway to find a burglary in progress and became a murder victim instead.

The explanation for Carmel Valley's increase was predicted years ago. In the same way University City is an easy in-and-out target off the 52 freeway, so now is Carmel Valley off the 56.

We moved from University City because, by that point in time, the auto thefts and burglaries had become the norm for both the community and the police department. We tried to form Neighborhood Watch groups, but that simply is not enough. What can Carmel Valley residents do? Is it too late? I believe not. If our local papers continue to publish fine, informative articles like Ms. Wright's, and if Carmel Valley residents speak out loudly now, in the beginning, I believe Carmel Valley still has a chance to preserve its peace. However, we will not be able to do it without increased police patrols and an increased commitment from our local police force. And that won't happen without our input. As a community, and with increased police support, let's hope Carmel Valley can conquer this problem before it's too late.

Kim Perl  
Carmel Valley

## **Community participation critical to outcome of Shores property negotiations**

We wanted to thank the Del Mar City Council for making their negotiations public and for inviting public comment regarding the current negotiating impasse with the DMUSD over the old Shores School and Park purchase.

We support both parties reaching agreement on a fair price for the property based on its public facility zoning. The city's offer of \$6 million (a significant premium to the last appraisal of \$4.4 million based on the site's public facility zoning) and generous concessions in terms over the long course of negotiations seem reasonable.

The city's valuation is in line with another North County public facility, the Self-Realization Fellowship in Encinitas. In a recent article in The San Diego Union-Tribune (March 12, 2006), Jeff Woolson, who is North Coast managing director of CB Richard Ellis, said that the oceanfront property is worth "about \$1 million per acre" based on its current public facility zoning. He further added that if the property were rezoned to residential, its value would double.

The DMUSD demand for \$12 million, more than twice the property's appraised value, obviously assumes a zoning change for all or part of the property to permit residential, multi-family and/or commercial development. According to the State Education Code under which the sale of "surplus property" is even permitted, the DMUSD must take into account compatible use to the community. Our donors and the Del Mar community will not support rezoning the property as the DMUSD valuation would imply for the following reasons:

- The PF zoning honors both the expressed intent of the original owners of the property and the deed restriction placed in its title when they sold the parcel to the Del Mar Unified School District (DMUSD) in the 1940s. The DMUSD acquired the property for the sole purpose of building the Del Mar Shores School, the DMUSD administrative offices and associated improvements including playgrounds, playing fields and parking. According to the original deed, if the property were to be used for any other purpose than as a school, it would revert back to the original owner. Even though the owner's reversionary right has expired, it should

be honored in principle by ensuring the Shores continued use as a recreational and educational resource to the Del Mar community;

- The Del Mar Community Plan enacted in the 1970s specifically designates that the Shores site be zoned PF only;

- Given its large size and location in the heart of Del Mar, any rezoning and subsequent development of this five acre property would have a large impact on the entire Del Mar community. The property abuts the busiest street in Del Mar, Camino Del Mar (the old Coast Highway 101) and another smaller artery, Stratford Court. Any rezoning to a more intense use would create unwanted additional traffic and congestion in an area already impacted by the highest density in Del Mar with large condominium and apartment complexes nearby;

- The site contains the only playing fields available for organized youth sports in the entire city of Del Mar. The Del Mar Little League was founded on that field and continues to host games there. It is also the home field of the Del Mar Powerhouse Baseball Club; and,

- The Winston School, the current and professed long-term tenant of the school facility, provides a valuable service to the entire region by providing college preparatory education for children with learning differences and public access to the park and playing fields.

The disposition of the old Shores' school site will not just directly affect the immediate community in the city of Del Mar. Even more importantly, it will set a precedent for the disposition of all future "surplus" schools in the DMUSD. This could soon include Del Mar Heights or Del Mar Hills unless there is a reversal of projected enrollment declines. What will also happen to Carmel del Mar, Ashley Falls, Sage Canyon, Torrey Hills, Sycamore Ridge or Ocean Aire when the current baby boom inevitably dissipates and some of these sites become "surplus?"

At this point in negotiations, community participation is critical to the eventual outcome to save all our parks, schools and playing fields throughout the DMUSD. We continue to welcome new supporters on our Web site ([www.delmarparks.org](http://www.delmarparks.org)) and gather pledges, both large and small, in anticipation of a successful resolution to the current stalemate in negotiations.

Meanwhile, please participate in the Del Mar City Council meeting on Monday, May 1, at 6 p.m. and upcoming DMUSD board meetings. Your written comments should be sent to the Del Mar City Council (<http://www.delmar.ca.us/>) and the DMUSD board (<http://www.dmUSD.org>).

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