



the Echo

Local News, Events
and Activities
for the Homeowners
of Shepherd Canyon



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PAVING UPDATE

No Re-Paving of Shepherd Canyon Road This Year

Many people have asked about the paving of Shepherd Canyon Road. We have both good news and bad news on this front. The good news is that we finally got the Public Works Agency to take a look at the drainage problems at the dip in the road just before the soccer field. We are concerned both about winter flooding and that erosion will continue to undermine the pavement and create potholes if drainage is not addressed before repaving occurs. We also want to make sure the bike path issues are addressed, and the places where the road is settling are stabilized. The second bit of good news is that everyone agrees that Shepherd Canyon Road Paving is still funded in the city's budget to be repaved. The bad news is that we can get no definitive schedule from the city as to when it will be repaved. Our concern is that now the city has finally recognized the drainage problem, they will spend the summer and fall thinking about how to fix it, then the rainy season will be an excuse to move the paving to next year once again. At this point, we don't think we'd publish a schedule if the city did give us a verbal commitment. What we will do is state for the record what the city has said and then provide the contacts for you to weigh in directly with the right city staff.

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UPCOMING PUBLIC FORA

Two Public Workshops to Spearhead New Vision for Shepherd Canyon Park

Since the Shepherd Canyon Open Space was set aside as park land as part of a mitigation measure in 1975, many changes have occurred in the neighborhood. A two-phase Park Plan was developed by landscape architects in 1984, a majority of which was never implemented. It is time to revisit community priorities for this important neighborhood asset. There are many opportunities to be considered, such as: providing more active park space for recreation; improving the landscape; restoring the creek and native vegetation; creating trail connections; and developing more efficient vehicular access to the Park.

What is the purpose of a Park Concept Plan?

A Park Concept Plan will identify community goals for the Shepherd Canyon Open Space and guide future decisions about park improvements. The Plan will outline a vision for the future of the Open



Hikers enjoying a late morning stroll in the 34-acre Shepherd Canyon Park.

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Summer 2003

PAVING from pg.1

On July 6th, 2001, Barry Weiland was quoted in the Montclarion saying that Shepherd Canyon Road would be paved by June 2002. In October 2002, at an SCHA Annual General Membership Meeting, Dwight Chambers said that the road would be paved by November 2002 or March 2003 if sound-attenuating pavement would be used. In March 2003, both Dwight Chambers and Barry Weiland said the road would be paved by June 2003. In July 2003, nobody is talking and nobody is answering.

The 1800 households of Shepherd Canyon have faithfully paid about \$20 million dollars in property taxes alone on time. This project is valued at less than a half-million dollars. Please contact your city official to tell them how important this project is.

Contact: Jean Quan District 4 City Council Member Phone: (510) 238-7004 email: jquan@oaklandnet.com or Claudette Ford Director of Public Works Agency Phone: (510) 238-4916 email: cford@oaklandnet.com

The Canyon Moves Toward Self-Sustained Vegetation Management

Even as we work with the City this year on the most comprehensive fire safety clearance of Shepherd Canyon

since the Oakland hills fires of 1999, we have also commissioned an inventory of the existing vegetation—both native and invasive fire hazard species to aid in future planning. We believe this will be a valuable tool in taking the next steps in a more comprehensive plan. We are trying to work with the City now, to make sure we actually

SCHA Sponsors Traffic Study

SCHA is contracting with a Bay Area civil engineering firm to address key traffic issues in the Shepherd Canyon area. The study will provide the SCHA Board with a report that describes local traffic hazards and potential solutions, citing current

- Arrowhead Drive:
- 4) The pedestrian path from Tiffany Drive to Paso Robles
- 5) Seasonal flooding at the bottom of Shepherd Canyon Road
- 6) Appropriate guardrails on Shepherd Canyon Road west of the firehouse
- 7) Line-of-sight issues at Shepherd Canyon Road at Skyline Boulevard

WORKSHOPS from pg.1

Space, and set forth a strategy and implementation actions for achieving that vision. Currently, funding for Park improvements is extremely limited. However, a community-based Plan is critical in providing opportunities for Council District 4, City Staff, the Homeowners' Association (SCHA), and neighbors to determine how to strategically allocate scarce resources. A conceptual Plan will provide these groups a foundation upon which to pursue grants and other funding mechanisms to gradually implement priority park improvements.

The Open Space element of Oakland's General Plan (adopted in June, 1996) calls for the development of an updated Master Plan for Shepherd Canyon Park. This co-sponsored park planning effort between Council District 4 and Shepherd Canyon Homeowners' Association collaborates with the City to work towards implementing this General Plan directive.

In May 2003, Councilmember Jean Quan convened an Open Space Master Plan Task Force to address Shepherd Canyon open space planning. Shepherd Canyon Park is just one component of the larger picture of open space in the hills. The aim of this Park Concept planning process is to kick-off Master Plan development by designating a general direction for the Park, outlining preferred activities, uses, and strategic implementation actions.

After a general community concept has been generated, the District 4 Council Office and the SCHA Board may seek additional funding to develop a more detailed Park Master Plan.

HOW IS SHEPHERD CANYON OPEN SPACE AREA DEFINED?

The Shepherd Canyon Open Space is located in the Oakland hills just east of Montclair Village along Shepherd Canyon Road. Much larger than the soccer field that is visible from Shepherd Canyon Road, Shepherd Canyon Open Space is actually a 34-acre resource conservation area that was set aside by the City of Oakland as a park land and nature preserve in 1975.

The study area is roughly defined by the railroad trail and Shepherd Canyon Road to the northwest; the hillsides along Escher Rd. to the east; Scarborough Dr. to the south; and Fire Station #24 to the southwest. The park is flanked by residential use and is conveniently located proximate to Montera and Joaquin Miller schools. Shepherd Creek runs through the park, although underground in some locations. In general, the area is composed of 22 wooded acres, several open meadows, a soccer field and the railroad trail on the west side of Shepherd Canyon Road.

THE PLANNING PROCESS This planning process provides an opportunity for the community to create a vision

for this important community resource, and to define a set of logical steps for how to get there. The process involves the following major steps:

I. IDENTIFICATION OF ASSETS AND CHALLENGES & DEVELOPMENT OF A VISION

This step will identify the assets, challenges and opportunities related to the Park. Meetings with community members will be held to guide the planning process. Existing conditions and park planning history will be reviewed and a Vision for the Shepherd Canyon Open Space will be developed by community members. A Vision is a statement describing the community's preferred future for the area. The Vision may address such topics as desired activities and uses for the Park, access and circulation, vegetation management, design concepts related to the creek and landscape, and other goals.

II. IDENTIFICATION AND PRIORITIZATION OF STRATEGIC ACTIONS

Practical implementation strategies will help bring the Vision into reality. Community members will help select and prioritize a range of strategic actions in order to most efficiently allocate scarce resources to improve the Park area. The implementation strategies will be categorized into a set of near-term, mid-term and long-term actions that will enable the community to

achieve their goals for the future.

WHO IS PREPARING THE PLAN?

Community members will play a major role in creating the content of the Shepherd Canyon Park Concept Plan and Action Strategy. The planning process is being coordinated by Council District 4 and Shepherd Canyon Homeowners' Association, in partnership with the City of Oakland, and with assistance from neighborhood volunteers.

HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?

There will be several opportunities for involvement in the planning process: Attend public meetings. Two public workshops will be held. The first on September 6th and the second on October 8th. Talk to District 4 or any member of SCHA Board—members are eager to hear your ideas.

Trail scouts are needed to identify and inventory midblock paths. These paths were originally planned to connect streets by small foot paths. They were included in the original general plan for the neighborhood. Some have been implemented, and some have not. The City's general plan says there should be an inventory of these paths but the city hasn't allocated any money to do it. We can help them get started. To help with the inventory call Herb and Adrienne Bryant at 339-0985.

Check the Website for further updates.

Freeways in Shepherd Canyon?

In the late 1950's there was a proposal to run an expressway, State Highway 77, down the middle of Shepherd Canyon Road. The expressway would have saved commuters to and from Contra Costa County. In the early 1970's this project was scuttled with the help of homeowners from the Shepherd Canyon corridor.

get a schedule for clearance that coincides with the fire season. A plan will help create a more clear scope and schedule, and allow cross-year planning. The City will soon ask us to pay a new tax for vegetation management. If we'll have to pay, at least we should know we are getting something for our money.

For more information on vegetation management, contact Lois Trostle at 339-8977.

Caltrans traffic and safety codes. The report will then be used to initiate discussions with the City of Oakland on mitigation measures. The current study focuses on seven locations that have long been considered hazards by area residents:

- 1) Parking at Shepherd Canyon Park
- 2) Intersection of Skyline Boulevard, Manzanita Drive & Colton Boulevard
- 3) The hairpin turn at Shepherd Canyon Road and

This first study is a pilot for the way in which SCHA intends to represent its members' concerns to the City. It's important that we demonstrate to the City that we are earnest collaborators, and that we expect the City to fulfill its accountabilities in maintaining our area.

For more information on the SCHA-sponsored traffic study, or to express an area of concern, please contact Tom Heidel at 339-8207.

In preparation for the workshops, please make sure to attend the hike through Shepherd Canyon Park on Saturday, August 23rd, 10:30 a.m. *

*This will be the last of the guided hikes through the park before the Community Workshops, contact Herb and Adrienne Bryant at 339-0985 for more hike information.

the Echo

The Newsletter
for the Homeowners
of Shepherd Canyon

SCHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mike Petouhoff, President
531-5959

John Carroll, Secretary
339-1788

Tom Heidel, Treasurer
339-8207

Lois Trostle, Director-at-large
339-8977

Larry Cooke, Director-at-large
336-9215

Jim Glosli, Director-at-large
339-6661

NEWSLETTER DESIGN
Joe Joffe



Inside: Your Input Needed on How to Improve Shepherd Canyon Park

www.shepherdcanyon.org

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MIKE PETOUHOFF

Message from the President

Did you ever feel like your tax dollars flow down hill to city hall more easily than services flow back up? We've felt that way too, and have tried to further increase our level of engagement to help pull at least a little back up hill.

First, we will be initiating an open space master planning process for Shepherd Canyon Park. As we've mentioned before, the City's general plan requires a master plan for Shepherd Canyon Park; not just the soccer field but all 34 acres of the city-owned Resource Conservation Area that is Shepherd Canyon Park. We need to address things like parking for Saturday soccer games,

comprehensive vegetation management and many other issues. Much of this was supposed to be addressed in the original 1975 Shepherd Corridor Plan.

Even as we plan, we'll continue the day to day process of working on issues like vegetation management for fire safety. The planning process will help us to come together as a neighborhood and create a vision for the park, and a strategy. While this doesn't create funding by itself, we will be working with the City officials who have a say in where the budget dollars go, and how we can get outside funding, as well. The first session is September 6th, where we will focus on our vision. The second session is October 8th where we will focus on strategies and

priorities. For other ways to get involved, read inside.

The second master planning effort is more for the whole canyon. While there is no requirement for an overall Shepherd Canyon Master Plan, per se, we want to clearly define requirements for things that need to get done and to bring them to the City's attention. We've already begun work on a traffic safety study, looked at road conditions and engaged with City staff to do a better job with new home construction permits among other things. As the City continues to come to us to ask for more taxes at least we will be able to point to specific things that need to get done with the \$10,000,000 a year we pay in property taxes alone.

SCHA efforts are paying off: our only unpaved road,

Forestland way, is being paved thanks to Board Member Lois Trostle; Board Member Jim Glosli got the City to issue a stop work order on defective construction on Shepherd Canyon Road at Arrowhead; and our open space is getting the closest fire safety haircut this year since the 1991 fire storm. These are all things we do to improve quality of life in Shepherd Canyon—a strong neighborhood association benefits us all. Please join.

➤ If you are not a member, please contact Tom Heidel to sign up. If you are a member, tell a neighbor who is not to call Tom. Our Fall Membership Drive is just around the corner. Also, we have plenty of volunteer opportunities. Please contact Lois Trostle at 339-8977 or Tom Heidel at 339-8207, if you are interested in participating. 🌿