



So what's up with the Shepherd Canyon Scenic Route signs?

Actually, a Scenic Route was declared in Shepherd Canyon by the Oakland City Council and Planning Commission in August of 1975. Special signs were called for at that time, but never installed by the city. These signs fulfill this original promise.

The genesis of this stems from action taken by the Oakland Planning Commission after CALTRANS abandoned plans for Highway 77 through Shepherd Canyon in response to outcry from residents. The highway had been planned along the former route of the Railroad that ran next to Shepherd Canyon Road. After



citizen outcry cancelled the highway plans, Shepherd Canyon was left as one of the last undeveloped areas of Oakland, with the land newly available from CALTRANS, who no longer had a highway plan. To make sure development was not haphazard, the City Council placed a development moratorium until the Shepherd Canyon Corridor (SCC) Plan and Environmental Impact Report laid out a plan for use of the area. The SCC Plan created a combination of residential use and dedicated park land, and it defined a “**Scenic Route**” designation that covered both residential and park land with special provisions. This guided what Shepherd Canyon is today. That scenic route designation took the form of an “S-10” scenic route zoning overlay, that still lives on in the zoning code today, and which provides for special design review for public and private projects in the area. The SCC Plan, approved by the Oakland Planning Commission and City Council in August of 1975 specifically stated

“Measures should be taken to properly identify the canyon to driver and pedestrian, resident and tourist. To reinforce the identity and importance of Shepherd Canyon, **a series of explicit signs** should be installed. Official ‘Scenic Route’ symbols should be placed...”

The plan went on to even propose an ‘Acorn’ logo for the Scenic Route on page 23.

However, unfortunately, the scenic route signs were not placed, the SCC Plan and EIR documents were lost and their meaning became only a vague recollection. In the dark days, scenic route park land was used by the city as a dump, and became an overgrown fire hazard. But we actually went to the state archives to relocate some of the documents. Now the documents have been recovered, and we are



actively engaged with the city on all these fronts. On Escher Road, one aspect has been cleaning up the upper meadow, where the city cleaned up much of their debris in 2001. Residents then worked with the city to fulfill the original park vision. We created paths, and planted native grasses. Scout Mark Ceraldi installed two picnic tables as well. The signs help memorialize this scenic route.



The signs were commissioned to be a true rendition of the logo proposed in 1975. The acorn is now proudly part of the sign. Boy Scout Matt Ceraldi took on installing these signs as part of his Eagle Scout project, and in particular, building a stone monument base

for the sign at the top of Escher Drive.

Appropriately, this stone base is filled with rubble that had previously been dumped, but now is recycled as part of the sign. In addition to this sign at the top of Escher Road, two other signs at the top of Shepherd Canyon Road, near skyline, and near the bottom of Shepherd Canyon Road before the fire station, roughly mark the extent of the Scenic Route.



So now these signs fulfill the vision of our city fathers from nearly 32 years ago, and help to make sure the Scenic Route designation is not forgotten.

Today the Shepherd Canyon Homeowner's Association Continues to work hard to fulfill the vision of the Shepherd Canyon Corridor Plan, and the Scenic Route, through its work in the Park, in Fire Safety, and in

the work of its design review committee, reviewing new private home applications in the Canyon.

For questions, or to help out contact Mike Petouhoff, President, SCHA (510) 435-2892

To say thanks to Boy Scout Mark Ceraldi call (510) 407-7227

