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Save the soul of Del Mar Mesa Preserve

BY ANNE HARVEY AND KATHRYN BURTON

Betrayed. That is how citizens feel when their elected leaders bend to the will of the highest bidder, the biggest donor, and the most influential corporation, instead of the voter.

In 1996, San Diegans citywide made their voices heard via Proposition H by voting to permanently preserve open space while defining where commercial development should go. An 11-acre privately owned parcel, surrounded on three sides by what would become Del Mar Mesa Preserve, maintained its agricultural zoning.

And so that lonely "notch" property on the east side of the Preserve facing Rancho Penasquitos sat in quiet bliss for all to enjoy.

Now Cisterra Development, which purchased that 11 acres in 2014, is trying to rush through a zoning change to build a 450,000-square-foot office/industrial complex and parking tower garage, with no height limit, in defiance of the

GUEST COMMENTARY

intent of Proposition H.

They were hoping we weren't paying attention.

But we were. As were the planning boards of Rancho Penasquitos and Del Mar Mesa, as well as environmental groups like The Friends of Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve and the Sierra Club San Diego, who voted unanimously to oppose this industrial development.

As soon as next month, the San Diego City Council will decide the fate of Del Mar Mesa Preserve. We can only hope that they honor the will of the people. Otherwise, they will approve a zoning change so the well-connected developer can scrape the mesa, bulldoze the chaparral, fill in the canyons, and destroy the habitat for countless plant and animal species in

order to erect yet another industrial complex that has no benefit to the community.

Del Mar Mesa Preserve is beloved by hikers, equestrians, bikers, naturalists, and anyone wanting to be inspired standing atop the mesa. The tranquility of the "tunnels," with year-round streams of water, are a refuge from an otherwise hectic lifestyle. Plant and animal life is abundant. Serenity is ubiquitous.

To destroy these 11 acres is to destroy the soul of Del Mar Mesa Preserve and it must be stopped. Contact your city council representatives and ask them to oppose this zoning change. For more information, please visit Protect our Preserves San Diego's website www.protectourpreserves.org

— Anne Harvey is a retired Carmel Valley and Del Mar Mesa Community Planning Board member. Kathryn Burton chairs the Torrey Hills Planning Board.

DEL MAR HISTORY



The old Post Office

PHOTOS COURTESY OF DEL MAR HISTORICAL SOCIETY



The old Post Office location today.

Then and Now

In 1926, the Del Mar Post Office was in the home of Mae and Luke Kibler. Mae was the Postmaster. In the same building was Luke's real estate office. Today, Julie's Beachwear is in the old post office; Sea Change Academy is in Luke's office; and Sundancer is in the Kibler home.

OUR READERS WRITE

Celebrating the Del Mar way: L'Auberge's 30th anniversary

Few people represent the Del Mar Way better than Jim Watkins. Many attractive buildings in Del Mar were either built or redeveloped by him including Stratford Square, he remodeled the old gas station on the corner of 13th and Camino Del Mar, and built Canterbury Corner and the Del Mar Inn. The L'Auberge Del Mar is his crown jewel and is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year.

Some of Jim's numerous awards include Del Mar Man of the Year, Del Mar Rotarian of the Year, and Del Mar Person of the Year as well as having held numerous non-profit board positions. Although one of the most successful developers in Del Mar, he was instrumental in the creation of the city's Design Review Board, whose aim is to preserve views and village ambiance. Few have walked both sides of the aisle so skillfully and successfully. His projects at times incited passion and rancor, but ultimately, delight and approval. Few would argue that the L'Auberge Del Mar is not an invaluable asset to downtown Del Mar.

Committee to Celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the L'Auberge

SEAWEEDERS TIP

Most of us do not have a cutting garden, but we all live near flowering trees, shrubs, and vines with enough flowers and greenery to create a spring bouquet.

For a small bouquet choose long-lasting leaves and herbs (ivy, ferns, grasses, hedge plants, rosemary), and a few brightly colored flowers (nasturtiums, roses, the tall inflorescence of succulents, and the bulbs that you may have planted last fall).

Make your selection considering the sizes, shapes and colors of your plants and, to prolong the life of your unique bouquet, do this in the morning.

On April 9, at 6:30 p.m. the SeaWeeders Garden Club of Solana Beach meeting features Heather Hough, educator at the Boys & Girls Club garden at La Colonia Community Center and Park, who will share her experience with permaculture land design at Hedonisia, near Puna, on the Big Island of Hawaii.

Please join the event at the Fletcher Cove Community Center, 133 Pacific Ave., Solana Beach. Visitors are welcomed; admission is free.



Spring bouquet

DRAWING BY IRINA GRONBORG

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