PANIL NOTES
piedmont avenue neighborhood improvement league

Volume 23, Number 2 May 1998

Housing proposal for Cerrito & 40th

Presentation at PANIL on Thursday, June 4

Affordable Housing Associates (AHA) is in negotiation for the purchase of the vacant lot at the corner of 40th and Cerrito. At the June 4 PANIL meeting, AHA and their architects, Powell Partners, will present several very preliminary site plans for consideration by neighbors.

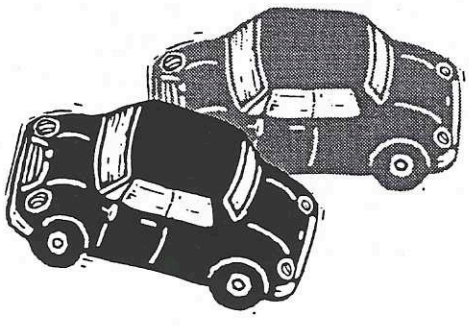
AHA has not yet made final commitment to purchase the site, but after meeting with neighbors on the block in mid-April, they felt it was worth going to the next step of working up several alternatives for site plans. These plans will be presented Thursday, June 4 at 7:30 pm in the Community Room of Piedmont Gardens, 33 Linda Ave. All interested neighbors are urged to attend.

AHA and Powell Partners have asked that neighbors identify their big concerns about the proposal, and designate a few representatives to act as liaisons during further discussion. While designated contacts can help the process work more smoothly, PANIL has always been a (small "d") democratic organization, and important issues should be decided by block meetings.

In block discussions on this and other proposals for the lot, density, parking and traffic have been major concerns. The AHA alternatives propose 19 units for the site, in a mix of 1-, 2-, 3-, and 4-bedroom units. This is approximately the maximum allowed under the current R-50 (medium density) zoning. However, the City Council recently passed a new land use General Plan which is expected to result in a rezoning to lower density for the area. The rezoning would probably allow about 12 to 14 units on the site.

The city has just adopted "interim controls" to guide development in the many parts of the city where there is a difference between current zoning and the expected future zoning under the new General Plan. These interim controls may require a reduction in the number of units, if the neighborhood decides to make a strong case to the Planning Department and Planning Commission during the public comment period.

see *AHA proposal,* p.2



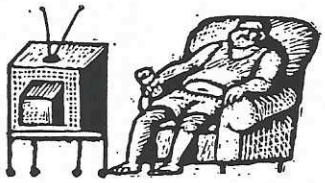
Next meeting June 4

On the agenda:

- ☆ Affordable Housing Associates will present a very preliminary proposal for the lot at 40th and Cerrito. (see story at left)
- ☆ New owner of the auto repair shop at Broadway and 38th: a gas station is proposed—with convenience market. (see story below)

PANIL meets Thursday June 4 at 7:30 PM in the Community Room of Piedmont Gardens, enter 33 Linda Ave.

This is a full and important agenda. We will need to start promptly!



Don't sit this one out—
Vote on June 2

Gas station/market proposed

Broadway and 38th Street site to be discussed at PANIL

Joseph Zadic has bought the auto repair shop on Broadway at 38th Street, and hopes to convert it to a gas station with a convenience market. According to his attorney, Peter Smith, the gas station conversion does not require a public review, but the convenience market would require a Conditional Use Permit.

Smith will be at the June 4 PANIL meeting to describe Zadic's proposal. Zadic has already applied to the county for permits which are required before he can file his city permit application. County approval is expected the week of June 1, and he would file for his Conditional Use Permit with the city soon afterward.

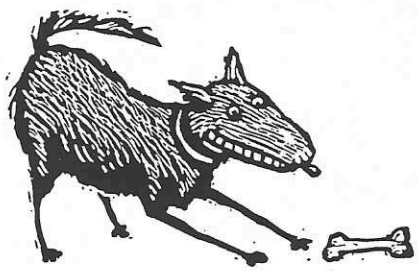
According to Smith, Zadic proposes to add gas pumps and a canopy to the lot, and replace three of the service bays with a convenience market.

There will be a public hearing before the Planning Commission for the Conditional Use Permit, where neighbors may oppose the application or support it with conditions of approval. Design Review or the project would be part of the Use Permit review process. ✪

AHA proposal, *from p. 1*

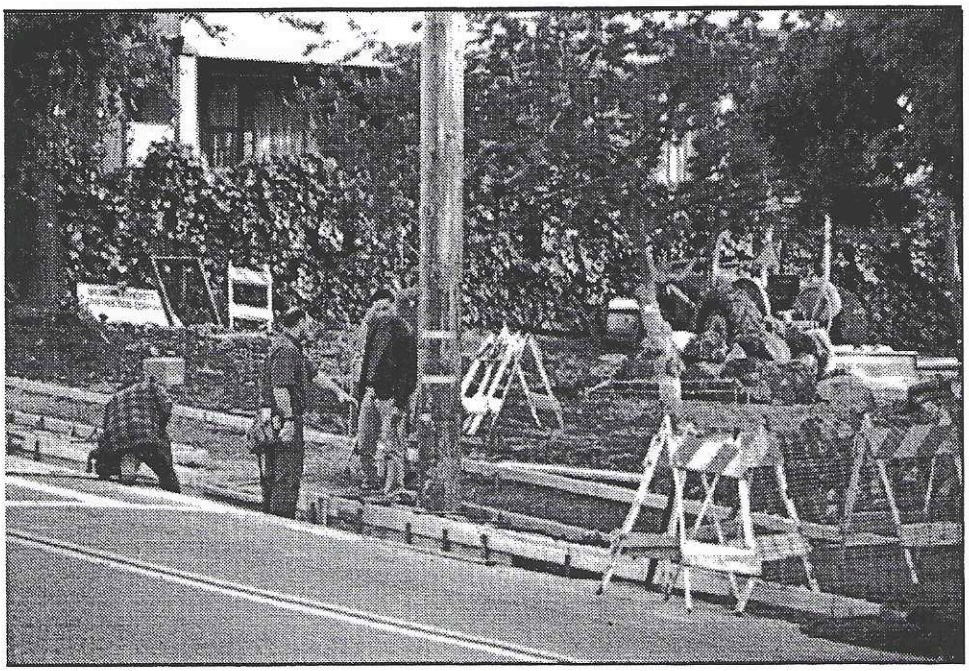
AHA and Powell Partners both expressed a strong commitment to making the project design "fit in with the neighborhood," during a preliminary discussion May 26 with PANIL Chair Valerie Winemiller and Vice Chair and block resident Phil Mineart. This would include breaking up the mass of the building complex, and planning the site so that it is both safe and livable for residents. AHA would manage the complex after construction, and director Ali Kashani and senior project manager Jonathan Austin state that good management can eliminate the problems that have given affordable housing a bad name in many neighborhoods.

There are a number of steps before this project comes to fruition. The final site purchase is dependent upon both design and finance contingencies. Because the project involves 5 or more units, a Conditional Use Permit is required from the city; this includes a public hearing and consideration of the quality and appropriateness of the site plan and appearance. AHA will be applying for affordable housing tax credits in December; announcements of the awards of those credits will come 60 days later. ✪



PANIL backs Pet Overpopulation law proposal

At its April 2 PANIL meeting, Glenn Howell, director of Animal Control Services for the City of Oakland, made a presentation on a Pet Overpopulation Ordinance which was scheduled for consideration by City Council. Howell presented appalling figures on the numbers of abandoned pets in Oakland, the number the of animals his officers must euthanize each year, and the cost to the city. PANIL members voted to support the proposal and a letter was written to Council. In spite of a commitment from the SPCA for free and low-cost spay and neuter services to low-income pet owners, the Council subsequently postponed a decision on the matter. ✪



Construction progress at park

The dangerously broken sidewalk by Glen Echo Creek Park on Monte Vista Avenue has now been repaired. Here, park reconstruction project manager Joe Trapp (by phone pole) of the city's Environmental Services Division consults with the sidewalk contractor (gesturing). Careful measuring was required to make sure the new curb cut met disabled access standards; the job was complicated by the fact that earlier contractors had raised the level of the gutter when asphalt was added to the roadbed. Trapp wanted the curb cut to meet the current gutter smoothly, but allow for restoration of the roadbed to its correct level when it is resurfaced in the future.

Chalk lines now mark the location of the new walkway within the park. Irrigation lines will be laid soon. PANIL will put out the call for volunteers when planting is scheduled. ✪

"Disaster Fiesta" set for June 6

Arlene Feng and the neighbors on the 4100 block of Gilbert Street invite you to a Disaster Preparedness Drill and Block Fiesta on Saturday, June 6 from 10:00 AM til 2:00 PM. The staging area/communications center will be the island at the intersection of Gilbert and Ridgeway.

Arlene reports that the event will be patterned after the city's CORE III unit, sharing information with neighbors who were unable to attend the block's CORE training session. "Damage scenarios" will be posted around the block describing structural damage or personal injuries, and participants must decide the appropriate action to take. Participants are invited to allow a sign to be put at their house, and/or to prepare a "culinary disaster" to share as part of the "fiesta." CORE program materials will be available, so please drop by!

For further information, call Mike Bray at 595-8168 or Arlene Feng at 654-1930. For information on the city's free CORE training workshops contact Carrie Barnecut at 238-6019 ✪

Community Policing News

The PANIL area formally launched its participation in Community Policing with a meeting April 30 at Piedmont Avenue School.

Speakers at the meeting included Captain Mike Simms, Sgt. Art Michel, Officer Christopher Craig, walking patrol Officer Wendy Rae, and Neighborhood Services Coordinator Angela Davis, as well as Councilmember Jane Brunner. PANIL will be acting as the formal "Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council" in our area.

Angela Davis, our Neighborhood Services Coordinator, can be reached at 615-5931

Captain Simms explained that the Police Department has been reorganized so that all officers (patrol, walking, Community Policing, bike, etc.) working in a particular beat are under the same command, allowing better coordination and communication.

A good deal of the meeting was devoted to questions and answers with neighbors. In response to a question about recycling scavengers, Sgt. Michel stated that about 80% of the scavengers have outstanding warrants or some kind of arrest record; some use the carts as cover for burglaries. The scavengers stake out "routes," he said, and territorial arguments between scavengers can sometimes escalate into violence. He encouraged people not to put out their bins until the last possible moment on pickup day. A Yosemite Avenue neighbor added that he works in the mental health field, and knew that a large number of the scavengers have substance abuse or mental health problems; he was not comfortable to see the scavengers sometimes roaming into his yard or his neighbors' yards.

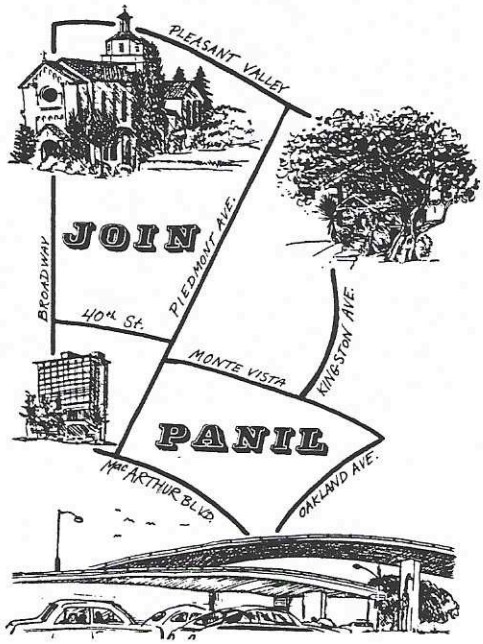
Who do we call for what problems? Always call 911 in an emergency or for a crime in progress. Call the non-emergency number for a response to problems that are not an immediate threat to life or property. Angela Davis and Officers Craig and Rae are available to help with ongoing problems, and frequently check their voice mail while on duty. Officer Craig generally works Tuesday through Friday, 1:00 PM to 11:00 PM. Or you can just look for Officer Wendy when you're on the Avenue!

Five thousand flyers announcing the April 30 meeting were distributed door-to-door by PANIL volunteers and by NSC Angela Davis. Many thanks to Miriam Valesco, Margitta Gardner, Joan Dark, Adele Bertaud, Mike Lydon, Gary Abrams, Richard Koogle, Don Bonney, Carol Brown and Michael Bass. Additional help came from Officer Wendy Rae, who distributed flyers on the Avenue, Angela's mom, Maudry Davis, and Angela's fiancee, Willie Lincoln. Thanks!

Officer Wendy Rae, the walking officer on Piedmont Avenue, is now more accessible than ever: the Piedmont Avenue Merchant Association has donated a cell phone for her use. During her working hours, you can reach her on the cell phone at 435-7406, or on her pager at 310-1681. ✪

Clip-and-save police numbers:

Emergency	*911*
Non-emergency	*238-3333*
Angela Davis, NSC	*615-5931*
Off. Christopher Craig	238-2054 vm box 112-8038
Off. Wendy Rae	*cell phone 435-7406*



PANIL MEMBERSHIP

To renew your PANIL membership for one year, or to become a new PANIL member, send a check for $12, payable to PANIL, to PANIL at P.O. Box 20375, Oakland, CA 94620. Your membership includes all issues of *PANIL Notes* published during the year, and supports outreach, photocopying and other expenses!

PANIL Notes welcomes comments, criticisms, announcements of its members' activities, block events or articles on issues effecting the neighborhood. Contributions should be sent to *Notes* editor Valerie Winemiller c/o PANIL, P.O. Box 20375, Oakland, Ca 94620-0375, or call her at 653-4552. The next deadline is June 15. ✪

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Jane Brunner, District 1 City Councilmember	238-7001
Ken Rice, District 1 School Board member	879-8661
Valerie Winemiller, PANIL Chair and *NOTES* Editor	653-4552
Phil Mineart, PANIL Vice-Chair	654-5454
John Mertes, PANIL Treasurer	652-1257
Jim Ploss, PANIL Secretary	420-0569
John Woodbury, PANSA Chair	654-6591

Urban nature corner: Swallows back at the quarry

✎ Donna Reynolds and
Valerie Winemiller

The parking lot by Payless/RiteAid on Pleasant Valley has offered a surprising and fascinating view of nature in an urban setting this month. The warmer weather has brought back great clouds of insects swarming above the water in the old quarry next to the parking lot, and scores of swallows have been engaged in a feeding frenzy. The swallows are most visible just at dusk; we're sorry we can't print in color, because the light on the quarry walls is golden at that hour, and valerian is in bloom on ledges and crevices of the cliff—vibrant fuchsia bloom with bright green foliage.

Mosquitoes, damsel flies and other insects are breeding around the water, and the swallows soar and dive, catching and eating great quantities of the insects on the wing.

This is the breeding season for the swallows, too, so they should not be disturbed. Most swallow nests are made of mud—some mixed with saliva, and often lined inside with soft materials: fuzz, hair, cotton string or any other found material. They lay four to six eggs. Incubation lasts about 10 days, during which the cock feeds the sitting hen. When the chicks hatch, they are first fed with insects.

The swallows are highly gregarious. Great clusters of them can be seen coming back and forth from the taller trees at the tops of the cliffs, and smaller groups of them gather on the ledges of the rock walls.

A RiteAid employee gathering shopping carts reports that he has seen egrets, Canada geese and several kinds of ducks at the site as well. Anyone who knows more about the swallows or other wildlife in the area is invited to call or write us with your news (see page 3 for address and phone). ✪

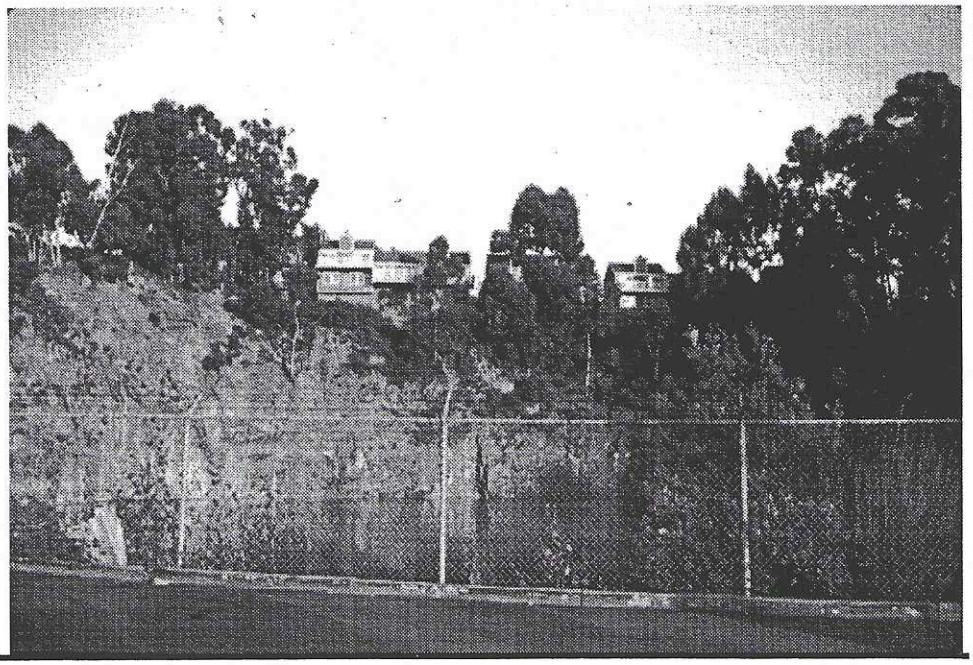


PHOTO: VALERIE WINEMILLER

You can watch scores of swallows feeding on swarms of insects at the quarry. Bring your binoculars and park your car in the RiteAid parking lot for a front row seat—better than a drive-in movie! Just before dusk is the best time.

PANIL
P.O. Box 20375
Oakland, CA 94620-0375

Expiration date past?
Please renew now!

PANIL meeting Thurs., June 4

☆ Affordable Housing Associates: proposal for the lot at 40th and Cerrito.

☆ Broadway and 38th: a gas station proposed with convenience market.

7:30 P.M. in the Community Room of Piedmont Gardens (enter at 33 Linda Ave.) All neighbors welcome!

PANIL meets the first Thursday of the month at 7:30 P.M.

FIRST CLASS MAIL