

BUSINESS

Trees pose challenge for highly touted mixed-use project

By Becca Whitnall
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A proposal to build Thousand Oaks Boulevard's first mixed-use development is scheduled to go before the city's planning commission next month.

The applicant, T.O.-based Daly Group Inc., is seeking to transform the former home of Lupe's Mexican Restaurant into a two-building, three-story blend of residential and retail, with 36 apartments and three spaces for businesses. A date with the planning commission is tentatively set for Feb. 13.

Five years after city leaders adopted a new set of design standards and guidelines for the boulevard that included incentives to build mixed use, Daly's proposal would be the first such project to reach the commission. Previous mixed-use applications—including Rick Principe's plan for the former Conejo Valley Veterinary Hospital site—never made it past the planning stages.

"The idea is to create something with vibrancy where you can stimulate the residential portion of the project to come down here and congregate," Thousand Oaks senior planner Steve Kearns said while giving the *Acorn* a tour of the Daly site. "If you had the right uses in here, you can come down here and hang out . . . and everything is self-contained from a recreational standpoint."

Kearns said the city is anticipating the 4,980 square feet of space for businesses at the site will be occupied by restaurants, cafes or coffee shops. A small park/play area that can be used by tenants and the public is also in the design.

Of the 36 apartments, 25 will have two bedrooms, nine will be one-bedroom and two will have three bedrooms, according to current plans. Four of the units will be live-work apartments with a 490-square-foot work area



MICHAEL COONS/Acorn Newspapers

SITE TOUR—Steve Kearns, senior planner for the City of Thousand Oaks, talks about the plans for a mixed-use development at the former Lupe's Mexican Restaurant property Jan. 10. The precedent-setting proposal is expected to go before the planning commission in February.

in addition to the standard living area. Kearns said these will be professional offices suitable for an attorney or an accountant, where you might get some visitors but not a lot of traffic.

"You're not going to have a boutique or bistro there," he said. "We're actually going to put conditions on that limiting use (because) we don't want to see any kind of use that makes noise or vibrations to any of the other tenants—or odor."

The tree question

While the building plans are mostly complete, the city is still working with Daly Group to final-

ize how they're going to navigate the numerous trees on the historic property.

Near the street side of the site at 1708 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd., three sycamores, a city landmark species, will need to be removed, according to plans. Two small oak trees near the Lupe's patio will remain but will be trimmed.

The rear of the property poses more problems.

"As you get to the back area, we're getting into the challenging portion because it's the slope area and you have more oak trees," Kearns said.

There, three large nonnative eucalyptus trees will be removed along with some pepper trees, though the city will have to make sure no migratory birds are nesting there at the time of removal.

Then there are the trees protected by the city's tree ordinance. A small California holly, or toyon tree, will have to be removed, and



WHAT'S PROPOSED—A rendering depicts a three-story mixed-use development planned for the 1700 block of E. Thousand Oaks Boulevard, former home to Lupe's Mexican Restaurant.

the city is still determining which oaks can be saved.

"I think the last leg of this journey really is finalizing and determining what trees can be saved and what trees have to come out," Kearns said.

Any oaks that can't be transplanted will be replaced at the city's standard 3-1 ratio. The de-

veloper must replace each single tree with two 24-inch boxed trees and one 36-inch boxed tree.

"Most of our removals are fairly young trees, and I don't think any being removed are native (to this site)," Kearns said, adding that some of the native oaks will be encroached upon.

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CERES	CERE	0.3970	0.3970	0.3970	0.3970	THOUSAND OAKS
DIODES, INC	DIOD	25.81	25.58	26.19	26.28	WESTLAKE VILLAGE
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FAMILY

Hospital 'bartender' steals heart patient's memory

There's another dimension of surgery beyond that which is known to the patient. According to the guy in the hospital who kept referring to himself as my bartender, I, the patient in this case, wouldn't remember my procedure because I was going to get some kind of anesthetic that causes amnesia.

"I don't want amnesia," I told my wife as some lady shaved my chest clean. "I'll just gather up my chest hair here and be on my way."

Too late, I realized as they finished up the prep for my surgery. *That's the signpost ahead. My next stop: twilight sleep!*

Ten years ago, I blacked out in front of my doctor during a routine checkup. She thought it was unusual (the blackout, not the checkup), so she had me do some tests and discovered my heart was beating abnormally slow and that it even stopped on occasion.

She sent me to a cardiologist. Three days later, at 30 years old, I was the proud owner of a pacemaker. I didn't think I needed a pacemaker, but some people seemed to feel that blacking out,

Family Man

Michael Picarella



possibly behind the wheel of a full-size sedan, is a bad thing.

Even with the pacemaker, I could still live a pretty normal life, they said. I'd just have to get the battery changed every 10 years or so.

"It's only been 10 years," I said to my cardiologist before the holidays when he said it was time.

I had two choices: I could look at it as no big deal, like my stepfather and so many others suggested I do, or I could stress about it because I was the one who had to have the operation.

I stressed. Right away, my "bartender" and I didn't get along. He was nice, easygoing, helpful and forthcoming with anything I needed to know. What was he hiding?

"Don't be nervous," the guy said. "We do these surgeries all the

time. I did two of 'em yesterday."

"It's not the surgery I'm worried about," I told him. "It's that IV in your hands that bothers me."

I once saw an overturned ambulance, and my first thought was, *I hope they weren't carrying a guy in there with an IV in his arm. The needle no doubt broke off in his arm when the vehicle flipped.*

"It's done," he said. "The IV's already in."

And all was well. That's when my "bartender" told me about the

anesthetic he'd give me that causes amnesia.

"I don't remember them giving you that the first time you did this surgery," my wife said to me.

"Well, you know I don't remember," I replied.

The hospital staff had to peel my wife off me (or maybe vice versa). Then they wheeled me into the operating room. As they tented off my head from the surgery spot, I realized I was still totally awake.

"That twilight sleep isn't work-

ing at all," I said to my executioner.

"We haven't administered it yet."

"Well, what else do you need from me? I'm ready."

The doctor came in, cut me, swapped out devices, glued me up, and that was that. It was simple. I stayed awake the whole time and it didn't even hurt. They wheeled me back to my wife, I ate breakfast, and the guy who said he'd take my memory away asked if I felt

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SALUTING OUR SCOUTS

Zachary Mahon, 18, of Troop 730 in Newbury Park, achieved Boy Scout's highest rank of Eagle Scout and was recognized Jan. 8 at his Eagle Court of Honor at St. Matthew's United Methodist Church in Newbury Park.

His Eagle project benefited Ride-On Therapeutic Horsemanship at their Newbury Park location. Ride-On teaches adaptive horseback riding to children and adults with physical and cognitive disabilities.

The project involved the reconstruction of a large interactive wooden board used for physical therapy. The original board, which was old and broken, was removed and a new board was designed, built and painted, with newly created containers attached.

The new interactive board was installed and cemented into the trailside.

During his Scouting career, Mahon served as assistant patrol leader, patrol leader, den chief and troop guide. He earned 29 merit badges and was awarded a seven-year Service Star.



COURT OF HONOR—Zachary Mahon of Troop 730 earned his Eagle Scout rank and was honored Jan. 8 in Newbury Park.

Mahon is the 134th Eagle Scout in Troop 730 since it was established in 1971.

He is a Newbury Park High School graduate and now a freshman at Northern Arizona University, majoring in criminology.

The new Eagle Scout is the son of Kelly and Jill Mahon of Newbury Park.

Mixed use

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Among those is the city's 25th anniversary tree, a large valley oak sitting on what is now the east side of the Lupe's parking lot. A deck will be built around the tree, and the public can lounge at the site.

Kearns said the project meets, and in some regards exceeds, requirements mandated by the boulevard specific plan, adopted in 2011 for the purpose of creating a pedestrian-friendly downtown.

For example, while the plan calls for roughly 840 square feet of public space, the developer is providing more than 6,000 square feet of what he described as a

"very inviting public quarter."

Just as important, the planner said, it meets the council's goal of creating a walkable area.

"What you want in a mixed-use development is to reduce the number of vehicle trips," Kearns said. "With this development being where it is, you're going to have some self-sustainable uses with restaurants; you're going to have walkability to the Civic Arts Plaza.

"You also have Lassens there (at The Lakes). There's a Latino market and other markets in walking distance the other way, and you have other restaurants like the Tilted Kilt, Rokabab, Subway and Moqueca in walking distance, and the bus stop right here."

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Saturday, March 4th
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Skill Assessment Location:
Conejo Valley YMCA
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Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

League Starts:
Sunday, April 2nd
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For more information contact Ray Cruz, Program Director, at rrcruz@sevymca.org

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