

# Glendale News-Press

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PRD moves to council

## Housing-in-hills vote due

By DAVE JOERGENSEN

Whether there will be more townhouses in Glendale's hills could be decided Tuesday by the City Council.

The city's notorious Planned Residential Development (PRD) ordinance, referred to by some opponents as a Pretty Rotten Document, has been substantially revised from the first edition adopted nearly two years ago.

While revisions were numerous, the Glendale Planning Commission on July 22 refused to act on a list of amendments because of a belief that the basic concepts of the PRD ordinance were unacceptable to the community and will never be accepted.

Even if adopted by the City Council, the commission said

residents would undoubtedly oppose any project submitted under the law.

It asked the council to consider two basic changes dealing with density and "row housing." It said densities should be compatible with surrounding residential areas and that there should be no attached housing.

The commission actually went one step further than the Glendale Hills Coordinating Council, an association composed of 11 hill groups.

The Hills Council hired the firm of A.C. Martin and Associates to prepare a PRD ordinance. Specifically the group hired Robert Braunschweiger to prepare expert recommendation regarding townhouse development.

In the ordinance proposed by the Hills Council, attached housing is not an issue. The issue is density.

In fact the most basic area of difference between the city's amended PRD and Braunschweiger's PRD is density.

When Braunschweiger first testified before the Planning Commission, he introduced a density formula based on the degree of slope.

The steeper the slope, the fewer allowed dwelling units per acre.

Following the example, Glendale Planning Director Jerry Jamriska prepared a density formula based on slope, only his formula allowed more units per acre at steeper slopes.

Both laws begin with a 4.35 maximum density for slopes

from zero to 10 degrees. This is the same density allowed in standard rice paddy subdivisions in R1 and R1R zones.

At 40 to 50 per cent slope, the density allowed in the city law is 3.44 while that allowed in the Hills Council supported document is 2.

At 60 to 70 per cent grade, the city's ordinance would allow 2.8 dwelling units per acre while the Braunschweiger ordinance calls for 1.5 units per acre.

The next most basic difference in the two statutes is height and depth of cut and fill slopes. The homeowners limit cuts slopes to 35 feet with an exception allowed for contouring the slopes.

The city's ordinance places no limits on cuts and fills.

Other differences deal with amounts of usable open space; grades of usable open space and the prohibit of building that might be silhouetted against the sky.

In each case the city's ordinance is less restrictive than the one supported by the Hills Council.

Carl Johnston, president of the group, says their recommended ordinance is a workable compromise with the city on the PRD issue.

If adopted by the City Council as presented, the Hills Council will support it, he said.

If not the issue will probably go to a vote of the people of Glendale in a special election.

Opponents of the PRD ordinance have quietly been collecting signatures on petitions to call an election to

decide the fate of the development concept.

The petitions will be presented to the city clerk's office today and indications are that more than 15 per cent of the registered voters signed the petitions.

With a 15 per cent signature ratio, the state election code mandates a special election within 90 days. A 10 per cent signature ratio would place the issue on the ballot of the next regular election.

A provision in the petition would cancel the election if the council were to adopt the Hill Council's law.

If not, the matter goes to the people. Planning Director Jerry Jamriska said the law prepared

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by the A.C. Martin is virtually a "no growth document."

He said the cities that have similar slope-density requirements are communities where the ruling legislative bodies have declared a no growth policy in the hills.

Jamriska noted that the Glendale City Council has proclaimed no such policy and that apparently the voters of Glendale don't support a such a "no-growth" based on the results of the last election.

In supporting his statement that the Martin law is a no growth law, Jamriska said the average slope in the Verdugo Mountains is 60 per cent.

Under the criteria of the Hill Council's ordinance, there would be 1.5 dwelling units per acre.

"This is economically unfeasible. So the effect of the ordinance is no growth," he said.

There is one PRD project in the city, the Baldwin tract on Chevy Oaks Circle in Chevy Chase Canyon. The council will begin deciding Tuesday whether it will be the last.