

PATTERSON IRRIGATOR

City Council agenda addresses road, affordable housing funds

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On an agenda that included street closure requests for the Patterson Apricot Fiesta (June 1 – June 4), the 2017 Amgen Tour (May 15), and the Live Stations of the Cross (April 14), the City Council also considered a resolution in support of transportation funding legislation, as well as an affordable housing resolution, and penalties and fines for marijuana businesses operating before the city takes an official stance on the question of marijuana cultivation and sales within city limits.

Affordable Housing Funds Granted

The council granted a funding request from Self Help Enterprises, Inc., for \$730,000 in “in-lieu” funds to build 41 owner-occupied affordable housing units, to be made available to low-income households in the Villages of Patterson, Stonegate Shire, Phase 1 project development area.

Betsy McGovern, director of real estate development for Self Help Enterprises, said that the nonprofit organization has built approximately 170 “home ownership” single family homes in Patterson since the late 1960s. Ms. McGovern said that there is a “tremendous need for working families to be able to afford housing and stay in the community where they grew up.”

The Self Help program requires that all families contribute labor toward the construction of their homes. Groups of 10 families work together to help build their homes. This “sweat equity” covers both down payment and closing costs.

The city’s Affordable Housing In-Lieu Fee is part of the Inclusionary Housing (Chapter 18.86) component of the Patterson Municipal Code, which stipulates that at least 15 percent of all new housing units be available to very low-, low- and moderate-income households, at an affordable housing cost. Developers have the option of building 15 percent of their projects as affordable housing or paying an “in lieu” fee instead.

The fee was challenged by the Building Industry Association in 2009, and was ultimately ruled legal by the California Supreme Court. The city has collected and held these fees in a separate account over a period of time; Self-Help Enterprises is requesting that part of those funds be used for the affordable housing project in the Villages project. City manager Ken Irwin called the project “a good use of those funds.” Mayor Pro Tem Dennis McCord also supported the project, noting, “we need affordable housing; you’re a good developer; this is a good project.” Councilmember Parham agreed, saying he is “very satisfied that this is taking place.” Mayor Novelli also supported the project, saying it is “a good project for our citizens. We need projects like this.”