

The Reactor

Paul Azevedo



The monuments we leave behind

We Pacificans are not only a city. We form a corporation, organized for mutual benefit. Our board of directors are called council members. There are five of them, elected for four-year periods which are staggered so that three are elected, then two in cycles.

Our corporation has been considering the purchase of a piece of property for use by the citizens who form the organization. It's called Sanchez School, and the acreage is available at an excellent price because the property belongs to another public corporation, the Laguna Salada Union School District, and the laws are favorable.

When my wife and I bought our home in Linda Mar 28 years ago, it was a scary thing to do. The price seemed high, but our home has gone up in value to more than 10 times the 1963 value. When Park Pacifica was new, I heard of buyers who had stretched themselves so thin they had no furniture and had to sleep on the floor. Most of those owners now take pride in their fine furnishings, and look back on those early days with nostalgia and the pride of obstacles overcome.

Up until recent years Pacifica has been singularly lacking in monuments. The fortunate gift of a modern

piece of statuary of Gaspar dePortola, the gift of the region of Catalunya to the State of California, now helps fill that void. The Pacifica Community Center nearby is also a building in which we can take much pride. Its purchase was the result of a window of opportunity of which a few foresighted leaders took advantage. We all benefit.

Our community pier which benefits us all was the result of a clever city engineer who was able to combine two complementary functions and two separate funding sources into one affordable project.

I don't like redevelopment projects, because it has been my observation in other cities that while the community may benefit, often it is at the expense of small property owners who are driven out and who suffer a loss of the potential that existed in their property. In the case of Sanchez School, both the city and school district will benefit. The public which both entities are responsible to will also benefit. It is a win-win-win situation.

I hope that those who can see only cost will consider the future benefits to all of us that will result from this project. It may be possible to stymie the purchase, or delay it beyond all reason. If that does happen, Pacifica's present and future citizens will be the losers. Our grandchildren in the year 2050 will not ask if we saved a few cents on the tax rate. They will be grateful for the monuments we leave behind, or resentful if we do not. No one in Rome can tell you the cost of the Colosseum or the tax rate that was generated to pay for the Vatican Library.

Pacifica is unlikely to generate monuments on such a grand scale, but at the least, we can think beyond the immediate cost, as did those who scrimped every penny to get into their tract homes 25 or 30 years ago.

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