

90-3

Uses debated for Laguna Park

5-9-90

by Dawn Armstrong

debated.

Plans to include recreational ballfields in the proposed Laguna linear park are in limbo following last week's city council meeting where members of the Laguna Advisory Committee voiced strong concerns that such use was incompatible with the principally passive use originally envisioned for the 75 acre park on the city's east side.

Second thoughts about the adequacy of the Laguna Linear Park Request for Proposals (RFP) resulted in scheduling of a public input session as part of the May 15 city council meeting where park uses will be further

During the public input portion of last week's council meeting, Laguna Advisory Committee member Kim Cordell requested that wording in the RFP which included development of ballfields on acreage northwest of the Community Center be eliminated. She added that the new concept of active mixed with passive use at the park requires an intermediate study and public input before submitting an "unstructured" request to outside consultants expected to design the park.

Cordell was responding to a vote by the city council a week (Please turn to page A8)

A8 The Sebastopol TIMES & NEWS May 9, 1990

Laguna . . .

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earlier that included the ballfields as part of the RFP, something requested by local Little League and Youth Soccer representatives who cited the city's lack of recreational space for the city's youth.

Cordell suggested that a citizens committee be set up to study the needs and alternatives for recreational facilities. The area in question, which sits adjacent to two existing city ballfields, could be left undesignated, pending results, and the original Laguna process could be continued, "...to avoid conflict in

Laguna Committee seeks non-profit foundation status

City Councilman Nick Stewart, chairman of the Laguna Advisory Committee, reported last week that the city's ad hoc group was filing papers to become independent as the Laguna de Rosa Foundation.

Kim Cordell, preparer of the documents, explains that expenses have become a big burden for the all volunteer committee.

"As a foundation, we can

raise money separately and do projects which the city can't take on," said Cordell. "We can give the city support instead of asking the city to support us.

"We can work on education, develop a docent program, and produce a video tape for the schools. The city staff is just too small" to achieve those goals, according to Cordell.

the community that could cause long term bad feelings."

But according to Mindi Marshall, representative of the Little League, Soccer and Bobby Sox leagues, "The point is that we need more park space, and that we don't have enough for the community now, let alone later."

Council members agreed that more information was needed before a final decision on the park design plans could be finalized and agreed to hear more on the subject at the May 15 council

meeting where the issue could be formally tabled.

The disputed area suggested for multiple use, formerly city sewage ponds, is about 400 x 600 feet, or four acres, according to Cordell, who says that noise and the potential of night lighting are in conflict with the Laguna Advisory Committee's recommendation for passive recreational uses.

"Two goods are conflicting," Cordell feels. "The two uses are valid, but not valid in this location. Sonoma County is poor in

Television . . .

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Following the adage: "Out of

parks and publicly owned lands. This highlights the need for the city to add parks; I'd like to see it tied into annexation."

Marshall concurs, "People's needs don't stop where the city limits stop. Everything is linked. I hope we've made it clear that we're willing to work with anybody who can make both things happen.

"We all want the Laguna preserved. The city council needs to be able to make a decision based on best use. Everyone's needs have to be on the table. We have to look at the big picture, and not fight over molehills.

"It's like building a house," Marshall continues. "The initial design includes everything, even if it comes in phases, so that everything will work."

While the council waits for public input, the Laguna Advisory Committee announced plans to pursue non-profit foundation status, while multiple-use advocates have begun a community recreation needs survey.