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Catalina Foothills Association

NEWSLETTER
MAY, 1993

P.O. Box 64546 • Tucson, Arizona 85728

Devoted to the preservation of the unique residential character of the Catalina Foothills for over 25 years.

Message from the President

Greetings from your board. It is through your support and participation that Catalina Foothills Association is strong and effective.

What is it that CFA does for you, our neighbors and friends? We are concerned with maintaining the beauty of our area, our sense of community and property values. We are charged with the responsibility of enforcing covenants in those areas not served by their individual associations. We monitor covenants in areas 5 and 6. Areas 7, 8, and 9 enforce their own, while areas 1 thru 4 are without covenants as they were not renewed. (However, some parcels under their original deed are required to observe the covenants.) We seek to ensure that any new building is in keeping with its surroundings.

Catalina Foothills Association is a vehicle for information exchange, for early discussion of proposed land use changes. Our power comes from our numbers: we actively need and want your participation in the Association and in our projects.

Here's how you can help: we have 5 standing committees with emphasis on planning and zoning issues, regional impact, site and deed restrictions, roads, and with preparing the newsletter. In addition, we have ad hoc committees for security issues and planning for the annual meeting. Short term committees are formed to address specific concerns; a few years ago members evaluated the pros and cons of forming a fire district. And we always appreciate people who are willing to write letters, make calls, be involved. Please consider joining us in this cooperative community venture.

Katherine Jacobson
President, 1993

The Importance of "Being Covenanted"

(with apologies to Oscar Wilde)

Foothills densities are on the increase! Most foothill residents are aware as they drive through the area that the "face of the foothills" is rapidly changing. Recent building activity, due in part to the division of large parcels into several smaller ones, has underlined the importance of protective covenants. At the present time, only Areas 5 & 6 of the Catalina Foothills Association (CFA) hold covenants (#6 Townhouses and Condos, 7, 8, 9, and 10 have their own associations and covenants).

These protective covenants which are legal and binding were designed to maintain and enhance the quality of the foothills area and regulate how buildings, solar and cooling equipment, satellite dishes, fences, etc., would be placed on a lot so as not to interfere with adjacent homeowners or detract from the area.

However, certain parcels within the CFA boundary are identified as "excluded" and are not required to observe the area's covenants. Other large parcels which lie outside but are bordered by covenanted areas, are only required to meet county regulations which are less restrictive. The county requires only a 10 foot setback of building, equipment, satellite dishes, etc., from side property boundaries. Areas 5 & 6 covenants require 30 foot setbacks. It is not difficult to see what an impact these lesser setbacks can have on neighborhoods.

The CFA urges all owners, whether under covenants or not, to be "good neighbors" by meeting in a cooperative effort to resolve problems which might arise in the transition from covenanted to uncovenanted areas. Covenants represent the most important means of protection and enhancement of the value of your home.

After all, most residents choose to live in the foothills because of open space, desert vegetation, quiet, and protective covenants. Our area is one of the few greenbelts on the periphery of the city of Tucson. Let's all help to keep it that way.

NOTE: We have enclosed a summary of Areas 5 & 6 covenants for your review. Because there are some differences between 5 & 6 please refer to the document of your area for specifics.

Cactus Theft Alert

We have had several complaints from residents concerning the theft of small cacti from their land. Hedgehogs are apparently quite popular and easy to remove. A three cactus group will retail for \$50.00.

According to the Arizona State Agriculture Department, there is a stiff fine for removing cactus without a proper permit.

Residents are advised to be on the alert and simply record the license plate number of any person observed removing cactus and report the event by calling 911.

Comprehensive Plan and Wash Ordinance Update

What kind of Comprehensive Plan for Eastern Pima County can we expect to be implemented when:

- It has been guided by a seat of the pants game plan or planning process.
- It has taken over ten years with many false starts.
- Over three million dollars have been spent on the Plan.
- The top three formulators of the Plan have recently resigned.
- Thousands of hours of misdirected citizen input have been expended.
- Our elected officials have continuously given lip service to a comprehensive plan and have not demonstrated the will and commitment to see that a sound Plan is actually formulated and implemented.

The so called Comprehensive Plan adopted by the Board of Supervisors in October 1992 is a shallow plan that is another prime candidate to sit on a shelf and collect dust. The Plan does not focus in on many key community issues, how they are interrelated and how solutions to the key issues can be scheduled into a positive and achievable action plan. The purpose of the action plan should be to guide and direct short and long term county development, based on a realistic knowledge of available resources. The success of the implementation action plan will depend on assigned responsibilities and accountability in the form of a monitoring program to assure that actual results are being accomplished.

Many will say we finally have a Comprehensive Plan, but what does it mean without the Board of Supervisor's will and commitment to follow and implement the Plan's policies? The Plan, with the exception of zoning code amendments is a policy document meaning it is a guide to future decision making and can be followed or ignored.

A classic example of ignored policy was the recent approval of the Stouffer Pima Canyon Resort Specific Plan. This action clearly violated the spirit,

purpose and intent of the adopted Pima County Regional Vision Statement and six Comprehensive Land Use Element policy objectives. The Specific Plan was also a misuse and abuse of the Buffer, Specific Plan and Grading Ordinances, all of which involved hundreds of hours of dedicated citizen committee input. This kind of planning decision making does not convey credibility or public confidence and needs to be challenged before more harm is done.

The Comprehensive Plan does address the treatment of washes and riparian areas but again only as policy. To achieve real Protection for these areas a strong ordinance is needed. This need has been evident for many years and is finally being addressed. The Board of Supervisors has recently directed the Department of Floodplain Management to draft a wash ordinance, has authorized studies to define and map washes that will be covered by the ordinance and has postponed consideration of the ordinance. This February the Planning and Zoning Commission moved to postpone any action until the current studies are complete in July.

If you care about our washes and believe that protecting them is in the best interests of the Catalina Foothills Community you can:

Write our Supervisor Mr. Mike Boyd with copies to the other Supervisors, asking for a strong and implementable wash ordinance. Board of Supervisors 130 W. Congress, Tucson, Arizona 85701.

Bursage: A Misunderstood Native Plant

STOP! Before you pull out that weed!

It may be bursage—a nursing plant for the saguaro, mammillarias, hedgehogs and numerous other native desert plants.

It is part of the desert ecosystem.

1993 DOWNPOUR UPDATE

Those of you who survived both the flood waters of 1983 and our late winter deluge may have been debating whether 1993 really equalled '83, the most serious flood of recent memory. The answer, according to Joanne Hershenhorn, a principal hydrologist with Pima County Department of Transportation and Flood Control District, is most likely, yes. Rains being as erratic as they are, areas of Pima County were affected differently this past January but, for example, the peak water flow of the Rillito River at Dodge Road reached 25,000 cubic feet per second on January 8th this year, approximately as much as in 1983.

This year saw significant amounts of rain falling every day except one from January 7th through the 20th. There were two peak flooding periods, the first on January 8th when the Tanque Verde Wash, Finger Rock Wash and Sabino Canyon areas experienced heavy rain augmented by snow melting, and later on the 18th when most of the flooding occurred along the Santa Cruz River. The Northeast wash areas experienced heavy sediment deposits as a result of the January 8th flooding.

A particularly dangerous situation arose on January 8th at the Craycroft Road Bridge over the Rillito when severe erosion of over 100 feet into the North Bank began to threaten the North abutment of the bridge. Pima County Department of Transportation and Flood Control District Officials working to avert the potential loss of the abutment were forced to call on the US Army Corps of Engineers for help. Under its Emergency Assistance Program the Corps responded by taking over the project and provided necessary heavy equipment as well as funds for rip-rap and fill. Fortunately, there was no structural damage to the bridge itself, although it was closed from January 8th to the 19th

while necessary work was completed to stabilize the river bank area.

Meanwhile, downstream of the bridge on the Northwest side, a residence was threatened by erosion of the river bank to within 6 feet of the house. In this case, help was obtained from the U. S. Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service Emergency Assistance Program in time to avoid disaster.

Along the Country Club Bend area of the Rillito (East of Country Club Road) extensive erosion resulted in the loss of several accessory structures (green houses and animal shelters). Fortunately, here too the Army Corps of Engineers was able to halt further erosion by shoring up existing soil-cement bank stabilization areas.

In spite of help from the US Army funds, Pima County has experienced heavy costs as a result of the flooding. Current estimates of damage to the public infrastructure (principally roads and bridges) in the unincorporated areas of the county are approximately \$4.5 million. Tucson and Marana figures bring the total to more than \$6 million.

Currently, the county has no way of determining flood losses experienced by most individual homeowners even though the information would be very useful in formulating and evaluating flood control activities. So, if you experienced significant damage during the January period, you would be performing a helpful service by calling 740-6350 and providing the Pima County Department of Transportation and Flood Control District with a brief report of your losses. You might also ask that the County not allow building in the FLOOD PLAIN, thereby saving TAX DOLLARS.

River Road Construction-Revised Plans

First Avenue: River to Ina Road Widening 1994

(Per report by the Pima County Transportation Department to Composite Citizens Committee for River Road on February 11, 1993)

Activities and on-going plans for the construction and widening of **River Road** announced at the **Annual Meeting in January** have undergone a major revision and shift in focus by the County since reported on February 11th to the Citizens Committee:

- Construction of Oracle Road to First Avenue section will be completed by the end of June 1993
- The **First Avenue** intersection has been redesigned and is being constructed for permanent usage; original design was temporary to await final construction from Campbell to First. The intersection construction and widening of River ends near the entrance to Altamira Apartments.
- No further work on **River Road** is planned in the foreseeable future. Long-standing plans had called for construction to begin during 1994 or '95 on the Campbell-First section. Reportedly **NO** funds remain from earlier bond issues to continue River Road.
- Future road building efforts in the vicinity of River Road will be focused on **First Avenue** and the stretch

from River to Ina Road. The intersection at First and River will be widened with turn lanes; **First Avenue** will be widened to four lanes with a central median from River to Ina. Design is underway and early construction is anticipated by 1994, with construction over several years. The right-of-way property is owned by the County and estimated costs for 4-lane construction is around \$15 million.

- The County currently plans to complete **First Avenue** before future construction is done on River Road and/or Campbell Avenue.
- A widened **First Avenue** will provide a fast, direct link for traffic originating in higher foothills area and **Pima Canyon Resort** (planned) to the **Tucson Mall** facilities and the **Pace Club** under construction at Stone and River Road.

There have been reports of individuals representing themselves as repairmen with little information as to address and location of repair.

**DO NOT OPEN YOUR DOOR TO
UNEXPECTED PEOPLE.**

What's In a Name?

The following list of organizations allegedly claiming to be environmentally oriented is an excerpt from an article by Ted Williams titled "Greenscam" which appeared in the 1992 May/June issue of Harrowsmith.

Two umbrella organizations (which are not included in the list, but are discussed in the text) are the well known "Wise Use Movement" and the "Alliance for America."

There are so many organizations asking for our help, we should know more about them before contributing.

Alliance for Environment and Resources, Sacramento, California. When we called this organization, we reached the offices of the California Forestry Association. Judging by the materials provided to us, the mission of the alliance is to persuade the public that environmentalists are crippling the efforts of the forest-products industry to take care of the public forests.

Desert Conservation Institute, Sacramento, California. Sponsor: the mining industry. Purpose: to defeat the California Desert Protection Act. This group maintains that "mining is a good neighbor to the desert and the environment."

Environmental Conservation Organization, Maywood, Illinois. Claiming dozens of sponsors, including the Land Improvement Contractors of America, the American Farm Bureau Federation and a host of state Farm Bureaus, this group argues that federal regulators should get out of the way and "allow the creativity of free enterprise to protect true wetlands."

Information Council for the Environment, Grand Forks, North Dakota. We found this group headquartered at the Minnkota Power Cooperative. Funded by coal and utility companies, its mission is to persuade Congress and the public that global warming is a myth, so there's no need to curtail production of greenhouse gases. In fact, we were assured when we called, "We're living in a CO-2 starved environment right now."

National Endangered Species Act Reform Coalition, Washington, D.C. The Endangered Species Act is up for reauthorization by Congress

this year, and this group wants to see it weakened because of its "increasingly adverse impacts on public projects, localities, industries and individuals." Sponsors include the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Water Resources Association and a number of western utility companies.

National Wetlands Coalition, Washington, D.C. This is the group behind current efforts to narrow the definition of wetlands protected by federal regulations. Its logo is a duck flying over cattails, but its mission is to open more wetlands to development. Sponsors: primarily land developers and oil and gas companies.

People for the West, Pueblo, Colorado. Created two years ago with the support of the Northwest Mining Association to block reform of the 1872 Mining Act, People for the West identifies its sponsors as "communities, natural resource and related industries, individuals and local governments advocating support for continued management of public lands for multiple use," but its board of directors is dominated by mining interests.

Wilderness Impact Research Foundation, Elko, Nevada. Sponsors: Industry associations (the Rocky Mountain Oil and Gas Association, National Forest Products Association, National Cattleman's Association and Northwest Mining Association, to name a few) and other groups (United Four-Wheel Drive Association, Motorcycle Industry Council, International Snowmobile Council) opposed to the National Wilderness Preservation System. Mission: "Educating the public about the damage wilderness causes society, the economy and even wildlife."
