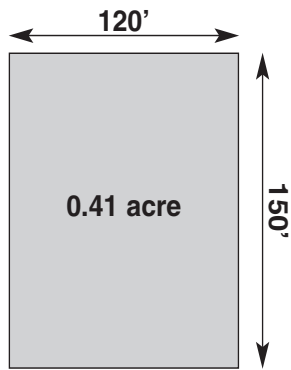


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**NEWS**

**Zoning law battle nears end**

BY MARK HELFEN  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

A two-year battle will come to an end today when the Mountain View City Council takes up a law regulating historic buildings. Council members on both sides of the proposal agree that after an "extensive, overwhelming process" the key decisions have been made.

Asked if the process was over, Councilmember Greg Perry replied, "I hope so. This is the best solution we can find."

Councilmember Rosemary Stasek agrees that today will be the final meeting "after two years of study," even if she won't vote for the measure. Mayor Matt Pear uses words like "arduous," "extensive," and "overwhelming" to describe the two-year effort, but believes that the time allowed a community and council consensus to develop.

Two measures will be considered at the meeting. The first will offer financial and zoning incentives to persuade owners of historic buildings to place their properties on a register of historic buildings. The second changes the requirements for a neighborhood to define overlay zoning rules to restrict development of historic properties. Two-thirds of the own-

ers must approve the zoning change.

In April of 2002 the city adopted an urgency ordinance prohibiting modifications of 94 buildings placed on a temporary register of historic structures. In the words of the original ordinance, the council's objectives were "to safeguard the heritage of the city", "strengthen civic pride," and "promote the conservation, preservation and protection... of historical resources." That law has since expired, leaving owners free to demolish or modify their buildings.

Over a number of council study sessions, the consensus developed to make the ordinance voluntary, and create incentives to persuade, rather than force, owners to keep the historic character of Mountain Views historic buildings. For owners willing to restrict altering their property, law will offer lowered property taxes, relaxed zoning restrictions, and a special loan fund for historic building rehabilitation.

Stasek doesn't support the final result, and said she will vote against it.

"A voluntary ordinance will not do anything," said Stasek. She believes that the incentives outlined will not be effective.

**Ethics code model for state**

BY MARK HELFEN  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

Michael Martello, cleared of ethics violations in a report issued last week, knows the city's ethics rules very well.

"It's been an interesting process. When I helped invent the ethics process I never expected to be the first to go through," said Martello. He said the final report had "nothing surprising."

Mountain Views ethics program has served as a model throughout the state. The League

of California Cities holds it up as an example, one of 12 cities that are in the "Ethics Code Hall of Fame" on the League's Web site.

"Mountain View has held a higher standard, not just what the law requires," says JoAnne Speers, Executive Director of the Institute for Self Government, part of the League. Of 478 California city's, only 12 have adopted a "values oriented" ethics code that the League recommends, and Mountain View was one of the first, according to Speers.

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