



TORRANCE PRESS

1406 CRAVENS AVE.—FA 8-2345

10c PER COPY

VOL. X

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THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 1959

NUMBER 33

A Good Start

AN EDITORIAL

Sale of the old city hall and civic auditorium to financial institutions appear to be excellent steps in the right direction.

Not only will the city gain as far as disposing of property which has been outgrown, at good prices, but the downtown area will be improved by the coming of the financial institutions in the heart of the city.

But the sale is only the initial step in a program which has to go hand in hand with Torrance's future.

A new auditorium to replace the old one will be vitally needed to serve the community. Sale of the old city hall is also expected to call for an addition to the present city hall to take care of expanded personnel requirements.

The City Council recently took the first step toward future planning of the civic center when it created a 15-member citizens committee to help it in its development program.

It is to be hoped that as soon as members of the committee are appointed that they will get to work in determining the future needs of the center, the costs, and recommend a program to finance such needed facilities as a new auditorium which can bring many important events to Torrance, as well as serve the day-to-day needs of residents from all parts of town.

There are many large-scale activities such as exhibits, tournaments and social events which now drift to other towns simply because the needed facilities are not here.

An auditorium can do a great deal in bringing worthwhile events here, and can also be used to hold dances and other activities for our young people for whom there is now little provided in the way of teenage programs.

The idea of the civic center committee is a good one—provided it buckles down to work and does not become another politics-ridden body that does nothing but talk itself to death.

Phantom Sniper Suspect Blames Television Westerns

A Torrance service station attendant who felt the yearning of the Old West, at least as he saw it on television, found himself in custody following a series of weekend sniper attacks on Long Beach women.

Booked on suspicion of assault with intent to commit murder, was husky Michael Edwin Smith, 21, of 1051 Spicer St.

He told deputy sheriffs that domestic problems, mixed with a few drinks gave him an urge to prowling the streets with a loaded .32 caliber pistol.

The suspect, a strapping 6 ft. 2 inches tall, and weighing 220 pounds said that he got into his car and drove around for a while. "Then I decided to play stage-coach and Army tanks like on TV," he told detectives.

As a starter, officers said, Smith apparently pointed his revolver out of the window of his vehicle driven by Mrs. Elaine Thomas, 44, of Long Beach.

The woman told officers she tried to elude the other machine, and even ran a traffic signal, but it speeded up and a shot splintered her windshield.

Mrs. Thomas was treated for glass cuts on her face, and a slug was found still in her hair.

A few moments later, two other Long Beach women felt the zing of bullets around their heads, but they missed. Deputies were called to Smith's home by his mother, Mrs. Catherine Rupard, who noticed her son's pistol clip was empty when he returned home.

Old City Hall Bought by Savings Co. for \$100,000

The Home Savings and Loan Association became the owner of the old city hall at 1511 Cravens Ave., Tuesday night, when councilmen quickly accepted its offer of \$100,000.

Although the company reduced its original offer of \$116,000 to the amount finally accepted, the city will continue to use the building rent-free for its recreation department for two years, and the Chamber of Commerce will also be able to occupy it for \$150 per month rent.

The deal will be effective as of Oct. 1. Appraised value of the property was estimated at \$96,500.

The city hall became the second municipal building to be sold in recent months. The old auditorium across the street from it, was bought by the Security-First National Bank for \$125,000.

In making the motion to accept the city hall offer, Councilman Nicholas O. Drale asked that the money be placed in the recreation development fund.



GOING, GOING, GONE—The former City Hall at 1511 Cravens Ave., was sold to a saving and loan firm this week, after the city accepted the highest bid yet offered for the 23-year-old municipal structure. The building is now occupied by the Recreation Department and the Chamber of Commerce which will eventually have to find new homes. Press Photo

New City 'Snooper' Post Ends in Angry Argument

Riviera Variance Stirs Furor

Professional Building Approved

A variance for a professional building Tuesday night became the first chink in the residential armor of Hollywood Riviera.

The City Council accepted the Planning Commission recommendation in a tight 4-3 vote after more than an hour's hearing.

The variance was granted to Gerald A. Herfurth for a building on Pacific Coast Hwy. between Camino de las Colinas and Paseo de las Delicias.

Comdr. William A. Mason, 204 Via la Ciruela, vice-president of the Hollywood Riviera Community Association, argued that the area had been ideally laid out nearly 30 years ago providing that apartments should go in where the variance was proposed.

Himself a former planning commissioner, he said that the original plan had worked well in making the area a desirable residential section and should remain in keeping with the deed restrictions.

The opposition lived up considerably when Mrs. Mildred Stevens of 115 Camino de las Colinas protested the variance next door to her.

"I don't know who picks the Planning Commission. You need new men. Only two of them are anything," declared the attractive red-haired resident, brandishing long, crimson fingernails. "We live right next door; we should have the say what goes in."

Herfurth and several other residents argued that a professional building actually is a more desirable structure than an apartment house because it is operated only during the day.

He was granted the go-ahead with Councilmen Jahn, Nicholas O. Drale and Willys Blount opposed.

"We've got to get out of the horse and buggy age; you will thank us in six months," said Mayor Albert Isen in casting the deciding vote.

PLAN HIGHLAND GAMES

The United Scottish Society will celebrate its 27th annual Highland Gathering and Games Aug. 22 at Olive Memorial Center, Burbank, according to Thomas Ramskill, chieftain, of 1604 W. 220th St.



TAKEN TO HOSPITAL—Ambulance attendants place Patricia E. Styff, 26, of Gardena on stretcher after she and two other persons were injured in a two-car collision at Western Ave. and 206 St. Monday afternoon. —Press Photo

Three Injured in Auto Accident

Three persons were injured in a two-car collision at Western Ave. and 206th St., Monday afternoon.

Taken to Harbor General Hospital with cuts and bruises were Patricia E. Styff, 26, driver of one of the cars, and her passenger, Lawrence V. Langner, 26, both of Gardena.

Edward Washington Smith, 25, of Compton, driver of the other car, was to see his own doctor.

Officers said that Smith's car apparently had stalled, when it was struck by the other machine and hurled on the other side of the center divider by the impact.

Nikita Welcome to Visit All American City

If Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev wants to see what an All-American City looks like, he should be sure to visit Torrance while on his American junket next month.

That was the gist of a night letter fired off yesterday by Mayor Albert Isen to Christian A. Herter, Secretary of State.

"Respectfully suggest California be considered in Khrushchev itinerary. Cross section of United States should include Torrance — All-American City award winner—a model industrial community of 100,000, which offers inspection of blue book roster of industries and exhibits high standard of living of typical American city. "Please advise," was the mayor's cable content.

A copy of the wire was sent to Congressman Cecil R. King, requesting his assistance.

Theft Suspect Nabbed

A truck driver was arrested on a warrant charging him with grand theft of \$2000 of metal from a Torrance firm at 1030 Englewood Ave., Monday night.

Booked on suspicion of theft was Frank Miller, 32, a transient.

Chamber Joins Council in Attack on League of Cities

The Chamber of Commerce came to the support of the City Council this week in taking a blast at what it terms the "wishy-washy" policy of the League of Cities.

The board of directors administered the verbal slap in unanimously advocating the adoption of the Bonelli Plan for increasing Southern California's representation in the State Senate.

"It's about time that we in Southern California unite to be certain the citizens of our area receive the things that they are rightfully entitled to, particularly in matters of health, safety, water and highways," declared President J. H. Paget.

The City Council has already adopted resolution supporting the Bonelli Plan despite the opposition of the League which had op-

posed it on grounds that it will cause conflict which may defeat the Feather River water plan, if a sectional fight ensues in California.

Paget said that presently the Northern part of the state has 30 Senators for a population of 5,975,000 or thirty-seven and two-thirds per cent of the state's total, while the Southern part with 8,776,300 or sixty-two and one-third per cent has only 10 State Senators. Under the Bonelli Plan each section would have 20 Senators which the Chamber believes to be "more than fair" to the North.

Chamber officials said the Bonelli Plan will call for: 1. No count-

(Continued on page five)

Nursing Check-up Blasted

A man's home is his castle and should be safe from the prying eyes of a snooper, no matter what her title is.

That was the opinion of Councilman Nicholas O. Drale Tuesday when he led the defense of city employees from house calls by a city nurse to check up if he is actually a sick man when he says he is.

The lengthy argument over the job description of a personnel nurse to be added to the municipal staff was finally shelved for one week while the city attorney looks into the legal picture.

"I'm going to call a spade a spade. There's nothing to hide," argued Councilman Robert Jahn. "We lose a lot of time because of sick leave. Some people who are on sick leave have been seen by councilmen on fishing boats and at Hollywood Park."

"You mean the nurse will serve as a special policeman?" queried Mayor Albert Isen.

"I think you are overstepping your bounds," snorted Drale. He added that he believes having a nurse on duty to give first aid to ailing employees is a fine idea. But when it comes to using her to call on sick employees' homes, without permission, that's snooping.

"You're picking on a small percentage of employees. I'll defend them; they are a pretty good bunch," Drale argued. "A man's home is still his castle, and just because he is a city employee, he doesn't have to let anyone in."

Drale then argued that he does not believe a nurse is qualified to say whether a person is sick. But Jahn retorted that the nurse will have a great tendency to cut "goofing-off" if employees are not really sick but just take their sick leave time.

"A nurse can't do anything but make a report. A man may have a hangover; how can she determine that?"

Isen agreed with Drale that constitutional rights might be involved in the home calls and asked for a legal opinion.

"I don't know," muttered Councilman J. A. Beasley, "she might be a good-looking nurse and the employees would want her around every day."

Mall Plan Parley Set Here

Discussion of pedestrian malls in downtown Torrance will be held Aug. 25, a few days before trees are slated to be planted in the central shopping area.

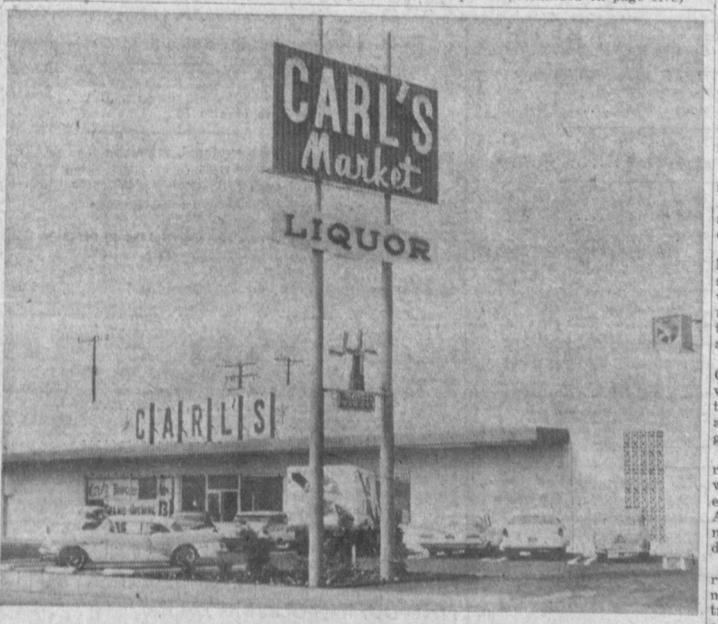
The meeting to discuss the Toledo, Ohio, plan for converting streets to planted pedestrian walkways, will be held at Caprin's Restaurant at 6:30 p.m. by the Downtown Merchant's Association.

Bob Tremaine, manager of the Oxnard Chamber of Commerce, which has instituted a mall plan there, will tell the advantages and disadvantages of such a program and present pictures.

In Sunday's issue of the Torrance Press, study of such a plan was proposed, and it was suggested that El Prado and Sartori Ave., could well be adapted to malls as means of reviving the downtown shopping area.

In the meantime, Darwin Parrish, chairman of the tree committee, said that 30 Indian Laurel trees will be ready for planting about Sept. 1.

Although the program originally called for 100 trees, sufficient funds for only 30 have been raised through cooperation of businessmen and their landlords, the chairman said.



GRAND OPENING of Carl's Market will take place today following ribbon-cutting ceremonies to be held at the supermarket, 228th St. and Vermont Ave., at 9 a.m. Civic officials, as well as Mrs. Billie Robertson, winner of "Carl's Mother of the Year Contest," will participate in the opening ceremonies. Special announcements of the Grand Opening sale will be in an eight-page section of today's Torrance Press.

Look for Torrance Red Tag Day Values