



Photos by Kirstina Sangsahachart / Daily News

A second chance

Residents who have been helped by JobTrain, Single Stop USA give thanks

ABOVE: Sunshine Reyes, left, kisses her daughter Sophia Iniguez, 8, after giving a speech thanking social service nonprofits JobTrain and Single Stop USA for their help at JobTrain's Menlo Park office on Monday. JobTrain renewed its partnership with the national nonprofit, which has helped the local agency expand its assistance programs to more than 700 Bay Area residents. With help from the nonprofits, Reyes said she was able to find a safe place to live, stay out of jail and focus on caring for her daughter. "We have been down, all we can do is go up now," she said.

RIGHT: Elvie Roguel-Regla, 70, thanks JobTrain and Single Stop USA in a speech on Monday. "I wanted my kids to be proud of me, not ashamed," said Roguel-Regla, a mother of seven. Menlo Park Mayor Richard Cline, center, was among the attendees at the celebration.



MOUNTAIN VIEW

City proposes 2 large apartment complexes

■ Developers say projects would follow general plan goals, before document is even inked

BY DIANA SAMUELS
Daily News Staff Writer

While Mountain View isn't yet done updating a document that will guide development within its borders for the next 20 years, pieces of it are already coming online.

As part of the so-called general plan, city officials say they want to revitalize El Camino Real with high-density housing and concentrate residents near public transportation. Tonight, the city council will hear from two developers with project proposals that would meet those goals.

On the north side of the city, Palo Alto-based Urban Housing Group is looking to build a 198-unit apartment complex on a 2.91-acre site at 2650 and 2656 El Camino Real. The San Antonio Inn and Hong Kong Restaurant, as well as another small commercial building, would be demolished.

"We've been following (the general plan process), and are very excited to have an opportunity to work on El Camino," said Elaine Breeze, vice president of development for Urban Housing Group.

"I think it's a great location — it has services right there; there's transit, we're close to the train station, we're right on the bus lines."

Further south, Archstone, a nationwide apartment management company, wants to nearly double the size of its 180-unit complex at 870 East El Camino Real. The company proposes redeveloping the 9.74-acre site with 332 apartment units and 5,400 square feet of commercial space.

Both developers will ask the council tonight for "gatekeeper authorization," a first step for the projects that will allow city staff to continue working on them.

The projects will be ready for approval before the general plan is finished, expected sometime in late 2011 or early 2012. However, they'll likely be judged based on the unfinished document's guidelines, according to a city staff report.

"The proposal helps implement the city's General Plan vision for El Camino Real," a city staff report said about Urban Housing Group's proposal. "Staff expects to review the project against this vision and policy direction. The applicant is aware of the city's General Plan El Camino direction and will

be designing their project accordingly."

Urban Housing Group's project would top four stories along El Camino Real and drop to three in the rear, according to documents submitted to the city.

The Archstone complex has one- and two-story buildings, which the company wants to replace with a four-story building at the front of the site along El Camino and three-story buildings on the rest of the property, according to a letter the Archstone sent to the city.

The company submitted a similar proposal in 2007 but the city asked it to hold off while the general plan was updated, the letter said.

With the document now closer to completion, Archstone Vice President Amir Massih wrote that his company feels "confident that our proposal helps to further the city's goals of creating distinctive and diverse neighborhoods that promote transit-oriented development."

E-mail Diana Samuels at dsamuels@dailynews.com.

IF YOU GO

WHAT: The Mountain View City Council will consider "gatekeeper" requests from two developers that want to build high-density housing projects along El Camino Real.

WHEN: Tonight, 6:30 p.m.

WHERE: 500 Castro St.

MORE INFO:

www.ci.mtnview.ca.us/

PALO ALTO

Roberts slams 'incorrect' media reports

■ Former public works director says news of his retirement 'greatly exaggerated'

BY DIANA SAMUELS
Daily News Staff Writer

After months of silence, former Palo Alto Public Works Director Glenn Roberts decided to "set a couple things straight" at a council meeting Monday about his sudden resignation.

"The reports about my departure have been greatly exaggerated," Roberts said, paraphrasing Mark Twain in a jocular speech that slammed local media — and in particular, the Daily Post — for misstating the circumstances surrounding his retirement.

News of Roberts' retirement became public in October, after a city council agenda announced that council members would discuss "significant exposure to litigation from 'G. Roberts'" in a closed session. A few days later, the city council announced Roberts would immediately take a leave of absence and retire Dec. 30.

Local media could not reach Roberts for comment, and city officials were tight-lipped about the departure. Eventually, the city released a settlement with Roberts that cited a "dispute" over "continuance of Roberts' employment," and gave him \$130,655 in severance pay.

On Monday, after the city council issued a resolution appreciating Roberts upon his retirement, Roberts said in a speech that he "never intended to sue the city" and his departure was amicable. He called his 18 years with the city "extremely rewarding" and a "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

Roberts said he was approached by City Manager James Keene about an early retirement or buyout, and accepted.

"My understanding is that (Keene) wanted to make some organizational changes," Roberts said after the meeting.

Roberts had planned to retire soon anyway and wanted to spend more time with his family; the timing was right.

"For me, it just all came together," he said.

He said the confusion came from a clause that an attorney had put in the agreement to protect the city in case Roberts, 61, decided to sue for age discrimination. That led to the closed session item and the "exposure to litigation."

"I never initiated such a thing," Roberts said.

In his speech, Roberts cited the Post's "incorrect" reports that he had filed a claim against the city and had been fired. Quoting Mark Twain again, he said: "If you don't read the newspaper, you're uninformed. If you read the newspaper, you're misinformed."

Roberts said he didn't want to dwell on the Post's "bad fiction," and while thinking of "good" fiction authors, said he thought of Ernest Hemingway, known for his drinking habits. Roberts then presented a bottle of Johnnie Walker Scotch whisky as a "peace offering" to the Post. He handed it to the city clerk for safekeeping, to "help inspire them to better fiction."

Premature quadruplets to go home soon

BY DIANA SAMUELS
Daily News Staff Writer

Quadruplets born last fall at Lucile Packard Children's Hospital are getting ready to head home.

After three months in intensive care, the four sisters — Audrey, Emma, Natalie and Isabelle Wang — will join parents Samantha Weng and Wayne Wang at their new home in Redwood City, according to an article posted Monday on the Stanford School of Medicine website.

Weng reportedly did not receive any fertility treatments.

"We thought we were having one, then ultrasounds showed two, then three, and then we found out about four," Weng said in the article. "We were shocked and then even more shocked. We were also very happy, but a bit overwhelmed."

The babies were 26 weeks old when born Oct. 21 — about 14 weeks early — and each weighed less than 2 pounds.

Quadruplets are rare, occurring once every 729,000 births. At least two of the babies — Emma and Audrey — shared a placenta and are identical, a one in a million event, according to hospital officials.

"It's too early to tell if the other girls, Natalie and Isabelle, are identical to each other," obstetrician Jane Chueh said in the article, "but if they are, the babies' birth would be a one-in-8 million event. And if all four girls are identical, the odds would be one in 11 million or more."

Lucile Packard Children's Hospital also delivered naturally conceived quadruplets to a San Mateo family in 2005.

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