

Master plan for safety improvements on Highway 9 gains approval 7

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PLANNERS DENY ONE HOME DESIGN, SEND ANOTHER ONE BACK TO DRAWING BOARD

Extensive debate over plans for Reservoir Road houses

Large cellar a sticking point

By JASON SWEENEY

Designs for two large homes on Reservoir Road were cause for extensive debate at the Feb. 28 meeting of the Los Gatos Planning Commission. One home design was denied while the other was sent back to the planning department for a redesign.

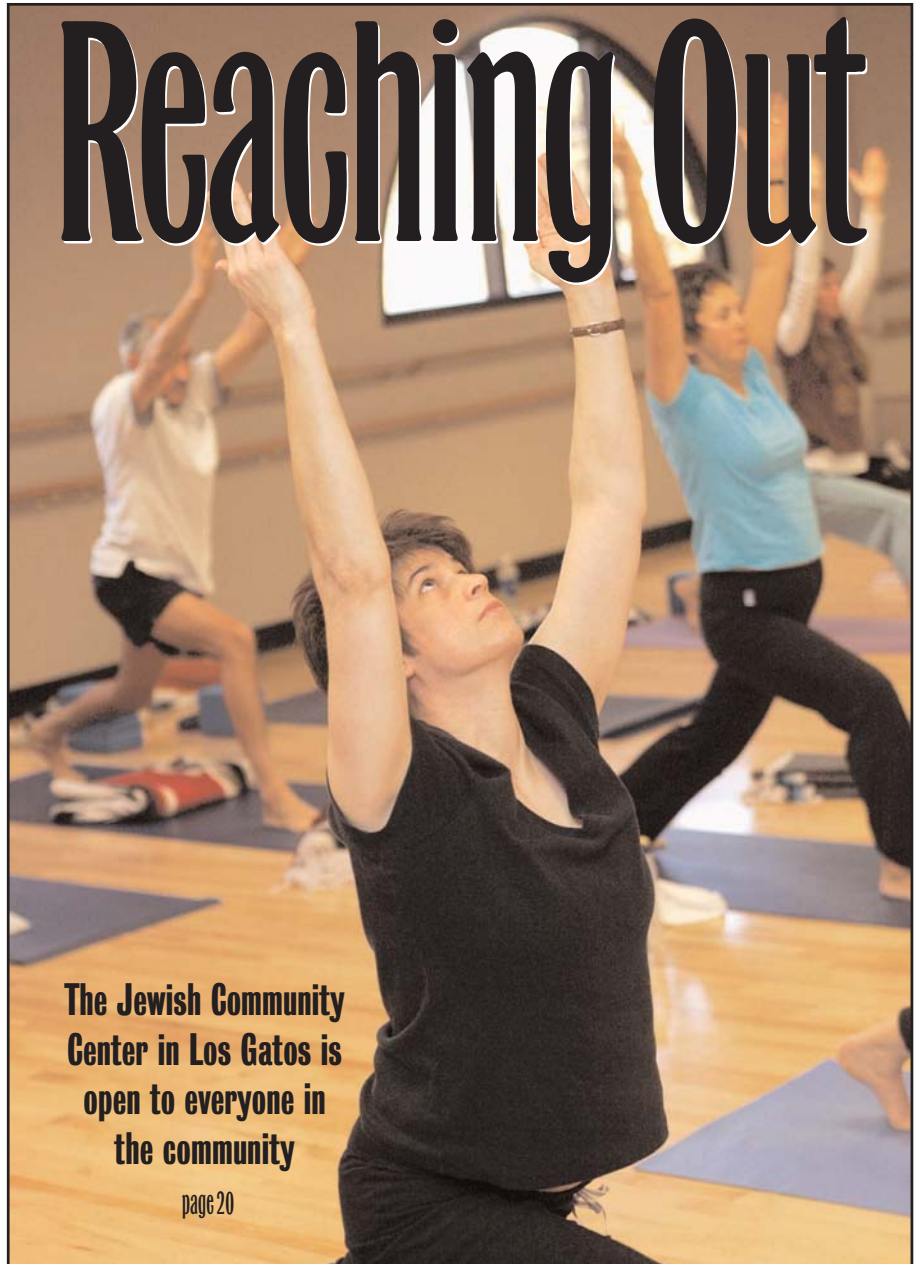
Both designs initiated debate on the intention of the town's Hillside Development Standards and Guidelines—whether the standards and guidelines were laws to be followed or a “guiding light” that allowed for flexibility in designs.

The location of the two proposed homes is on a four-lot subdivision north of the intersection of Reservoir Road and Prospect Avenue on what was once a San Jose Water Company reservoir.

In December 2003, the Los Gatos Town Council voted to allow the removal of the nonfunctioning reservoir so a four-lot subdivision could be constructed on the landfill. The planning commission had

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Reaching Out



Photograph by George Sakkestad

The Jewish Community Center in Los Gatos is open to everyone in the community

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The Addison-Penzak Jewish Community Center has something for everyone. Davette Berry takes advantage of the opportunity to participate in a yoga class.



Early learning is available for youngsters in the preschool at the community center. Teacher Vardar Bahan places a crown on the head of 4-year-old Hailey Karpel.



Personal trainer Lisa Lord (right) leads Darlene LeClaire through her workout.



Roxanne O'Shea (right) participates in a life drawing class.

Center of Activity

Something for everyone at the Addison-Penzak
Jewish Community Center

By MARIANNE LUCCHESI HAMILTON

Photographs by GEORGE SAKKESTAD

Watching themselves in the floor-to-ceiling mirrors, tiny ballerinas stretch and pirouette, then collapse in a giggling heap. Down the hall, a family of Russian immigrants stops by for

counseling services. In the fitness center, harried executives work off stress on state-of-the-art treadmills, each equipped with its own TV screen.

At the Addison-Penzak Jewish Com-

munity Center, members and visitors find nourishment of all kinds—for the body, mind and soul. Spanning 119,000 square feet of floor space, with surrounding athletic fields that sprawl across nine acres, the

JCC has plenty of room for everyone to follow his or her passion—and enough activities to keep youths, teens and adults coming back for more.

Since its opening in September 2005, the

JCC has attracted a devoted coterie of members and guests with an eclectic blend of programs. Whether you're looking for a lip-reading or Pilates class, or hope to hook up with a rock-climbing buddy, or seek a refresher course on art history or computer skills, there's sure to be someone who offers the expertise you need.

"We like to think of the center as a central meeting place for the whole community, and as an agency that enhances the quality of life for local residents," says Hal Bordy, chief executive officer of the JCC. "We encourage everyone—Jewish and non-Jewish—to visit us, and to see all of the wonderful things we have to offer."

Bordy, who has been affiliated with JCCs for more than 35 years, says the Gloria and Ken Levy Family Campus is typical of the 200-plus JCCs in existence worldwide (including such unlikely spots as Hong Kong). All operate independently, yet all share a common vision, Bordy says.

"The Los Gatos JCC has everything you'd find in most of the JCCs in North America," he notes. "We have recreational and fitness facilities, which help support our more mission-driven programs—the arts, lifelong learning, educational programs and child and teen programs. Between Palo Alto and Los Gatos we have a very densely populated Jewish community, but the nature of the Jewish home has changed dramatically: Like every other group in California, our religious and cultural identification has become kind of diffused. We feel that our JCC closely reflects the greater South Bay community."

Toward this end, Bordy and his team of program planners—particularly administrative program coordinator Lisa Ceile Golfus—work tirelessly to mount the sort of activities that locals will enjoy. For example, the JCC's 2007 concert series will debut March 25, featuring the San Jose Chamber Players—former Royal Philharmonic Orchestra violinist Christina Mok, San Jose Symphony principal cellist Peter Gelfand and internationally acclaimed pianist Mark Anderson—who will take the stage in the JCC's 500-seat auditorium. With professional lighting and sound equipment just installed, the site is now ready to host the JCC's full slate of cultural events.

Last year, the JCC welcomed cabaret singer Julie Budd, hosted a jazz-comedy night and presented a concert featuring the works of Holocaust-era composers. Additionally in 2006, the JCC produced *Beauty and the Beast* (staged at the Heritage Theater in Campbell), while this year's presentation of *The Wizard of Oz* played to sold-out audiences as well.

Those who enjoy fine arts also have made it a point to stop by the JCC, which has turned several of its hallways into galleries showing the works of artisans of note. Last month, the JCC partnered with the Museums of Los Gatos to display original graphics created by Jules Halfant (a renowned WPA artist whose paintings were on exhibit at the LG Museum). Currently, visitors can enjoy the work of April Berger, who has combined colorful tapestry and collage to create a show titled "The Mystical Hebrew Alphabet: Layers of Meaning, Fabric of Time."

"I tell people I'm not exactly a poster-boy for the fitness center, but I'm passionate about the JCC," Bordy laughs. "The classical arts in particular have always been a love of mine, so I've encouraged their growth at the JCC through our alliances with Arts Council Silicon Valley, the San Jose Symphony and other organizations. Of course, our challenge is always to find



Dance teacher Brea Paillet of The Dance Company teaches ballet to Caylin Ziemelis in the 4-5 age level class at the Jewish Community Center.

funding to cover the costs of arts programming. Artists and performers are excited to come here, so we're constantly in search of sponsors to make these programs possible."

The JCC's fundraising arm, the Jewish Federation of Silicon Valley, is responsible for keeping the facility financially solvent. Other costs are offset by the JCC's nearly 3,000 members. Program services

director Vicki Epstein figures the JCC still has room for more. "It's really based on locker rooms and the fitness facility, which are what motivate most people to join,"

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Taking part in yoga class at the Jewish Community Center are Lan Duong (left) and Vicki Feigelson.

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she says. "We believe we could easily handle 4,000 full members, plus those who want to join as 'social' members to take advantage of our educational and cultural programs; this doesn't put additional stress on the fitness facility."

Those who check out the JCC's capabilities are often pleasantly surprised at the very reasonable cost of membership. Bordy and his colleagues engaged Club One ProServices to outfit the fitness center (dubbed "The Center for Healthy Living"), resulting in a gleaming, well-maintained array of exercise equipment. Locker rooms are nicely appointed, and the staff and personal trainers are cheerful and knowledgeable. During the morning hours, moms can drop their little ones off at the JCC's Playcare Center and sneak in a cardio class (childcare service is available to any parent using the facility, whether for fitness classes or other activities). Older adults and those with special needs are also



Dance instructor Geno Torres (left, front) puts Pam Ryder (right) and the cardio dance class members through their paces.

encouraged to participate in sessions specifically mapped to their capabilities.

In addition to the athletic facilities, the Oka Road property is home to Jewish Family Service of Silicon Valley, which further addresses the needs of the community through senior case management, psychological counseling, teen programs, social services for South Bay Holocaust survivors, emergency assistance for low-income persons in need and other services. An NBA-worthy gymnasium, kosher café and a preschool run by the JCC also share space on the first floor, while the independently run Yavneh Day School is housed upstairs.

Older students have made the JCC a

popular hangout, too: In the teen lounge, "Club 3 to 6" offers a safe after-school environment where middle and high school students can enjoy pingpong and pool, a full complement of electronic gear, TV and Wi-Fi access. Outside, after a match on the JCC's newly refinished tennis courts, an Olympic-sized pool gives families a place to cool off on hot summer days. Swimming lessons are also available for all ages and athletic capabilities, plus soccer leagues, fencing and virtually any other sport desired.

As imaginative and full as the JCC's slate of activities may be, staff members encourage the community to come up with its own uses for the facility. "All of our

As imaginative and full as the JCC's slate of activities may be, staff members encourage the community to come up with its own uses for the facility



An Olympic-sized swimming pool offers a variety of activities. Pat Sear takes part in a water conditioning class.

rooms are available for rental," Epstein says. "Any person or group is welcome to call us—we've had organizations reserve a meeting room for an hour or an entire day, and we've had weddings and bar mitzvahs. This is a nice service for the community, and it brings in a little income for us, so we'd love to talk to anyone who's looking for some space for their meetings or events."

In June, the community will be invited to participate in the JCC's first Environment Day. The event will include a screening of former Vice President Al Gore's Academy Award-winning documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*, and an expo that will demonstrate various methods to reduce society's role in climate change. The JCC also is partnering with the Commonwealth Club of Silicon Valley to bring a slate of sought-after speakers to the South Bay (Elizabeth Edwards, cancer survivor and wife of presidential candidate Sen. John Edwards, was the JCC's featured guest last fall).

The Addison-Penzak Jewish Community Center calls itself "your place to connect." Savvy local residents would do well to make this connection.

For more information about the JCC and its programs, visit www.svjcc.org.