

# City says it won't revise report on Whiskey Gulch

By Michael Shapiro  
Times Tribune staff

A day after neighboring cities asked East Palo Alto to revise a report on the impact of potential developments in the Whiskey Gulch area, city officials said no.

"We're not ramming it through," said Councilwoman Pat Johnson. "We've been at this for two years — it's not like we just started."

East Palo Alto Redevelopment Director Virgus Streets said the city would review all public comments on a draft environmental impact report but would not con-

sider major revisions at this time.

During the past week, officials and residents in Palo Alto and Menlo Park have asked the city for wholesale revision of the report and a 15-day extension to analyze the 285-page document.

However, Streets said East Palo Alto must stick to its schedule to approve a redevelopment plan by the end of the calendar year.

"It's a two-way street," he said. "We're seeking others' cooperation in sticking to our schedule."

The primary plan for the area is

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## Ex-East Palo Alto mayor is charged

By Michael McGuire  
Times Tribune staff

The San Mateo County District Attorney's Office has charged James Blakey, a former East Palo Alto mayor and City Council member, with sexually molesting a teenage girl.

The six-count criminal complaint accuses Blakey, 61, of molesting the daughter of his live-in girl-

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James Blakey  
... accused of molesting teen.

# REPORT

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DeMonet Industries' proposal to build twin 18-story towers housing a 244-room hotel, a 10-screen movie theater, a performing arts center and 340,000 square feet of office space.

One criticism of the environmental report, compiled by Jefferson Associates Inc. of San Francisco, is that it does not specifically address the DeMonet proposal.

East Palo Alto officials said the report is not intended to evaluate the DeMonet proposal; rather, its purpose is to consider alternative levels of development for Whiskey Gulch, located along University Avenue just west of the Bayshore Freeway.

"We have to take one step at a time," City Manager Stan Hall said.

"It is inappropriate to comment on 'What if?'"

Asked if another report would be compiled specifically considering the DeMonet proposal, Hall said the city would make that decision later.

Johnson called neighboring cities' requests "another grandstand play."

She said Palo Alto and Menlo Park "should let us determine our own destiny."

Johnson said she has not seen detailed comments from other cities but has read about their concerns in press accounts.

"I don't think the press is the right place to air their grievances," she said. "It's bad faith to make those accusations."

East Palo Alto officials say the city needs major development as soon as possible.

Last year the city raised only

\$192,000 in sales tax revenue of its \$4.7 million budget, much of it from businesses in the Whiskey Gulch area.

This year, unless revenue-generating measures pass in the November election, the city faces a \$500,000 deficit on its \$5.1 million budget.

Councilman Warnell Coats has said East Palo Alto's neighbors are trying to "undermine" development there so that East Palo Alto residents continue to shop in Palo Alto or Menlo Park.

East Palo Alto needs that sales tax revenue to hire more police officers and enhance community services, among other programs, he said.

A 30-day review period on the draft EIR ends Sept. 22.

At its meeting Monday, the East Palo Alto City Council will hear public comment on the report.