

Council washes its hands of Dumbarton Bridge plan

By Ann Gibbons
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EAST PALO ALTO — Even as a new four-lane Dumbarton Bridge is being built, the East Palo Alto Municipal Council approved a resolution against its design Monday night.

The 3-1 vote, with one member of the council absent, was a signal to neighboring communities that the current Municipal Council did not like the mess a previous Municipal Council put it in.

"It's time we showed Palo Alto and Menlo Park that we're a different council," said Councilman Berkley Driessel, who proposed the resolution. "People still think we're the same old council that brought the bridge in. If we'd been the council then, we would have opposed the design."

Only one councilman — Henry Anthony, who was a member of the previous council which voted for the new bridge — voted against the resolution.

The resolution said that the Municipal Council "opposed the Dumbarton Bridge in its current design" and would have preferred a plan for a two lane bridge with bike paths and a southern connection between the bridge and the Bayshore Freeway.

Such a plan — called the Stephens Amendment — was rejected by the East Palo Alto Municipal Council in 1974. East Palo Alto was the only West Bay community to support building of the four-lane bridge during critical negotiations that year.

Since that time, other communities have blamed East Palo Alto for the bridge they fought against.



Times Tribune Photo by Bob Andres

A. Berkley Driessel

Driessel's resolution was an attempt to smooth over old conflicts, clearing the way for East Palo Alto to seek cooperation for a road that would travel south of East Palo Alto and connect directly with U.S. 101, somewhere in the vicinity of Oregon Expressway.