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Rapp ruling raises policy questions

Project delayed as council overturns height limit decision

BY WILL OREMUS
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

A new, four-story building at University Avenue and Bryant Street could be delayed half a year after the Palo Alto City Council overturned the project's approval.

The council ruled Monday that the Architectural Review Board was wrong to allow the building to rise five feet above the city's 50-foot height limit. The decision followed an appeal by Palo Alto resident Lynn Chiapella, who argued the city let developer Roxy Rapp get away with too many exceptions to city codes.

Rapp, who says he had a major

clothing store lined up for the first two floors, must now submit a new application.

He lamented the setback Wednesday, saying the delay will hurt not only his property but surrounding merchants. He pointed with disgust at the building's current condition; Starbucks and Noah's Bagels have already moved out, leaving one ground-floor storefront vacant and a second occupied temporarily by a Tibetan handcrafts dealer.

But some of the issues raised in the skirmish transcend the individual site. Chiapella said she filed the appeal — and a similar appeal against a project

across the street at 310 University Ave. — because she believes the city has grown lax in enforcing design limitations.

She questioned not only the height of Rapp's project, but also its density and distance from the street. In its unanimous recommendation of approval, the Architectural Review Board had signed off on all three exceptions on the grounds that they resulted in a better project.

The extra height allowed for two floors of tall-ceilinged retail space, presumably making the site more attractive to certain merchants. The

RAPP RULING, page 7



Courtesy of Roxy Rapp

This is concept art of a new four-story building in Palo Alto at the corner of University Avenue and Bryant Street.

» TWO SILICON VALLEY INSTITUTIONS MERGE

Carmone Smith works out on a treadmill at the East Valley Family YMCA on Thursday in San Jose. He says he works out at the facility every day for at least an hour and sometimes for two hours.

The boards of directors for the YMCA of Santa Clara Valley and the Mid-Peninsula YMCA have voted to merge, creating the YMCA of Silicon Valley.

The merger itself isn't expected to impact members and no facilities are expected to close. But it will likely mean some consolidation of staffing.

Pauline Lubens /
Bay Area News Group



YMCA puts the past on the shelf

BY LINDA GOLDSTON
BAY AREA NEWS GROUP

Imagine Silicon Valley as the best place for kids to grow up, a place that is one of the healthiest areas in the country for children and families to live.

That's the hope behind the merger Thursday of two Silicon Valley institutions: the YMCA of Santa Clara Valley and the YMCA of the Mid-Peninsula. The new organization will be called YMCA of

Silicon Valley, a change that is more than a procedural merger of two groups, more than a relabeling of the name, officials said.

"It's kind of imagining Silicon Valley into the future," said Kathy Riggins, who will be CEO of the YMCA of Silicon Valley and is the current head of the Santa Clara Valley Y.

"It translates into what's possible."

For the 190,000 YMCA members, there

will be no immediate impact and no reduction of programs. Fees will remain the same, although a decision has not been made about whether additional charges will be necessary to allow a member at one center to participate in programs at any of the other YMCAs.

And when the change goes into effect on Jan. 1, the combined YMCA expects to introduce new programs, improve existing

YMCA, page 7

Juvenile murder suspect nabbed by Texas police

BY SHAUN BISHOP
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

The teenage murder suspect who escaped on Valentine's Day from San Mateo County's juvenile lock-up facility has been captured by police in Texas, officials said Thursday.



OROZCO

Josue Raul "Ojitos" Orozco, 18, was arrested Wednesday at a house in San Antonio by local police acting on a tip from San Mateo County sheriff's detectives, said Lt. Ray Lunny.

Officials said it is not yet clear when Orozco, a member of the Sureno gang, will be brought back to San Mateo County to face murder charges for his alleged role in the 2005 killing of a rival gang member.

He was 14 at the time of the shooting and is the youngest person in county history to be charged as an adult for murder.

For now, Orozco has been booked into the Bexar County Jail under the name Jesus Contreras, an alias he used while in Texas, officials said.

"I am proud of the tireless and professional work done by the Sheriff's Office Detective Bureau to bring this investigation to a successful conclusion," Sheriff Greg Munks said in a statement.

The arrest caps a seven-month manhunt that kicked off after Orozco, then 17, used a boost from two fellow wards to scale the 15-foot-wall of an outdoor recreation

MURDER SUSPECT, page 11

Ask Dr. Nipa: Invisible braces, visible smiles

Q: What are invisible braces? Who needs them? How do they work?

A: The Invisalign® treatment is an innovative new solution to straightening crooked teeth. It involves a series of transparent, plastic, and removable aligners that slowly move your teeth until they are straightened. Most adults prefer them since they're virtually invisible, easily removable and easy to clean.

The straight talk about crooked teeth is that it may be bad for your appearance, and perhaps even for your health. If your teeth are crowded, crooked or unusually spaced apart, straightening them is recommended. Straightened teeth preserve your teeth and jaw structures longer, make chewing easier and will help you look and feel better.

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