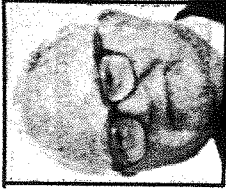


Metes & Bounds

by Bill Haigwood



Politically correct experts

The company president fixed a steely gaze on the applicant and asked: "How much is two and two?"

The young accountant smiled and replied: "Why, four, of course!"

The president frowned. "Sorry, I can't use you." He signaled to his secretary to show the young man out the door. The secretary returned with the second applicant and the president asked, gruffly, "How much is two and two?"

"Four," replied the applicant. "I can't use you," said the executive and waved him out.

The secretary brought in the third applicant and the president again asked, "How much is two and two?"

The applicant took the secretary by the arm, eased her out of the room, closed and locked the door, drew the drapes closed behind the president, leaned across the desk and whispered, "How much do you want it to be?"

The majority of the City Council has rejected the expert opinions of their own appointees to the Planning Commission and Design Review Board, city staff and special consultants they hired to counsel them on the technical and legal aspects of municipal affairs. Obviously, the considered opinions of the experts differed from the personal opinions of the Council majority. The Council's remedy is to seek "additional expert opinion"—presumably until they find experts who will agree with them.

When an Arab asked a fellow tribesman for the loan of a rope, he was refused because the owner claimed he needed the rope to carry water. "But," protested the Arab, "one does not use a rope to carry water!"

The tribesman replied, "If one does not want to loan one's rope, any excuse is good enough."

The excuses given by the Council majority for turning down the Orchard Park project really don't hold water, but any excuse will do so long as you have the authority to say "No." Unfortunately, just saying "No" does not answer the need for affordable housing.

Councilman Roventini claims he voted against the project because of a potential water shortage. The City Engineer says we have a reserve capacity of 50 percent more than current consumption and the City is in the process of drilling another well. According to experts, our chances of NOT finding a surplus of water is infinitely smaller than our chances of becoming radioactive if the "Nuclear-Free Zone" signs are removed from our city limits.

Mr. Levy claims, "The experts I'm listening to are not telling me everything's OK."

Councilman Levy obviously is listening to experts who have not participated in the public meetings and discussions where 77 modifications were made in the plans for Orchard Park in order to meet the conditions for an "Okay" required by the Planning Commission, Design Review Board and City Council.

Mayor Hamilton and Councilwoman Magnie urged delay until the new General Plan is completed and suggest it may result in rezoning the site for industrial or commercial use. Yet, the same NIMBYs who opposed Orchard Park also opposed the Redwood Marketplace!

It is the cosmopolitan population of Sebastopol that gives the city its charm. We lost some of that charm when we lost Orchard Park.