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San Jose Planning Commission approves development of cemetery on McKean Road near Cinnabar Hills

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2 COMMENTS

The San Jose Planning Commission voted unanimously on Nov. 19 to recommend building Heritage Oaks Cemetery. The new non-sectarian cemetery is planned for 275 acres on McKean Road near the Cinnabar Hills Golf Club. The city council will vote on the project on Dec. 9 at the evening public meeting.

About 10 people, evenly divided, spoke for and against the project whose footprint will contain 102 acres for burial and the surrounding 173 acres as permanent open space. Those against were mainly concerned about the impact of grading the hill on the site.

Approximately 120 trees within the cemetery proper will be displaced, but Brandenburg Properties will replace those with 600 mature trees. At the same time, the company plans to gather and plant acorns to create at least 2,000 saplings that will be planted throughout the 275-acre property.

Those acorns with their genetic connection to the land will produce stronger trees, says Bill Baron, a partner in Brandenburg Properties, the developer. The company used the same acorn-growing plan when it built Cinnabar Hills Golf Club. As the cemetery matures so will the trees.

The planning staff and the commission approved the environmental impact report, which incorporated community input.

Heritage Oaks will be the fourth cemetery in San Jose and the first to be added to the city in 125 years. The other three are growing full. Oak Hill began in 1800, Calvary in the mid-1800s and Los Gatos Memorial Park in 1887, according to Baron.