

NIMBY in Santa Cruz

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got mine, so fuck you.” For me, every neighborhood should include a few half-way houses, a safe house for runaways and violence victims, and a starting-over facility which one can voluntarily enter as opposed to the current lock-down system where those on probation or in jail always get top priority for too few beds.

People of all ages leaving a hospital need care in homes that are near family and friends — some for just a day, some

for longer, as we learned when this winter’s storm abruptly crushed a Felton board-and-care home. Each neighborhood should also have half a dozen humble units provided to single groundskeepers, firemen, motel housekeepers, and other service workers who maintain the neighborhood. Providing such facilities — like those given some priests and UCSC brass — would help compensate for the gap between incomes and rents.

Also, there should be neighborhood transitional houses, where indigent and lower-income people who are traveling

through can connect efficiently. They would be like the hostels but open more hours, with computer terminals, clean socks, lockers, dry blankets, bus tokens, coffee, maps, and reasonable rates. This vision contrasts with our hard-to-manage, crowded ghetto-building — a No Parking epidemic waiting to happen. (Not to mention the total negligence and abuse throughout the rest of the County!)

I just don’t understand why we can’t provide housing for all the people we need working here as a way to improve our tourist-based economy. The “service

jobs” that make tourism viable don’t pay enough for our existing housing. Would it be so hard for cities and Santa Cruz County to correlate things better? Granted, they might have to ignore a few bribes and threats for two to five years, but our collective humanity is at stake and the results would be well worth it.

Do you have housing questions or answers? Call Linda Lemaster at Housing NOW! in Santa Cruz at 831/423-HOME or e-mail: hearth8@hotmail.com