

Bryant Ranch Slated to be Museum

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The Bryant Ranch building gutted by fire on Dec. 29 was a potential site for a Yorba Linda community center and museum, city officials said earlier this week.

CW Associates of Newport Beach, owners of the building, were planning to give title of the building to the city within two years, said community development director Phil Paxton. A report on the status of the building was postponed at Monday night's City Council meeting due to the absence of Councilman Todd Murphy, who was scheduled to present the report.

The building, an old ranch house located off La Palma Avenue, was gutted by a blaze at about 2:30 a.m. Monday, Dec. 29, according to county fire department reports. Arson is the suspected cause of the fire, which resulted in nearly \$100,000 in structural damage to the abandoned building.

Although the building is not a registered historical site, it dates back to the 1920s when the Bryant Ranch was one of the largest such operations in Orange County. In the 1940s, the building was used as a recreational facility and lecture hall.

Paxton said no formal proposal for either a community center or museum had been made by the city largely because the city would not get title to the building for at least two years. CW planned to give the building and some surrounding land to the city as part of an agreement when the company purchased the 4,500-acre site in 1977, said Paxton.

Paxton said city officials are waiting for a final report from the fire department on the fire. Preliminary inspection indicates that the majority of the first floor of the building sustained only minor damage. Paxton said, while at least one-quarter of the upper floor was gutted.

"If it's (the building) salvageable, it is still a great location," said Paxton. "But I don't think we're going to act with any haste. There's no urgency."

In other business at Monday night's council meeting, tract maps and neighborhood problems will be pushed aside for one night in February when the council devotes an entire meeting to discussing the city's traffic problems. The special meeting is scheduled for Feb. 16.

"The council has felt a groundswell movement recently for some discussion of traffic problems,"

said Mayor Irwin Fried. "We want to illustrate that we're not ignorant of (traffic) problems, and that's a matter of timing. Something will happen in this or the next fiscal year."

Fried said the special meeting will feature a discussion of regional traffic problems affecting Yorba Linda, as well as staff analysis of problems and timeframes for solving them.

Also at Monday night's meeting, the council—with Murphy and Roland Bigonger—unanimously approved the second reading of an ordinance to ban the use, sale, and possession of so-called safe and sane fireworks within city limits.

The ordinance, requested by a majority of voters during the November elections, would make Yorba Linda the 11th Orange County city to ban safe and sane fireworks defined as those that do not explode or

travel through the air or on the ground. The ordinance is expected to receive final approval at the council's Jan. 19 meeting.

The next meeting of the Yorba Linda City Council is slated to begin at 6:30 P.M Monday, Jan. 19.