

7260 News, Winter 2000

Smedra's Westwood Plans Thwarted by Homeowners Groups

Thanks in large part to West-wood homeowner groups, West-wood business interests, and an alliance of individual activists, developer Ira Smedra's plan to close off Glendon Avenue in the heart of Westwood Village has failed.

Nor, it appears, will Smedra be able to realize his ambition to al-most double the number of new movie screens in the Village in violation of the Westwood Specific Plan.

According to the Los Angeles *Times*, a group of Smedra's partners have sold their interest in the West-wood property. The new ownership group is likely to build an apartment complex and market in place of the originally scheduled shopping center/movie theatre complex.

To defeat the project, opponents raised and spent over \$300,000 to hire professional consultants, lawyers, and lobbyists. The opponents ran successful letter writing and petition campaigns and blanketed Westwood area with anti-Smedra project lawn signs.

After the developer attempted to change state law in his effort to close Glendon, the project's opponents hired an army of Sacramento lobbyists, who helped defeat the effort.