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Council hears housing authority presentation

By Molly Davis, Staff Writer

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The Housing Authority of San Bernardino County will have a presentation at the Redlands City Council meeting on the 228-unit, located on the Northeast corner of Orange Street and Lugonia Avenue. The Housing Authority is taken on a project known as the Lugonia Aveune Housing Project for the purpose of reconstructing the site into a 228-unit planned residential development which will consist of 39 detached single family residences and 189 apartment. (John Valenzuela/Staff Photographer)

REDLANDS - At its first meeting of the year, the City Council met a full house to tackle a number of items, including a presentation on a Housing Authority project in north Redlands and a street engineering project at Redlands Boulevard and Colton Avenue.

The council heard a presentation from the Housing Authority of San Bernardino County regarding a proposed 228-unit planned residential development on about 19 acres, at the northeast corner of Orange Street and Lugonia Avenue.

Gus Joslyn, chief operating officer for the

Housing Authority, explained to the council what the project consists of and where they are in the process.

"The project has been some five years in the making," Joslyn said. "We've finally cobbled together enough to begin Phase 1."

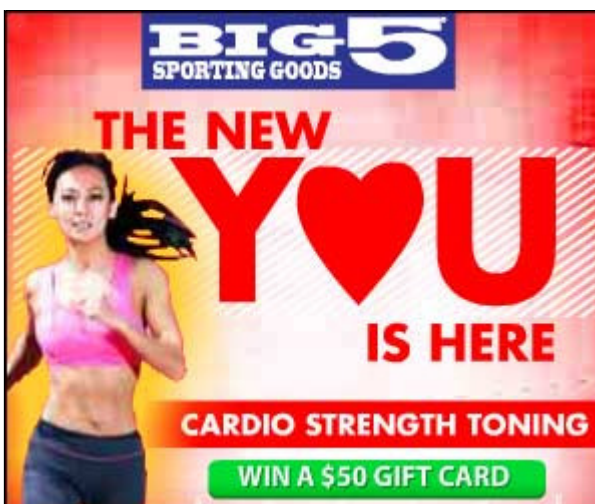
Joslyn said that the current Housing Authority site at Lugonia and Orange is the oldest public housing site in the county and was built in 1942.

It has 115 low-income units, which will be demolished in favor of the 228 units. Two-thirds of the project will be multi-family units, while the front development will be created as single-family homes for sale to first-time homebuyers.

Phase 1 includes five five-plex buildings and four nine-plex buildings, done in a Mission-style architecture. Each unit includes its own garage, Joslyn noted.

In addition, Phase 1 includes on-site management and maintenance offices, plus a childcare facility, community meeting rooms, swimming pool and a park.

Residents housed in the not-yet-demolished units are in the process of being relocated, Joslyn said, with the expectation that ground could be



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broken as soon as April.

Councilman Bob Gardner expressed some concern with how residents were relocated. Joslyn said that they have been provided with other Housing Authority units, or with vouchers to rent in the general public.

Joslyn added that the displaced residents will have first priority to move into the new units once they're ready for occupancy.

Finally, Joslyn said that the project is funded by tax-exempt bonds, and no money for the project comes from the city.

The Housing Authority project was a communication item and required no action from the council.

"I think this is an outstanding project," Mayor Pro Tem Paul Foster said.

At the beginning of the meeting, after a number of public comments -- many from members of Occupy Redlands -- the council recognized a donation from the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians in support of the Redlands Emergency Services Academy.

Tribe chairman James Ramos presented Mayor Pete Aguilar with a check for \$32,900. In turn, Firefighter Eva Toppo, on behalf of the Redlands Fire Department, presented Ramos with a plaque honoring the tribe for their help with the program, which trains firefighter and police personnel.

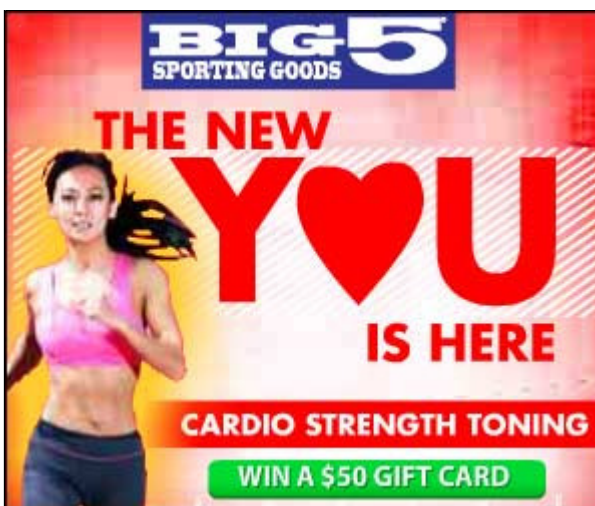
The council also heard a presentation from Engineering Manager Michael Pool regarding engineering designs for a Redlands Boulevard, Alabama Street, and Colton Avenue improvement project.

The council unanimously approved \$52,490 for consultant services with Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc., to look at ways to

improve safety and traffic flow at the intersection of Colton and Redlands.

"We're saving \$2 million and getting (the project) ready three years sooner," said Fred Mousavipour, interim municipal utilities and engineering director.

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