

BUSINESS

First renters move in at 1710 on the Blvd

By Becca Whitnall
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Monday morning's rainy skies couldn't damper the spirits of Lou Mellman and Garry Collett.

The co-founders of the company behind 1710 on the Blvd, Thousand Oaks' first attempt at mixing residential and retail, welcomed the site's first tenants that day, a full 2.5 years after the so-called "Lupe's project" broke ground.

"It was magical," California Commercial Investment Group leasing coordinator Lea Devine said.

Nearly all of the 36 apartments—ranging from \$2,425 a month for one bedroom, 690 square feet, to \$3,700 for three bedrooms, 1,520 square feet—are spoken for, Mellman said in an interview in early March.

As for the almost 5,000 square feet of retail space, that's still up for grabs.

"I love the idea of Italian pizza, gelato," Mellman said. "One of the things we looked at possibly is a store, like a little gourmet shop."

The success of the development, built at the former site of Lupe's Mexican Restaurant, which is honored by a plaque out front, is central to the Thousand Oaks City Council's vision for the boulevard.

If mixed-use can work at 1710, the thought is it can be repeated up and down the east-west thoroughfare.

The Acorn received a tour of the new apartments last week.

The units feature keyless entry, washer and dryer, hardwood flooring, stainless steel appliances and balconies overlooking T.O. Boulevard. The complex has a dog run and pet-wash area, gym, clubhouse, fire pit, barbecue area

and a mini pool/spa that developers call a "spool."

Apartments shown to the Acorn had an open floor plan with no walls dividing kitchens from living spaces. A tri-level work-live unit had entrances on both the first and second floors.

On the first floor, the door faces the front of the complex and will be where clients enter. The other is on the second floor to the rear of the unit, easily accessible from the residents' parking garage. The second floor is where the kitchen, living room and bedroom are located, and a small loft is on the third floor.

The complex is next to a new Italian ice shop and within walking distance to the Civic Arts Plaza. The views include the city's 25th anniversary oak tree on one side and hills on another. But the view looking across T.O. Boulevard is of Jiffy Lube, a gas station and a not-so-updated strip mall containing a 7-Eleven and Chef Burger.

Still, people clamored for the units when they first became available last fall, Mellman said.

"There are only 12 units left and we're not even open yet," he said two weeks ago.

By March 10, there were only eight.

Rocky road

The development gained approval from the Thousand Oaks Planning Commission in February 2017.

Contractors toppled the Spanish-tile-roofed Lupe's building in November of that year. Then things stalled.

There were rainstorms and storm drains, the Woolsey fire, a change in builders and a utility line that needed to be rerouted. And then there were bigger problems. When digging into the



NIGHT LIFE—Above, 1710 on the Blvd. at night. The mixed-use development consists of 36 apartments and 5,000 square feet of retail space. While the apartments are mostly spoken for, there's been no word on the vacant commercial spots. At right, a plaque honoring Lupe's Mexican Restaurant, which operated at the site for over 70 years.

Photos by RICHARD GILLARD
Acorn Newspapers



ground to make holes for the 180 pillars needed for the foundation, contractors learned the ground beneath the property was mostly solid rock.

At one point, one of the project's loudest cheerleaders, Councilmember Al Adam, was discouraged by the pace, which delayed city streetscape projects that

couldn't begin until 1710 was near completion.

"I'm going to go down there with a shovel, myself," he said in February 2019.

It wasn't a laughing matter for CCI as expenses mounted.

"It's been a labor of love," Mellman said. "We spent a lot of time and energy. . . . The pressure

came in when the costs started mounting."

Looking to the future, Mellman said CCI has some electric car hookups but has the infrastructure to put in more should the need arise. It's also considering providing golf carts or an electric bike borrowing system for residents to make short trips.

Approved office building will be built into Westlake hillside

By Kyle Jorrey
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A plan to build a two-story office building into a knoll near Via Merida and E. Thousand Oaks Boulevard has received approval from the planning commission.

Construction will involve grading more than 6,000 cubic yards of dirt, enough to fill over 420 dump trucks, and the removal of two protected coast live oaks, one of which the applicant has agreed to transplant. The commission voted 5-0 Monday in favor of the proposal, but not before questioning the applicant and architect about the impact on the natural environment.

"The thing that I have concerns about is the trees. . . ." Commissioner Don Lanson said of the plans, which also require nine oaks to be pruned. "I balance that with what I think are some great parts of this project.

"We're always looking for connectivity. The way this building looks in terms of the slope and how it integrates with the trees and the materials they are using, I think just looks fantastic. I wish we could automatically change the look of all the other buildings

in that whole area to mimic this."

A tree report completed by Westlake Village-based L. Newman Design Group on behalf of the applicant, Hanes Properties, said the large oak that is to be cut down is in poor health. It sits within the footprint of the proposed building, which would have parking below and offices above.

"This tree is in decline and has thin foliage due to twig and branch dieback," the tree report says. "Preserving this tree would not allow the reasonable development and use of this property."

After the meeting, Commissioner David Newman (no relation) said he agreed with the arborist's assessment.

"The tree, which measures about 22 inches across at 4 feet above ground, shows significant burns from a fire, and also has branches that appear to be dead or dying," he said on his Facebook page.

As is city policy, Hanes Properties will be required to make up for the loss of the tree by planting three replacement coast live oaks somewhere else on the parcel. They also committed to planting 10 more oaks to form a grove on

one side of the building.

If the transplanted tree does not survive, it will also have to be replaced at a 3-1 ratio.

The municipal code requires planning commission approval for any proposal that requires grading into any hillside with a slope of 25% or more.

In this instance, the developer said building into the knoll would

reduce the visibility of the building from Via Merida and T.O. Boulevard.

"Grading into steep slopes isn't great, but it is permitted with waivers. . . ." Newman said. "The upside of the grading is that the building profile will be much reduced and appear more harmonious with its surroundings."

The applicant acknowledged

EYE ON LOCAL AREA STOCKS

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AMGEN	AMGN	244.27	229.96	223.94	229.99	Thousand Oaks
ARCUTIS BIOTHERAPEUTICS	ARQT	32.34	32.20	32.44	35.00	Westlake Village
ON ASSIGNMENT	ASGN	99.09	95.69	93.15	97.95	Calabasas
ATARA BIOTHERAPEUTICS	ATRA	16.39	16.70	15.95	17.35	Westlake Village
BLACKLINE	BL	114.33	114.33	117.76	124.58	Woodland Hills
CHEESECAKE FACTORY	CAKE	61.03	59.01	58.11	55.52	Calabasas
DIODES, INC	DIOD	85.59	81.07	76.79	81.57	Westlake Village
MANNKIND CORPORATION	MNKD	3.90	3.85	3.62	5.98	Westlake Village
SEMTECH CORPORATION	SMTC	73.09	65.81	70.30	78.52	Camarillo
TAKEDA PHARMACEUTICAL	TAK	19.52	18.53	17.71	17.22	Thousand Oaks
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