

Seniors Focus Group

Thursday, May 17 11:30 – 12:30

Long Valley Garden Club

Participants:

- Gene Swartz
- Louie Fresquez
- Jan Seeley
- Maryanne Adkisson
- Michael Nabong
- Susan Bradley

What do you like about Laytonville?

- Small and rural
- Beautiful
- We live in paradise, and would like to see improvements
- Can see and breathe on a regular basis
- It's beautiful get away from pollution and chemicals. Greatest loves are wildflowers and birds. Watched how her previous community was ruined by unchecked growth. We don't need to bring

in anything else, we just need to market what we've got.

- Have lived here 42 years and felt welcomed here, even as a single person. Came from suburban area and this was like heaven to me. I love the character of the valley. It keeps our kids in "the cradle" and they don't get out of here, but that doesn't mean we want to bring the world here. Localization is the key... starting small businesses and farms to support community. I'd like to see everyone doing that...orchards, gardens, value-added products. We are concerned about development, but we need local affordable housing to attract service people. And walking options for transportation. The ability to expand will take development of the downtown area, and we should keep it compact.

What issues do you think are appropriate to retired people?

- Like to see more sidewalks. Walking up Branscomb is sort of like taking your life in your hands. We need better lighting

outside of downtown.

- Ten years from now the kids are going to take away our drivers licenses. How will we handle our lives then? Unless Laytonville provides housing of some kind...cluster housing or something... we'll probably have to move to Willits. We don't want to move to Willits. Where we live now, we have to drive to everywhere.
- We don't want to leave our property. We intend to die there. It will involve ridesharing or some other form of public transportation. Even nice trails to walk, shortcuts.
- Because we are in our cars so much, we don't get enough exercise. We should have trails and bicycle paths.

What are your favorite places to walk?

- There is a beautiful trail at the back of the park.
- The favorite walk (exercise walk) is around the subdivision in downtown be-

cause it is exactly a 1 mile loop. Foster to Harwood to Willis to Ramsey.

- Harwood Road is not safe. Kids ride horses along Harwood and Branscomb Rd.

What do you think Laytonville needs?

- We've been doing some talking recently because we want to give service to the community...like outdoor movies at the garden club.
- We need a swimming pool.
- We need a recreation center for young and old.
- What we need is trees and landscaping. We need a tree ordinance to protect what we've got.
- When I was a kid, we did a lot of hunting, fishing, walking, riding bikes. At that time there was a lot of sawmills and

work in the woods. I started working in the mill part time when I was 13. There used to be so many trees in this valley... oaks and pines....they just keep cutting them down.

- We need more nurturing things for the kids that are here and we need jobs for them.
- We used to have a strong ROP program where kids can learn building and trades skills. They built the garden club building. For example, the most popular class at the high school now is a guitar making class.

What was the school like when you went to school here?

- There were about 12 in our class. Our shop class built the shop, we went on to build a couple of houses in the community. There was a welding shop and an auto shop.

- Laytonville USD de-unified (from Wil-lits) in about 1980. Schools should be community resources. We would like to have more local control over our schools.
- The old campus needs to be opened up for community use.
- There are distinct housing needs in this community: the need for clustered housing for seniors, affordable housing and shelters for homeless families.
- Too often towns and cities use ordinances to push social issues (homeless, drug use) under the table.

If we were going to have a community gathering space in Laytonville, do you think it would be a magnet for homeless?

- We need to balance the needs: there are homeless, young, the elderly.
- We could have an area for a public farm-

ers market, community dinners. Something besides Harwood Park, which is way back away from the community.

Would you like to share any other ideas?

- Part of the problem with developing a community kitchen is the County codes for a code kitchen. The lack of waste water treatment is at the center of it. There are ways to do this that will not affect our environment. For instance, in Arizona, CO, NM, there are closed circulating waste water treatment systems.
- Sewage is a problem here, its raw and unsafe.
- Cross walks need to be safer. Time after time people have been killed.
- There needs to be a better crossing on Branscomb between the Health Center buildings. We need a crosswalk and a sign.

