

Shepard's Role Seen a Concern of Grand Jury in Zoning Quiz

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Councilman Thomas D. Shepard's support for a 900-unit condominium in Chatsworth appeared to become a concern of the County Grand Jury Thursday as it continued its inquiry into alleged zoning irregularities in the San Fernando Valley.

The investigative panel heard the testimony of Councilman James B. Potter Jr., whose appearance, according to Dep. Atty. Gen. Jack Goertzen and Dep. Dist. Atty. Ha-

rold Stanley, was in the nature of that of a cooperative witness.

Because he had been cautioned by the grand jury not to discuss his testimony, Potter offered little comment, but the prosecutor said he was asked about "matters involving the Brvan Gibson trial."

Gibson was convicted last year of grand theft following a trial which stemmed from his receiving City Council approval for a conditional use permit on 92 acres of land in Chatsworth for the condominium. It was never constructed.

During that trial, Potter testified that he had been introduced to Gibson by Shepard and that his fellow councilman had urged that he vote in favor of the conditional use permit.

Expounds Normal Policy

Potter said his normal policy is to support those zoning matters which are endorsed by the councilman in whose district the property is located.

Goertzen and Stanley noted that Potter's appearance before the grand jury also dealt with matters other than those involving Gibson and they emphasized that Potter is not a suspect in the case.

Meanwhile, they revealed that Shepard has been invited to testify, but would not disclose whether his appearance would be as a suspect or a cooperative witness.

Suspects in grand jury inquiries generally are invited rather than subpoenaed to testify because they cannot be forced to give testimony against themselves.

Goertzen and Stanley said they still may summon Mayor Sam Yorty if the evidence developed during the hearing indicates that he can add something to the investigation.