

## **Panic at Ponte Vista**

by **Steve Marconi**

Anybody else notice Bob Bisno's Ponte Vista was all over last month's *San Pedro Magazine*?

Ponte Vista "presents" the doo-wop concert kicking off the Hot Pedro Nites weekend. A couple of pages later, Ponte Vista is a proud sponsor of Summer in San Pedro (which is odd because I didn't know seasons needed sponsors). Turn a few pages, and there's an ad for Taste in San Pedro, with Ponte Vista listed among the sponsors (in smaller type, so money must have been getting tight). Finally, the blockbuster back-page ad with Taxco's Tony Moreno making the pitch that Ponte Vista actually will improve traffic on Western Avenue.

Tony, Tony, Tony...

Of course, Bisno's always had Western Ave. business owners on his side, easily swaying them with highly debatable statistics about how much money his Ponte Vista will generate for them. So who can blame them? Like Bisno, they're in it for the money. What do they care about the people who will have to deal every single day with the traffic and other overburdened infrastructures? And by the way, do those business owners who dream of all the new customers Ponte Vista might generate (I say might because who's to say at least half won't head east and north to spend their money and not south) ever consider where they will park? Most shopping centers on Western Ave., including Taxco's on the corner of Capitol, weren't made to cope with the amount of customers they get now. How will they handle the increase?

With planning department public hearings into Ponte Vista starting now, it looks like Bisno is pulling out all the stops. Either he is getting scared (Janice Hahn's quick smack-down in the McCowan's brouhaha must have sent a chill up his spine) or he's still confident he can buy enough support to sway city planners. He's certainly throwing the bucks around – what, you think that \$20 million offer to build an Eastview Little League complex really comes with no strings attached? Eastview only gets those fields if Bisno and the city reach an agreement – to Bisno's liking. The unspoken threat is if he doesn't get Ponte Vista rezoned, he doesn't build, and Eastview gets left in the lurch when its Knoll Hill tenure runs out.

I smell panic at Bisno campaign headquarters, and with the downturn in real estate since he bought the Ponte Vista site, who can blame them? So we're being hammered with newspaper ads featuring a variety of San Pedro types who supposedly represent us and seeing Angie Papadakis sing his praises right there in the middle of a Lakers playoff game (and you know that cost a bundle).

Angie, Angie, Angie – how could you?

I'm expecting to see a giant billboard any day now: Bisno Supports Contract 2008.