



Kurt Ellison

### First to come down

A bulldozer clears away debris of the old Watsonville Appliance building in the 200 block of Main Street. The building was

destroyed in a fire last week that officials say may have been set to cover up a burglary. This is the first demolition on the

block, which is destined to be torn down to make way for redevelopment.

## 200-block auction nets city \$17,500

By NANCY BARR  
STAFF WRITER

The auction last week of equipment and fixtures in the vacant businesses on Watsonville's 200 block of Main Street brought in \$17,500 to the city.

The auction grossed \$23,500, of which \$4,000 went to A&A Auction Galleries and \$2,000 went to cover expenses, according to city Administrative Services Director Chuck Comstock.

The auction held last Tuesday took a crowd of more than 200 from store to store on the southern part of the block. They started at the El Rio Laundromat on Rodriguez Street, working their way down Rodriguez to First Street, stopping at the Philippine Gardens on First, and moving around the corner onto Main Street, ending up at Daylite Market.

All those businesses are now empty, stripped of whatever valuable furniture or equipment was left when the city took over the property.

Yesterday, the city demolished what remained of the old Watsonville Appliance store after a fire there last week.

The next step is the demolition of the rest of the buildings on that part of the block to make way for a post office — something the city sees as a key move in the redevelopment of downtown.

The city is now accepting bids for the demolition, Comstock said, and the bid should be awarded late this month or early next month.

The demolition will probably begin in January, Comstock said.

Even as the city moves ahead with clearing two-thirds of the block for the post office, businesses on the rest of the block are still open. The city has already bought most of those properties and is renting them back to the business owners.

An agreement to purchase Fred's Barber Shop at 267 Main St. for \$92,000 is expected to be approved at a special meeting of the city Redevelopment Agency this afternoon.

Once that agreement is approved, the only purchases yet to be completed by the city are of the Daylite Market property and Pete Sanchez' property, which includes his Pasatiempo Club and two restaurants.

### REFERENCE

