

Chamber of Commerce wants council to reconsider its TV lobbyist ordinance

SANTA CRUZ — City councilmembers are being asked by the Santa Cruz Chamber of Commerce to change their minds about demanding cable TV lobbyists to register and disclose their actions.

The item is scheduled for the council's 7:30 p.m. session in chamber at city hall.

Cable TV lobbyists have been singled out by both the city and county representatives for such controls.

Some councilmembers and supervisors are saying that cable companies have earned a reputation of distrust by past performance when cable franchises come up for bid.

The city and county have joined in contracting for cable services the next time around and talks are opening with Group W for the contract.

Under the ordinance, lobbyists will have to disclose any contacts they make on behalf of their companies and be restricted from contributing to political campaigns at certain times or from giving gifts to officials and employees of the city or county making the contract.

Chamber President Marty Hernandez has written Mayor Bruce Van Allen: "In our view the extent to which the ordinance goes is unwarranted and unnecessary.

"(It) provides no public information which could not be established by relatively simple questioning."

Hernandez says the city and county should use the system adopted by the state Coastal Commission that requires its commissioners and staff to reveal contacts they have made with applicants.

"As written, this ordinance is necessarily extensive and complex to the point of chilling first amendment freedoms of speech, assembly and seeking redress of grievances."

The council also will discuss allowing major home developers to pay a fee, rather than build their incremental low-cost units.

Other agenda are as follows:

HARBOR VILLAGE — Developers of this 50-unit cluster at 119 Frederick St., are asking for a time extension for their previously approved special-use and design permits.

NEARY'S LAGOON — The council again will consider if it will adopt medium density for the Neary's Lagoon area which could let in five-story buildings as tall as 55 feet. Neighbors oppose the zoning and planners are saying the council could protect the neighborhood by mandating that applications for four and five-story homes require a use permit.

RESIDENTIAL ZONING — A large area between Broadway and Barson Street, east of Ocean Street is to be considered for residential zoning from its present commercial visitor zoning.

During its 4 p.m. session, the council will consider a suggestion that building fees be doubled or for home builders who build first and seek permits after.

Also, the council will consider if it will allow developers to use asbestos-product water mains on projects already started. The city has an ordinance stopping city workers from using asbestos products when others are available to do the same job.