

Village plan

Preservation proposal sent to city council

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A zoning and design plan aimed at preserving the charm of Capitola Village was passed on to the City Council last night by the Planning Commission, after some brief squabbling over the wording.

Commission Chairman Bill Fisher questioned some of the grammar and connotations of the document, but Planning Director Susan Tupper said the city attorney would review it to make sure it's correct. Any recommendations by commissioners will also be relayed to the City Council, she added.

The zoning plan was drawn up to serve as a checklist for the city's review of any new project, and also encourages applicants to use it in the same manner.

"It is easy to take the charm

of the Village for granted," the document states, "but the impact of each new increment must be evaluated regarding its effect on the overall Village character."

If approved by the City Council, the plan would place tighter restrictions on "cultural areas" such as the group of houses known as the Six Sisters, the stretch of buildings along the Esplanade and the Venetian Court buildings. Also protected would be the Capitola Theater, Lawn Way residences and the Soquel Creek side of Riverview Avenue.

Restrictions would also be placed on new construction, reconstruction and second-story businesses.

Speaking against requiring a conditional-use permit for second-story businesses, Barbara Reding — who with her husband, Jim, owns the build-

ing which houses the second-story restaurant, Antoine's — protested the singling out of such businesses.

"There aren't very many (second-story businesses) in town," she said, "and I feel it presents a great hardship."

However, Tupper said existing second-story businesses would not be affected by the permit requirement unless their use changed. All new businesses would have to apply for a permit, she added, but they do now anyway.

Nels Westman, a Riverview Avenue resident, spoke in favor of preserving second-story residences and against their conversion to commercial uses. Such conversions have helped make Riverview Avenue one of the "densest" areas of the city, he said.

Hugo Barbic spoke against the document's directive that

anyone who wants to build should get his plans checked by a professional designer. Obliging them to "make sure they get their plans checked," Barbic said, "is really an insult to these people."

The plan also addresses parking, the lack of which has long been a sore point for the Village.

Any new business or intensification of use of an existing business would be required to provide off-street parking under the plan. In addition, more parking will be required for residences.

Instead of two spaces being required per unit — as is now the case, regardless of the size of the unit — any units larger than 1,500 square feet would be required to provide three spaces, and units above 2,000 square feet would have to provide four spaces.