

Capitola's Rispin Mansion project will create traffic

By DENISE FRANKLIN
Sentinel staff writer

CAPITOLA — Traffic is expected to be a key issue in the city's efforts to develop the Rispin Mansion site and seven acres across from it on Wharf Road into a community center, library, parking lot, park and child-care center.

Traffic consultants were on hand at Thursday night's City Council meeting when the project's draft environmental impact report came before the council. But not a word was spoken about the traffic the project might bring to Wharf Road and surrounding streets.

Instead, the council asked the consultants to come back when it considers the final environmental impact report. No one in the audience spoke up about the report, which estimates the project will bring 2,000 new car trips a day to surrounding streets.

The city bought the 16 acres of land on both sides of Wharf Road at Clares Street in the late 1980s for \$2.7 million. It plans to build a 25,000-square-foot library in conjunction with the county, 17 units of affordable and senior housing, a 2,500-square-foot child-care center, restore the 10,000-square-foot mansion for community use, develop 14 acres of park and open space, and install enough parking to serve the community center and library.

The entire project should be completed by 1995.

In past community meetings, neighbors have been concerned about the increased traffic on Wharf Road and have suggested having the street dead end. While the report proposes three alternative site plans, none shows Wharf Road as a dead-end street.

In the first alternative, Wharf Road remains aligned as it is now. All the development, except for the Rispin Mansion community center, is located across Wharf Road. The plan also includes a foot bridge over Soquel Creek to link the mansion property with Peery Park.

A pedestrian pathway links the two sites. It crosses Wharf Road at Rispin Mansion.

In the second alternative, the library is placed near the mansion community center. The affordable housing, park, child-care facility and parking lot are across the street. Wharf Road is slightly realigned to allow enough room for the library to be next to the community center.

Again, a pedestrian pathway links the two properties, but this time crossing Wharf Road further north at the library. The footbridge across the creek is in the same as in the first alternative.

The third alternative plan makes the most changes to Wharf Road. It realigns the road to the west, al-

lowing more space around the mansion and library for parking.

The affordable housing, child-care center and park remain on the site at the intersection of Clares Street and Wharf Road. A pedestrian path crosses Wharf Road at Clares Street. The foot bridge remains the same as in the other two alternatives. Wharf Road snakes in an S-curve. Traffic impacts caused by all three plans include increased traffic:

- Through the intersection of Wharf Road and Clares Street. The report suggests adding a free, right-turn pocket at this intersection and adding a westbound left-turn lane on Clares Street.
- Through the intersection of Robertson Street and Soquel Wharf Road. A traffic signal is suggested here.
- Through the intersection of Clares Street and 41st Avenue. The report suggests adding a left-turn lane from southbound 41st Avenue to Clares Street and adding another lane in each direction on 41st Avenue.

- Through the intersection of 49th Avenue and Capitola Road. A traffic signal is recommended, or adding a free right-turn lane to southbound 49th Avenue and a left-turn lane to eastbound Capitola Road.