

New auto center tower rejected

By BOB SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Another proposal by three Santa Cruz auto dealers to erect a landmark tower — this one 60 feet high — along 41st Avenue was shot down Thursday night by the Capitola Planning Commission.

The commission unanimously denied the application by Richard Stengl, owner of Marina Pontiac, Cadillac and Buick, and a frequent spokesman for the auto dealers who plan to move their agencies to Capitola.

In denying the auto dealers' request, the commission ruled that the tower should be considered a sign and, as such, subject to the city's 16-foot height limitation for signs along 41st Avenue and Capitola Road.

City Planning Director Steve Russell cited a portion of the city sign ordinance, defining a

sign as "sign, display, board, bill, poster, picture, lithograph, map, plat, banner, barber-pole, bunting, flag, pennant, whirligig, balloon, valance, light festoon, merchandise display, structure or other device or appurtenant light structures used principally to advertise or attract the attention of the public."

Using this definition, Russell argued, "it appears that to be fair and consistent with the other property owners and businesses on 41st Avenue, it would be inappropriate to approve the clock tower at a height greater than 16 feet. The city is in the process of presently requiring all of the other property and business owners to bring their signs into conformance with the ordinance."

The commission did approve a "canopy" sign for the Wells Fargo Bank at 41st Avenue and Capitola Road to replace the

free-standing signs that are not allowed under the city's new ordinance.

Time extension requests for two other businesses, Quik Stop, 4150 Capitola Road, and Cafe Capitola, 2180 41st Ave., were denied by the commission last night.

Other actions taken Thursday by the commission include:

—Approval of signs for a new restaurant in the Upper Village Center, 502 Bay Ave.

—Approved changes in the window design for a home owned by Christie Carlson and Mike Schwartz at 611 River-view Drive.

—Approved plans for the addition of roof deck, stairs and other changes to a home owned by Alfred Pinard at 1870 Wharf Road.

—Approved a carport addition by Ray Rivaldi at 154 Wesley St.

—Approved the final subdivision parcel map for a lot split at 4400-4450 Capitola Road, allowing the California State Automobile Assn. to build a new Santa Cruz District Office there.

—Continued an application by the City of Capitola to build a temporary parking lot at Jade Street Park.

—Allowed Bill Kuettel to open a Recreational Vehicle rental office in his home at 305 Escalona Drive, but ordered Kuettel not to store any RVs there or do any repairs on any commercial vehicles.

—Approved a conditional use permit to allow the sale of alcoholic beverages by Eric's Deli Cafe in the new Spa Fitness Center, 1100 41st Ave.

—Approved a conditional use permit for a hairdressing salon to be opened by Eleanor Ceballos at 2121 41st Ave.