

# Aptos family dealing to buy Cooper House

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SANTA CRUZ — A deal is being fine-tuned to sell the Cooper House to an Aptos family investment group.

Owner Steve Sanchez confirmed rumors Thursday that a sale was in the works, but said it was "unfortunate" the news broke this early since the deal isn't completed.

He also said he doesn't want the shop owners who lease at the downtown landmark to worry. Their busi-

nesses can continue as usual, based on what the potential new owners tell him, he said.

The Cooper House is the former county courthouse that underwent a renaissance at the hands of Max Walden in the 1970s. It houses several shops, a restaurant and a bar.

Sanchez has owned the building for a year.

In that time, he's been remodeling and improving the building, which at a cost of some businesses that

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## Cooper House

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couldn't make it with all the building activity going on.

Sanchez wouldn't reveal the name of the potential buyers, saying only, "I've done business with them before, their word is good and they will do a first-class job at Cooper House."

He said the investors live in the county but have no major holdings here.

Sanchez acquired the Cooper

House from a San Francisco partnership, Stanley Mattison and Russell Delong of Cooper House Associates, by trading for three La Selva Beach condominiums.

The associates had bought the building seven years earlier from Walden.

Sanchez said the deal probably wouldn't close for a month while details were being worked out.

He said the Cooper House had not been up for sale, but offers have been

made now and then "and this one looks good; it's a decent offer."

One rumor was that new owners would keep the shops on the first floor and in the basement and open a private club upstairs.

Sanchez said the idea of a club had been entertained, but it was just one of many ideas that a new owner entertains.

Sanchez, whose family operates Anastacio's restaurant on Ocean Street, said he never wanted to be in

the restaurant business, or any business with a lot of employees, and that owning the Cooper House meant he had to personally get into the restaurant business.

His sister, Sandra Hernandez, manages Anastacio's.

Sanchez said if the Cooper House goes to the Aptos family, they would be able to renovate the building properly.

"They love the building," he said.