City advisory commissions join forces

SANTA CRUZ — The city's Parking Advisory Commission and its Pacific Garden Mall Commission have been wedded into the new Downtown Commission.

The new commission will be made up of seven members, four carryovers from the parking commission and three from the mall commission.

Councilwoman Mardi Wormhoudt wanted the commission membership opened to city residents who live outside the downtown parking district, but she failed to get any interest from other councilmembers.

Lionel Stoloff, executive director of the Chamber of Commerce, said the membership requirement was discussed at meetings between the two older commissions, but it was felt that outsiders would not be "sensitive" to downtown needs.

Wormhoudt said the business section is somewhat of the nature of a community commons and that those who live in the residential rim around the business section have something at stake in what the town is like.

As approved, the commission will be composed of seven members of registered voters in the downtown area and at least four of the members must be business owners or professional people with offices downtown.

Its duty is to "review, monitor and make long range recommendations concerning the construction, operation, and maintenance of publicly owned off-street parking . . . traffic . . . parking meters . . . monitor activities and recommend programs to preserve, enhance and advance the viability and attractiveness of the Pacific Garden Mall in particular and the district in general."