

✓ VISION SANTA CRUZ

Santa Cruz gets a new vision

'Gang of 36' chooses a name, gets to work on plan of action

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SANTA CRUZ — The so-called "Gang of 36" has a kinder, gentler name.

The committee formed to help rebuild downtown Santa Cruz decided Monday to call itself "Vision Santa Cruz."

Monday's meeting at Loudon Nelson Community Center Monday night was the third gathering of the 36-member group since it was created last month to develop a plan of action and make recommendations to the city council for rebuilding the quake-damaged downtown.

"Vision Santa Cruz" won out over two other possibilities, "Restore Santa Cruz" and "Partnership Santa Cruz," according to committee staffer

Christina Valentino.

"It took two votes," Valentino said, "Partnership Santa Cruz was eliminated on the first ballot."

The organization also took a step toward developing the organizational framework to form a rebuilding plan when it approved in concept a "Draft Work Program," presented by UC Santa Cruz Associate Professor James Pepper.

The 15-page proposal outlines the steps that must be taken to meet the committee's ambitious goal of making recommendations to the City Council by April.

According to the proposal, the overall goal is to "find effective ways of using community resources to develop a plan for the downtown area, blending interactive citizen participation and judicious use of consultants and available staff resources."

It recommends focusing on two key issues in the early stages, Pepper said — rehabilitating and replacing quake-damaged buildings, and a redevelopment plan for downtown.

The "Draft Work Plan" also identified various tasks that must be performed to accomplish each goal.

In other action, the task force subcommittee headed by Norm Shokley came up with a framework to gather public comment, according to Valentino.

It was decided to form two task forces composed of board members to obtain that comment, Valentino said, one on urban design and public infrastructure, the other on economic and community development.

According to the report, the for-

mer will address such issues as urban form, architectural design, parking, traffic circulation, transportation, parks, recreation, public facilities, public safety and land-use.

The latter task force will cover such issues as conventions and tourism, marketing and promotion, housing, office space, retail space, arts and entertainment, education and social services.

Valentino said \$100,000 has been raised so far to fund the work,

If attendance at the meeting was any indication, the general public may not be as interested in the work of "Vision Santa Cruz" as its board members.

By 9 p.m., board members outnumbered the audience by 2-1.

The committee reconvenes Feb. 26.