

# Capitola-by-the-Sea? We'll see

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## Councilman says changing Capitola's name would allow city 'to look inward'

CAPITOLA — Carmel-by-the-Sea may not be the only Central Coast hyphenate if Capitola City Councilman Dennis Norton has his way.

Convinced he has the support of residents and his council colleagues — and that Capitola is ripe for a “rebirth” — Norton will attempt today to refine the city's image by changing its name from plain old Capitola to the very chic Capitola-by-the-Sea.

“It is a new identity and has a new feel to it,” said Norton, who floated the “by-the-Sea” tail past residents during his City Council campaign this past fall. “I felt it was time for Capitola to look inward, and this is one way of looking inward.”

If four of the five council members agree, “by-the-Sea” Capitola could be.

While the panel could enact the adjunct today, City Manager Dan Pincetich is suggesting the council hold a public hearing within the next six months before filing an official ordinance with the county Board of Supervisors and Secretary of State, if indeed there is a four-fifths vote of the council.

At least one council member is not yet on board. Margaret Fabrizio said she won't make a decision until she hears tonight's presentation.

No one seems to agree exactly what effect the name change would have.

“From a practical standpoint, a name similar to Capitola-by-the-Sea will have little impact external to the city,” Pincetich wrote in a memo to the council. “Capitola-by-the-Sea will still be called Capitola external to the local market.”

Not according to the Capitola Chamber of Commerce, which sees a tourism payoff by already printing the hyphenated name in all its advertisements and publications.

“We do that because we are visitor-serving, and so that people will know we are right by the ocean,” said Toni Castro, chamber executive director. “We are by the

ocean, so let's just say we are by the ocean.”

Though it was never legally recorded, the name Capitola-by-the-Sea dates to 1869. According to local historian Carolyn Swift, the town came to be known by its diminutive name in 1874. By 1919, millionaire Henry Rispin had revived the hyphenated name to promote land sales, Swift said. But the final — and solo — word came in 1949 when the city incorporated as Capitola.

“I feel like it has always been Capitola-by-the-Sea,” Swift said. “As long as I don't have to say it all the time or write it in my return address, I don't have a problem with it.”

Neither does Jack Kettman, a Capitola Village homeowner.

“What's the difference?” he asked.

*The council meets at 7 tonight at Capitola City Hall, 420 Capitola Ave.*

REFERENCE

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