

Aptos incorporation idea resurfaces

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APTOS — The idea of incorporating this area is back after an absence of seven years.

A group of about 30 people has already met twice, according to spokesmen Victor Marani and Ken Fleissner. An informational meeting open to the public is scheduled June 4.

Both Marani and Fleissner said no one is "pushing" incorporation. The group simply wants input from the community on whether the idea should be pursued.

"We're facilitators rather than advocates," said Marani, whose family developed Deer Park shopping center in Rio del Mar. Fleissner is manager of Pacific Realtors in Aptos. Neither is associated with the Aptos Chamber of Commerce, which backed an unsuccessful petition drive for cityhood in 1980.

Aptos Chamber Manager John Hibble — speaking as an individual and not for the chamber — said the idea of incorporation "may be more viable this time around." He was quick to add, however, "I strongly suspect the

chamber would not take a position on it until it gets much farther down the road."

Marani and Fleissner note that new state-generated revenues are available to new cities. Of course, the age-old argument for incorporation involves "self-determination" or determining one's own destiny.

"From a services angle, the trend is definitely not for counties to provide more monies and services, but exactly the reverse," said Marani.

Fleissner expressed surprise at the enthusiastic response so

far. The "broadly based" group has already heard from a public finance expert. It hopes to get an attorney, with expertise in incorporation, at its June 4 meeting.

That meeting will be at 7 p.m. in room 1604 at Cabrillo College. The 1600 building is located behind the Porter Seson House on the ocean side of Soquel Drive.

Any next step would center on hiring an outside consultant to study the feasibility of incorporation. Marani said the group is "listening" to consultants, but

have made no move toward hiring any yet.

In 1980, the chamber was envisioning an Aptos of 26,000 to 29,000. A petition drive to get the incorporation issue on the ballot fell 200 signatures short of the required 2,300 signatures.

Talk of incorporation has resurfaced since then, including 1985, when the chamber invited an expert in incorporation to speak in Aptos. The chamber never made a commitment to look further into the feasibility.