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Joint Transit District Plan In Works

12/14/66

By John Elliott
Sentinel Staff Writer

Formation of a transit district, with taxing powers, appears the most likely recommendation to be made by a group of city and county officials next month.

Jerry Minford, assistant to City Manager David Koester, disclosed last night during a city council meeting that he has held a number of meetings with Fred Patrick, administrative assistant in the County Administrative office, and Henry Baker, of the county planning staff.

They are meeting, Minford said, to study present and future transit needs, including whether present routing procedure is the best possible.

He told the council, in connection with their consideration of a request for a subsidy extension to Santa Cruz Transit company to serve the UCSC campus, "it has about been decided the (Santa Cruz) transit system won't be able to support itself."

He told councilmen a report for individual jurisdictions — the Santa Cruz city council, the county board of supervisors and the Capitola city council — should be ready sometime in January. He said a number of alternative solutions will be listed for consideration, probably by the three groups meeting in joint session.

While hesitating to discuss findings to date, Minford admitted formation of a transit district "is the most serious consideration at present." He emphasized the group may decide against such a proposal, and substitute one of the alternatives now under study.

He said if a district were formed it would likely include individuals within the area now served by Santa Cruz Transit company and "most likely would" mean a tax against residents of the district.

If a district is to be formed, he said, it will require approval of the three jurisdictions, enabling legislation by the state legislature and an affirmative vote of the individuals within district boundaries.

Approved by the council was a three-month extension of the subsidy for the UCSC route, which went \$616 in the red for October and November, despite \$800 in subsidy from the city and UCSC, which has also agreed to extend their subsidy for three months.

Special Use Plan Put Off

A Santa Cruz city councilman last night elaborated on earlier sentiments of an aroused citizenry and a proposed civic center SU (special use) district bit the dust, at least for a few months.

Councilman Norman Lezin warned that the SU proposal had the earmarks of "hysterical legislation" and "by using a legislative trick we can't put property into cold storage."

He moved, and the council voted 4 to 1, to refer the matter back to the city planning commission for establishment of a definite criteria to include permitted uses.

As forwarded to the council by a 6 to 0 vote of the planning commission, the proposal would have required a city-issued use permit for any and all future development.

Lezin said he doesn't object to that basic goal but property owners "should have some conception of what may be acceptable," permitted uses within the district should be completely and clearly spelled out.

Councilman Sam Leask III, while disqualifying himself from voting because of ownership of a parking lot within the proposed district, said the SU tag is "discriminatory" and that it amounts to "condemnation without any compensation whatsoever."

The same points were stressed time and again when the planning commission held public hearings on establishment of two SU districts on Ocean street last month. Those two proposals were killed by the commission but the civic center amendment was forwarded.

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