

Traffic Patterns

Cabrillo Times & Green Sheet, Thursday, March 10, 1977—11

41st Ave. traffic snarl has planners looking for way out

The traffic problem on 41st Ave. — which is bad now and promising to get worse — turned a rather short Capitola planning commission agenda into a long evening as commissioners wrestled with two building proposals Monday night which will toss even more cars out on the busy artery.

The first involved the Department of Motor Vehicles office and testing station to be located at Capitola Road and 42nd Ave. Although concerned about the traffic it would generate, the commissioners approved a use permit application and gave the building architectural and site review approval. They attached a condition to their vote of approval — that the DMV, the city and the county flood control district must work out a satisfactory plan to take care of drainage.

The second involved a commercial building proposed for construction behind Cindy's restaurant at Gross Road and 41st Ave. Here the commissioners balked, saying they wouldn't proceed with the application for architectural and site approval until a solution is found to the almost impossible

pointed out the existence of a 40-foot drainage easement along the west side of the property, which might be made into a street to carry traffic south to Clares St.

At last month's meeting of the council, City Manager Max Kludt read a portion of a letter from the state which indicated work could begin this fall on a project to improve the freeway offramps and install traffic lights on both sides of the 41st Ave. overpass. Capitola has budgeted \$75,000 for this project and the county, \$25,000. The whole thing will cost an estimated \$200,000.

But McCormick cast some doubt on that timetable. The signalling plan, he said, "brings in the county, then you also have to lobby the county (in addition to the state) to get the project off the ground.

"It definitely won't be this fall," McCormick said. He told the commissioners they had a difficult decision to make — whether or not this commercial building would be the one "that broke the camel's back."

Attorney James Jackson, speaking for the builder, A. K. Pierce, said that the estimate of 350 cars per day going in and out of the building was

Charles Roberts, engineering consultant with Washington and Jensen, said the applicants have done all that the ordinances call for, and that solving the traffic problem was the city's responsibility.

"No matter where we take the traffic out, you're still going to have traffic. That is your problem," he said. "We are following what the ordinance calls for."

After more than an hour's discussion, it was finally agreed that the commissioners would delay action on the application until they had more time to study it.

They agreed to hold a special meeting Tuesday, at 9 a.m., in the parking lot at Cindy's, and make a personal survey of the situation before reconsidering the matter at the next meeting.

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The Department of Motor Vehicles had easier sailing than did the Pierce application, although this took a lot of time and discussion before the approval was given.

Again, commissioners were disturbed about the traffic the operation would generate as well

would cost an added \$17,000, for which no funds are available, and would delay the project by up to six months.

The commissioners seemed satisfied that the DMV plan to pipe the runoff water into the 41st Ave. storm drain system would be satisfactory if a grease trap was put on the property.

They voted 4-0 (Commissioner Terry George was absent) to approve the use permit and give architectural and site approval.

In other business, commissioners:

—Continued for two weeks the hearing on a use permit application and architectural and site review for a small storage shed in the Capitola Shores complex, 1425 42nd Ave.

—Granted a six-month extension on a tentative map approval for a lot split at 320-322 McCormick Ave.

—Continued until next meeting a hearing on architectural and site review for facade additions at the Bandstand Restaurant, 201 Esplanade, because no one representing the applicant was present.

—Approved a sign for the

restaurant at Gross Road and 41st Ave. Here the commissioners balked, saying they wouldn't proceed with the application for architectural and site approval until a solution is found to the almost impossible traffic situation in that area.

Last month, after considerable debate, city councilmen accepted an environmental impact report on the project, but gave notice they would reserve for themselves the right of final review of the project. Councilmen also said they thought the builder's estimate of traffic — 40 vehicles a day — was far short of what it would actually be.

The councilmen were also uneasy over the fact the builders have not revealed what use the building will be put to.

City Planner Pat McCormick told the planning commissioners Monday night that the council, in passing the matter on for their consideration, want the commissioners to know they were concerned about the traffic problems at the Gross Road intersection; that the commissioners should consider asking the applicant to put up some money toward solving the problem there; and that they would conduct the final review of the whole project.

There was considerable discussion among commission members about the perils involved when drivers try to make left turns entering into and coming out of Gross Road. Also discussed were alternate routes for through traffic to reach 41st Ave. other than by Gross Road, but McCormick reminded the commissioners the council said no through traffic should be routed along Derby, Preakness or 42nd Ave.

Commissioner Jack Nicol

broke the camel's back."

Attorney James Jackson, speaking for the builder, A. K. Pierce, said that the estimate of 350 cars per day going in and out of the project "is all wrong. It will be substantially less than anticipated — perhaps 100 cars over an eight-hour day."

Jackson opposed Nicol's idea of seeing if a road could be built over the drainage easement, saying that would involve a great deal of delay and would cost \$100,000. "We can't afford that," he said.

When reminded by Commission Chairman Howard Dysle that the city still doesn't know what kind of tenant the building will have, Jackson said it will be "a professional type — real estate, lawyers, doctors, dentists, that sort of thing."

Jackson also said his client would be happy to put up \$2,500 toward the solution of the traffic problem, as the Jules Duc Co., builders of a mini-storage complex adjacent to the project, were required by the city to contribute. Jackson said his client would also accept a "right turn only" edict from the city, which would allow only northbound traffic to turn right into Gross Road from 41st Ave., and traffic leaving Gross Road to only turn right over the overpass.

When told by McCormick that "it was the mood of the council not to proceed until there is a solution to the traffic problem," Commissioner Lewis Deasy said, "It's our job as planners to solve this one way or another. I'm not taking direction from the council on this."

Jackson told the commissioners that "when you look at the whole situation (on 41st Ave.) . . . there is no solution to it."

and discussion before the approval was given.

Again, commissioners were disturbed about the traffic the operation would generate, as well as what the best solution to the drainage problem would be. The County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, which acts as adviser to the city, asked that the DMV be required to install a catch basin on the property to handle runoff waters and pollutants.

But DMV officials said this

Esplanade, because no one representing the applicant was present.

—Approved a sign for the Capitola Steak and Pie House, 4250 Capitola Road.

—Approved a sign for the Soundstone Music, 208 San Jose Road.

—Continued a hearing on architectural and site review of a duplex at 213 San Jose Road, asking the applicant to come back with a revised plan for parking.