

12-8-83

Capitola once again to discuss parking

By KEITH MURAOKA
Sentinel Staff Writer

CAPITOLA — The rekindling of an old idea — namely, the city's purchasing of Pacific Cove Mobile Home Park for a parking lot — is the key element in a plan to be presented to the City Council tonight.

The idea of buying the 83-space park, which is located next to City Hall and is within walking distance of the parking-plagued village, was shot down by the council 10 months ago. The re-established parking committee, however, is convinced it would be a feasible solution.

Favorable points discussed at a final strategy session Wednesday night included the fact that Pacific Cove is for sale and that a city purchase could return it to a safe condition. Portions of the park now has been described as dangerously close to condemnation.

Committee member Nels Westman maintained that the park "remains the best potential source for close-in parking." He added that acquisition would benefit both the city and residents.

Committee chairman Wayne Fontes stressed that his committee is only asking the

city to authorize funds for an engineering and feasibility study to see if purchase of the park is possible.

"This is a conceptual idea. We're asking the city to let us begin," he said.

Under the plan, the upper terrace of the 6.5-acre park would be converted into parking for 300 to 350 vehicles within three years. At the same time, the existing mobile home use would be consolidated to the lower terrace nearest Capitola Avenue.

This consolidation would mean the reduction of 20 to 25 percent of the existing coaches. Westman conceded this would be a "very controversial" part of the plan.

Committee members reiterated, however, that remaining park residents would be guaranteed lifetime tenancy. Residents would be relocated from the upper terrace to the lower area at no cost. The upper terrace was also said to be the portion of the park in the worst physical shape.

The committee is proposing the city's just-established Public Facilities Corp. could borrow the down payment for the park, which is for sale for around \$1.6 million. Repayment could be made through a number of sources —

the biggest portion of which could come from parking meter revenue.

The installation of up to 300 parking meters downtown was a significant factor in the council's decision against a similar idea last February. Committee members, however, were hesitant even to call what they were proposing "parking meters."

Instead, they are looking at what was described as "centralized parking banks." A company in Marin County manufactures the computerized banks, which could handle between 70 and 200 meters.

No money would be needed up front either. In discussions with the committee, the company said they would install the banks and wait for payment once revenues come in.

The committee is also looking at other potential sources of revenue, which includes a business license surcharge and an assessment district among property owners in the surrounding area.

They project upwards of \$300,000 per year could be generated among the three sources.

The public hearing is scheduled for 7 tonight in the Council Chamber at City Hall.