

# Incorporation for Aptos?

By BILL AKERS

After talking about it for more than a decade, the Aptos Chamber of Commerce directors have decided to fish or cut bait on the subject of turning the Aptos area into an incorporated city.

What they'll be fishing for immediately is some indication of how the people living in the area feel about having their own city government. The bait they'll be using is a sense of geographic identity, home rule and a tacit promise of a tax-free city subsisting on state subventions.

Meeting Thursday morning, Chamber directors voted to endorse the concept of incorporation, to canvass the community on its feelings, and to make a decision by February on whether to go ahead with an incorporation effort.

The "community input" the Chamber wants will be gathered at a Jan. 22 meeting at Aptos High School and by means of a canvass utilizing the history and government classes at Aptos High School.

The incorporation talk

surfaced after Director Glenn Specht asked her fellow board members to endorse Chamber opposition to the proposed annexation of the Porter-Sesnon property, across the freeway from Cabrillo College, to the city of Capitola.

The property, owned by the University of California, has been leased to the development firm of Hare, Brewer and Kelley, which is now formulating plans for its use. Although no concrete plans have been presented, company representatives said some months ago they envisioned a development that would generate "high public use." This was taken to mean some kind of conventions center complex, which a company representative said, although not definite, was a possibility.

With the news that the land was to be developed, Capitola city officials became interested in annexing it because it lies on the borders of the city. Since sale of the parcel would have an impact on city planning, Capitola officials want some control

over how it will be developed.

Mrs. Specht told her fellow directors that Capitola wants to annex the property for the rich sales tax plum it represents. She said giving that property to Capitola "makes the decision for Aptos" on how it will develop. She recommended a letter be sent the supervisors and LAFCO saying it "was not a reasonable thing to do . . . and to say we find it an uncomfortable situation. . ."

Director Virgil Kester said the Chamber should protest the annexation "only if we're serious about incorporation. Otherwise, if I were a builder, I would much rather be under city control." He said the Chamber should do nothing to hinder the development of the property.

Chamber president Lucile Aldrich indicated it becomes a matter of community pride. "Do we envision our future as being a sister to a growing Capitola."

Director Don Schwerling agreed with Kester. "I'm not so sure the Chamber should take a position on this (an-

nexation) one way or the other until we decide about incorporation."

Another director, Larry Wrathall, said it had never been determined whether or not the people really want incorporation. Mrs. Specht said that may be determined at the Jan. 22 meeting at Aptos High where elements of a study on the incorporation issue by the League of Women Voters will be discussed. These elements will include maps of the special service districts now serving the area, and information on the "financial base" for the proposed city. "No decision will be made at that meeting," Mrs. Specht said.

"Capitola is a city that's in a position to be aggressive," Wrathall said. "I like what Capitola is doing. In Aptos, until we define our interests, we will always be subject to encroachment. The Chamber should look into the facts (of incorporation) and make a determination quickly."

Citing 1964 and 1968 studies

on incorporation of the area, Mrs. Aldrich declared "it is entirely feasible for us to incorporate. Rio del Mar will decide it for us." She said the Supervisor Marilyn Liddicoat, who represents the district, "is not in favor of it." She added, "We should put it to the people: 'Do you want it or not?' and make a decision by our next meeting."

Schwerling said he would approach the government teachers at the school about using students to help gather information on public sentiment toward incorporation. "It would be a good project for the kids," he said.

It was Schwerling who moved that the Chamber endorse the concept of incorporation and seek further information on it, and Kester who moved that the Chamber oppose any action on the annexation of the Porter-Sesnon property to Capitola until the Chamber had made up its mind about incorporation. Both motions were adopted.

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