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# Board supports limited ban on big truck parking

SANTA CRUZ — Residents of the unincorporated area may soon be able to make their own bans against on-street parking of large commercial vehicles in their neighborhoods.

That's the direction county supervisors are headed in dealing with some neighborhood complaints over the parking of large rigs on their streets.

In a unanimous vote Tuesday, supervisors directed the county counsel to bring back a proposed ordinance on Dec. 6 that would allow residents to obtain a permit to ban on-street parking of large, commercial vehicles in their neighborhoods.

Supervisors believe this could solve the problems voiced by the few neighborhoods that are complaining, while still providing parking for truckers who don't cause problems in their neighborhoods.

If the neighbors don't enact a ban, the truckers could still park along streets in residential areas.

While heading toward a way to manage problems with on-street parking, supervisors Tuesday took no action on a proposed ordinance that would have banned off-street parking in residential areas of any vehicle weighing 10,000 pounds or more.

Jane Embry of Estates Drive in Ben Lomond was one citizen who complained of the off-street parking of a truck tractor across the street from her home.

The tractor is causing erosion and potholes along the hilly, narrow street as the truck driver makes his way home, she said. The tractor is parked in a driveway facing her home and if the brakes ever failed, it could crash into her home, Embry added.

Trucker Robert E. McIntire took exception to these comments, saying trucks nowadays have brake systems that lock up when brakes fail.

Supervisor Dan Forbus said he couldn't support any restrictions on off-street parking "because after you've dropped off your load and gone home, your work day is done."

Supervisor E. Wayne Moore Jr. said he couldn't support an overall ban against truck parking because the problems are only occurring in a few neighborhoods.

It was suggested that an overall ban could be enacted and then supervisors could grant exceptions to truckers who don't face neighborhood complaints. But Assistant County Counsel Harry Oberhelman said such a system would be illegal under state law.

Supervisors Tuesday also refused a proposed ban against the on-street parking of any vehicle over 20 feet in length on any county street from 2-6 a.m.

They did enact an ordinance making it unlawful to camp overnight or occupy a mobile home or recreational vehicle parked overnight. In the past, this ordinance made it illegal to simply park such a vehicle overnight on a county street.

Sally Perkins of Aptos, who owns and operates a commercial truck with her husband, said any parking ban would eventually cost consumers. Truckers would pass the cost of parking in a storage yard on to those who buy their goods, she said.

Over 80 form letters came to supervisors objecting to any ban of truck parking as "unnecessary, discriminatory and economically damaging to the entire county."

On the other side, residents of Blossom Drive in Watsonville complained a truck and tractor parked in their neighborhood was noisy and obstructed the view of other drivers.