

Erosion

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Erosion Woes Continue For Capitola Apartments

The Capitola Planning Commission attempted to "plug" a solution into the on-going erosion problems of the cliffs underneath the Crest Apartments, but its decision Monday only extended the current use permit.

The Planning Commission extended the use permit unanimously to allow the owners of the apartment to continue their quest for shoring up the cliff.

The owners of the apartments, which sit on a 90-foot cliff overlooking the bay on Depot Hill, now have an additional year to convince either, or both, the city of Capitola and the regional Coastal Commission into allowing them to protect their investment. Dick DaPont, one of the apartment's general partners, has proposed

plugging the undercut at the base of the cliff with concrete and then placing rip rap (large stones) in front of the plug for further protection from ocean erosion.

The problem that DaPont is running into concerns the question of ownership of the land underneath the cliff. The Coastal Commission has approved the concrete plug "because it was undercut beneath the cliff and they decided we owned that," said DaPont. However, "they didn't approve the rip rap," he added, "because they don't know if the city or we own that."

Planners, though, weren't acting on that question but they did express their concerns. Commissioner Bob Bucher noted that he used city streets to build his house and he didn't see any difference in allowing the applicant to go over the city beach to do the same.

Bucher also asked if the engineer's report required the rip rap to hold the plug in. Acting City Planner Bill Clarke replied the plug "would probably settle into the sand some without the rip rap protection."

Clarke added he felt the question concerns whether the owner has the right to protect his property. "My responsibility is to vacate the premises if it's unsafe. I don't want to have to do this because the city refused to let him protect his apartments."

Planning Chairman Al Wilder noted his major considerations concerned the owner, as well as the renters, future buyers and the citizens of Capitola.

The protection in question is a concrete plug "a maximum of five to 10 feet into the beach area and probably three feet up

the cliff," according to DaPont. The rip rap would be approximately 15 feet high and 30 feet wide.

In other business, commissioners set a public hearing for the next meeting to establish a policy for future commercial use on Lawn Way in Capitola Village. Commissioners want to keep Lawn Way residential, although there is already a yogurt shop there and a new proposal before them to open a craft shop at 134 Lawn Way.

Commissioners continued Brendon Walter's application on the shop until after the public hearing. They expressed concerns that Walter's shop would have an entrance on Lawn Way instead of Capitola Avenue, which they would have preferred.

Commissioners also approved a final map for 36 condominiums on 42nd Avenue adjacent to the Department of Motor Vehicles on Capitola Road. The addition of a deck at 4850 Opal Cliffs Drive was also approved with the condition that it meets with architectural and site review board approval.