

Rispin feasibility study approved

A \$10,000 study on the feasibility of converting the 65-year-old Rispin Mansion into a city library or some other public use was approved Thursday night by the Capitola City Council.

The study, which will be done in several steps, starting with a structural engineering analysis of the concrete shell building, City Manager Steve Burrell said last week.

Architects and other specialists will also be involved in the analysis, intended to give the City Council an idea of the work and money it would take to restore the building to a

usable condition, and then equip it as a library or for some other public use.

The study will be done in such a manner, Burrell assured the council that if the engineers or architects uncover some information that would make restoration impossible or impractical from a financial viewpoint, then work would be immediately stopped.

It will cost upwards of \$1.2 million to purchase the property from its present owner, Emmett Rittenhouse of Santa Cruz, and, Burrell estimates, another \$100-a-square foot to rebuild the 9,000-square-foot building. That would bring the cost to nearly \$2.25 million. It would cost more than \$200,000 a year in interest payments if the city borrowed the money to finance the purchase and reconstruction, Burrell said.

Burrell also told the council that the mansion, designed and built in the post World War I period, may have been designed by Julia Morgan, who was also the principal architect for San Simeon, the Castle constructed north of San Luis Obispo by newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst. Some of the architect's files are preserved at UC-Berkeley and the city will try to see if the working drawings for the Rispin Mansion are among them, Burrell said.