

✓Planners will consider 11-19-86 Capitola Mall project

CAPITOLA — The Capitola Mall expansion plan will be before the Capitola Planning Commission Thursday, complete with plan improvements that are hoped to move forward the Capitola Mall expansion plan.

Planning commissioners will have the revised — and reduced — mall-expansion plan before them for the second time. Planning Director Susan Tupper has recommended approval of the plan, which then must receive City Council approval.

If the commission approves the plan, the council will consider it Dec. 11.

In a staff report to the commission, Tupper cites the "number of improvements being made to accommodate the project ... with the expectation of the project moving forward."

The proposal calls for a 304,575-square-foot expansion, featuring two new big stores — a 91,805-square-foot JC Penney and a 54,000-square-foot Leask's. It also includes a site for a 7,000-square-foot Capitola branch library, which the city would build.

The total square footage is about 20 percent less than the original 395,000-square-foot proposal, which would have nearly doubled the existing mall. The City Council rejected that plan in August, citing the closeness of new mall buildings to existing neighborhoods and a predicted 78-percent increase in traffic.

The revised plan has moved the proposed Clares Street Loop Road — that will run behind the mall — an extra 30 feet away from the Lotman Drive-Sommerfeld Avenue neigh-

borhood. Also, the predicted increase in traffic has also decreased about 20 percent.

The improvements being recommended by Tupper are highlighted by the addition of an agreement between the developer — Cypress Properties of Menlo Park — and the city. The agreement provides the city a guarantee that Cypress will follow through with the project in a timely manner.

Additionally, there are three pages of conditions that clarify improvements needed to be done by Cypress. These include conditions regarding traffic, noise, drainage and landscaping improvements.

The proposed improvements, however, do not include two areas of objection expressed by planning commissioners two weeks ago. Those include the proposed location of both the library and a bus-transfer center.

The library is proposed near the loop road and Capitola Road, while Cypress and the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District are arguing over the location of the bus-transfer center.

Cypress wants the bus-transfer center to be along 41st Avenue, away from the mall. Transit District officials prefer a location similar to the current one, adjacent Sear's. The two sides also disagree on how much either side will pay toward the center.

Thursday's public hearing is the final item on the agenda. The meeting will begin at 7 p.m. in the council chamber at City Hall.