

City's population pegged at 24,400

Watsonville grew by 625 people last year, according to city Planning Director Robert Ellenwood, who told the Planning Commission Monday that the population figure stood at 24,401 as of Jan. 1, 1982.

Meanwhile, Ellenwood said, the city's housing stock has not grown to keep pace, exacerbating Watsonville's housing shortage.

"On the average of an estimated 2.7 people per household, the city would require an additional 231 dwelling units to accommodate that many new residents," Ellenwood said Monday. He said the city issued 129 permits for housing projects in 1981, and of those, Ellenwood estimated, fewer than 60 were actually started.

"We are far under the quota to meet the demand (for housing)," he said. "Every year there are more people and less housing. There is a real shortfall."

There were no housing units on the Planning Commission's agenda Monday.

The commission:

- Approved an application for a tentative map by Marty Sglav for office condominiums to be constructed at 734 E. Lake Ave.

- OK'd a use permit application for Steven A. Colen and John Cenicola to sell wine and beer at their business, the Italian Gourmet Deli-Restaurant on East Lake Avenue between Beck and Martinnelli streets.

- Approved a master plan for a four-unit office condominium project at Green Valley Road and Loma Prieta Avenue.

In another matter Monday, the commission approved zoning ordinance changes aimed at simplifying and tightening planning procedures for townhouse, condominium and co-op housing projects on undersize lots in residential areas.

Drafted by a committee composed of Ellenwood, council members Rex Clark, Betty Murphy and Ann Soldo and Assistant City Man-

ager Vern Hamilton, the amendments would prevent developers from applying for use permits with variances from zoning requirements.

Currently, developers seeking to build multi-family dwellings on narrow lots in downtown neighborhoods such as Jefferson Street may ask for exemptions from such things as setback and parking requirements imposed by zoning ordinances. The city's current zoning rules allow such applications in cases of parcels whose sizes do not conform to the city's zoning requirements because creation of the lots preceded them.

Under the proposed new procedures, developers would no longer be able to request such variances and would be required to make their projects conform at the outset to a series of specific criteria.