

Aptos chamber opposes bike paths

By BILL AKERS

The Aptos Chamber of Commerce this morning declared its opposition to the proposed bicycle path along Soquel Drive because it will curtail on-street parking along the way.

Director Virgil Kester, chairman of the chamber's streets and highways committee, brought the matter up, asking the board to declare itself against the removal of the parking.

Kester told directors that the county's bicycle path ordinance will require merchants to devote 15 per cent of their off-street parking to bicycles, as well as removing parking from the street itself. "They are just going ahead and doing all those things," Kester said, urging the board to oppose implementation of the plan.

Kester also said that the widening of Soquel Ave. from State Park Drive through the village to Freedom Blvd. would result in the removal of parking for the bicycle path. The street is to be widened using state funds to pay for the project.

Kester got an argument on that point from director Glenn Specht, who said Aptos Village would be exempted from the no-street parking edict as Soquel Village had been. "We were assured they will not take parking out of the village until off-street parking is developed," Mrs. Specht said.

But Kester disagreed. He said he was told by Gene DeLucchi of the county public works department, at a recent meeting on the subject that parking in the village would be gone within a year after the street widening. "I put him on the spot. I asked him specifically about that," Kester said.

Mrs. Specht was alone among the directors at the breakfast meeting who seemed to support the plan. She objected to Kester's statement that bicycle riders are not also shoppers, saying, "The direction of the Aptos Village plan and the county (bicycle plan) is to get people out of cars and onto bikes. I don't think the merchants know how many people are riding bikes."

But Mrs. Lucile Aldrich countered, "We simply aren't geared for bicycles on Soquel Drive. The whole thing will settle itself when we kill a couple of kids on bicycles."

Kester's motion that the chamber oppose the bicycle path passed with only Mrs. Specht voting against it.

In other business this morning directors:

—Discussed briefly a letter the chamber received in 1973 urging it to support the Cabrillo Music Festival. It was the consensus that the chamber should support it in ways it can, but not get actively involved in the promotion of the event.

—Approved a suggestion by Roy Thompson that the Chamber ask the state In-

surance Service Offices (ISO) to complete the processing of its survey on the Aptos area so the fire insurance rating can be lowered. Thompson reported that Chief Richard Chinn, at a recent fire board meeting, said the rating will drop from a Class 9 to Class 7, but that Aptos is 40th in line for consideration by ISO. The letter presented by Thompson, and which was drafted by the fire department, suggested to the ISO that Aptos be jumped ahead of "others in line that are not getting punished so heavily."

—Heard a report from Sherman Unell that the Aptos library has copies of the county ordinances, state fire code, building code, zoning maps, electrical and plumbing codes and state tax codes, and these are available to the public. He was asked to request the Aptos fire department make its fire code available to the library.

—Heard a report from Ted Colton on the Merv Griffin tennis tournament. It will be held Sept. 18 at the Aptos Seascap Racquet Club as a charity event to benefit the Monterey County SPCA and Halloran Hall. As a nominal sponsor of the event, the chamber will provide manpower for ushers, guides, setting up bleachers and to help with a barbecue if it is held, Colton said.