

# Radin responds to Carney: 'No comment'

By LANE WALLACE  
STAFF WRITER

Statements Bud Carney made after he was fired as Watsonville's planning director are "not deserving of comment," City Manager John Radin said last night.

Carney, who was fired Thursday by Radin, said in an interview in yesterday's paper that Radin was "totally out of control as an administrator" and was acting in a "bizarre and irresponsible manner."

Radin, who was out of town yesterday, had already prepared a statement when reached at home last night.

Radin said Carney's "recent public conduct and his statements in yesterday's Register-Pajaronian" spoke for themselves and weren't worthy of comment.

At Tuesday's City Council meeting, Radin twice cut Carney

off as Carney urged the City Council to retain the position of Assistant Planning Director Doug Spinelli, who oversees the city's housing-rehabilitation program. The City Council followed Radin's recommendation to cut the post because federal funds to pay half of Spinelli's salary have run out.

Carney said he thought cutting Spinelli's job would send a message to the federal and state governments that Watsonville isn't serious about rehabilitating low- and moderate-income housing.

That brought an angry rebuke from Mayor Betty Murphy, who told Carney, "You're out of order."

Radin said last night that under the City Charter, department heads serve at the pleasure of the City Manager. He refused to comment on the reasons for Carney's dismissal.

Carney and Spinelli aren't the

only ones leaving the Planning Department. Assistant Planner John Mahaney is leaving at the end of next week to return to school, and another assistant planning post has been vacant since June. That leaves two planners, Maureen Owens and Meredith Roeder.

Radin acknowledged that "there will be some delays" because of the depleted staff, but said, "I don't think they'll be earth-shaking."

There's already a list of applicants for the assistant-planner job that's been vacant since June, Radin said, and steps will be taken to fill that position as soon as possible.

'... there will be some delays' at the Planning Department.

— City Manager John Radin

Radin said he would decide Monday on an interim planning director. Carney said Radin had told him that Chuck Comstock, the city's administrative services director, would be the interim director. Radin said he never said that.

Radin said he would look into the possibility of hiring a retired person with planning experience on a short-term basis. There is a network of retired planners, Radin said, who are available, usually for 30 to 90 days.

Carney said that when he returned to City Hall yesterday afternoon after being out at a meeting, his office was locked.

Carney said that when he was let in to clean out his office, Finance Director Terry Stigall watched him. Carney said the directive for those actions was signed by Comstock.

The lockout was an indication  
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that he isn't trusted, Carney said, calling it "outrageous."

Carney said he and Spinelli plan to sue the city.

City Council members weren't saying much yesterday about Carney's firing.

The City Charter prohibits the City Council from getting involved in personnel matters, Mayor Betty Murphy said yesterday afternoon.

"I feel awkward discussing it," she said. "We're absolutely out of it."

In addition, Murphy said that enough staff was still in place to run the city's housing-rehabilitation programs.

Councilman Tony Campos said Carney "overstepped his bounds" Tuesday. Campos declined further comment, saying it was a personnel matter that was out of the city's hands.

"I don't have all the facts," Campos said.

Councilman Dennis Osmer said, "It's a decision John has made. John has to live with it."

Other council members could not be reached for comment yesterday.