

Shelter funding goes before council

Still no shelter site on the horizon, say supporters

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SANTA CRUZ — Council members Tuesday will consider putting some money behind their previous decision to "express intentions" to buy a shelter for the homeless.

Council members will consider spending federal Housing and Community Development grants for a shelter at a yet-to-be found location.

March 12, council members indicated their intentions to buy a shelter proposed by church and community leaders at a warehouse in the Potrero commercial district.

Council members backed a plan by Citizens Committee for the Homeless to join warehouse tenants in a cooperative purchase of the warehouse. Just as shelter supporters were organizing to move into the new shelter, a shelter opponent and Potrero-district landlord, Leland

Zeidler, joined with other tenants to purchase the warehouse.

Now, shelter supporters are looking for a new site, but project spokesman Page Smith said today there is none on the horizon.

However, Smith and other shelter supporters are hoping the council will commit about \$100,000 in federal grants for a shelter at some location.

The breakdown of the Potrero shelter project and the fact a temporary shelter on Cedar Street just closed, leaves some street people without a place to sleep.

Smith said several churches are working together to provide nights of emergency lodging at their facilities on a rotating basis.

Plans call for buses to shuttle some of the homeless from the St. Francis Catholic Soup Kitchen on Mora Street to the churches.

Federal requirements tie the

Housing and Community Development grants to projects to benefit needy neighborhoods or to prevent blight.

Also competing for the federal funds is a non-profit housing development corporation, called Santa Cruz Community Housing Corporation, a group supported by backers of "progressive" City Council members.

March 12, Councilwoman Mardi Wormhoudt had recommended granting a \$121,000 request for Housing and Community Development funds from the housing group.

But council members postponed a decision, after Councilman Joe Ghio — who is not a member of the progressive majority — voiced his concerns over procedures.

Ghio said it was not fair for the council to award the money to the Community Housing Corporation until they sent out requests for

proposals from other groups that may be just as capable of doing the task.

Council members agreed to Ghio's recommendation. Tuesday they will consider sending out the proposal requests for a group to "provide low- and moderate-income housing opportunities" through redevelopment or development and to manage the housing projects through a non-profit housing development corporation.

Council members will meet at 7:30 p.m. at the Council Chamber at City Hall.

In other matters, council members will consider:

- No parking from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. on East Cliff Drive from San Lorenzo Point to Alhambra Avenue, at Third Avenue vista point and First Avenue vista point.

- Spending \$28,200 of motel-room tax revenues on the summer beach-downtown shuttle program.