

1985 was a productive year for city of Capitola

By KATHY SALAMON
STAFF WRITER

1985 was the year Capitola saw many of its projects, planned for years, come to fruition.

It was the year construction began on the gymnasium on Washburn Avenue and the Jade Park community center.

The city bought the Rispin Mansion for \$1.3 million, but it also approved plans to double the size of the Capitola Mall and the construction of an automobile dealership center which should generate enough in sales taxes to more than adequately fill the loss in the city's treasury.

Much time and discussion were also spent on parking in the city.

City officials continued purchasing mobile homes at Pacific Cove Mobile Home Park in order to eventually turn an area of the park into a parking lot. To finance the purchases, parking meters were installed April 1. These replaced the widely despised and short-lived "parking banks," an experiment which almost everyone agreed was a failure.

Two neighborhoods in the city — the Jewel Box

and Fairview areas — received major street repairs.

The city got a coastal grant of \$500,000, one of the largest coastal grants to be given in the county, to acquire the Hooper Beach property and to improve portions of the Esplanade and Village area.

All this added up to a busy year, said City Manager Steve Burrell.

"The reason so many things have happened this year," Burrell said, "is because so many things have been in progress for a long period of time."

Burrell said that the city has been trying to get a major parking lot on the Pacific Cove site for more than eleven years. The purchasing of mobile homes, done only when a resident wants to move out, may be complete within the next eight months.

"When the project began, this is just about how long we thought it would take," Burrell said. "Actually, it is even moving faster than anybody ever imagined."

The city also saw some changes in top person-

nel.

Police Chief Bob Allen announced his retirement in June, planning to spend the winter in Mexico.

Don Braunton, formerly police chief of Patterson in the San Joaquin Valley, was hired as the new police chief on Sept. 23. He was chosen from a field of 108 applicants.

What didn't happen in 1985 may be just as important as what did.

There were no natural disasters — "the first year we haven't had one in a long time," Burrell said.

The Beach Boys were not allowed play at Capitola's 4th of July celebration because city officials complained its small staff and small facilities could not handle a large crowd.

A plan to build a 20,000-square-foot Mormon Church on the 500-block of Monterey Avenue was rejected by city officials on the grounds that it would create too much traffic — not without, however, some accusations of religious prejudice by some.

An anti-smoking ordinance that would require separate smoking and non-smoking sections in

public buildings was rejected by the City Council because restaurant owners complained the ordinance would restrict their business. Both City Council members who are smokers, Jerry Clarke and Bob Bucher, opposed the ordinance.

As far as negative changes in Capitola, Burrell counts the potential loss of revenue sharing funds and the high price of liability insurance to be the most crucial.

Revenue sharing money, he said, has been used in the past for social services such as Meals on Wheels and senior citizen programs. The city may no longer be able to afford such support if the revenue sharing funds are withdrawn by Congress.

Liability insurance went from \$27,000 for \$5 million of insurance last year to \$55,000 for just \$500,000 of coverage this year.

"This is very significant because that's pure general fund money and now it's gone," Burrell said.

However, Burrell added that insurance rates have skyrocketed even more, and the city was lucky to get the rate it did.