

Village traffic proposal called 'premature'

At the suggestion of county supervisor Dale Dawson the Aptos Village Urban Design Citizens' committee temporarily backed off a recommendation for the immediate installation of a left-turn lane on Soquel Drive at the Trout Gulch Road intersection.

Some of the eight committee members were prepared to act Thursday night on the recommendation by consultant Richard Peterson that the left-turn lane should be installed as soon as possible in an attempt to alleviate some congestion at the busy intersection.

The motion was made by postmaster Johann Tarr and seconded by Mrs. Lucille Aldrich to urge supervisors to implement one portion of Peterson's traffic proposals. Dawson promised committee members that if they would wait for another three weeks, when they are scheduled to complete their report, and include this recommendation at that time he promised it would get speedy action from the supervisors and the public works department.

Dawson said he felt it was premature and "really jumping the gun to make a separate recommendation at this time.

"There are only two more

meetings until you finalize your recommendations," he told the committee. "If this is included in your recommendations I can get it before the board of supervisors very rapidly."

With that assurance, Tarr withdrew his motion.

Peterson presented a series of six recommendations that he felt would improve the flow of traffic into and through the Aptos village area and also remain within the general limitations that present and previous county policies have imposed on the area.

Those policies and decisions, as outlined by Peterson and county transportation planner Myron Jacobs, have virtually eliminated the possibility of an east-west bypass around the Aptos village area lessening the pressure on the two-lane portion of Soquel Drive as it passes through the village.

Supporting the decision to abandon plans for the old Aptos bypass is the current financial crunch now being experienced by virtually all governments in the state when planning for new roads.

Jacobs repeated earlier forecasts that the county will be hard pressed in another couple of years to find enough road construction money to just maintain

the present county road network, let alone build new roads.

Peterson's recommendations include several connections between roads north of the village center that now funnel traffic into Trout Gulch Road daily. He recommended a high priority for a connection between Cathedral Drive and Hopkins Road (entrance to Nisene Marks State Park) as shown on the Aptos area general plan.

He suggested a 1980-85 implementation of a connection from Polo Drive to Valencia Road and the extension of Granite Way, off Cathedral Drive to Hopkins Road forming a northern peripheral road around the village pedestrian core.

Other recommendations included:

— An update of the county "regional transportation plan" that relieves the village of through regional traffic and develops a roadway network providing alternate routes between home, work, shopping and services.

— Endorse an off-street parking program for Aptos Village as part of a recommended county-wide off-street parking program for old or small commercial areas where the ownership pattern makes cluster parking

difficult to achieve. Adding to that recommendation, Peterson suggested the county hire a consultant for one or two days who would be able to examine the off-street parking requirements, particularly in the Aptos and Soquel villages, and recommend methods of implementing parking programs. He stressed that formation of assessment districts, a controversial issue, is not the only way of financing the construction and operation of parking lots. Another way is the formation of public non-profit corporations.

— Formalize vehicular move-

ments, pedestrian crossings and parking in the village area; and ban roadway parking within 100 feet of an intersection. Included in this recommendation was the suggestion for the left-turn lane at Trout Gulch Road, consideration of a three-way stop at Soquel Drive and Trout Gulch for vehicular and pedestrian safety and the reconstruction of the Soquel Drive-Spreckels Drive intersection.

"The service characteristics of the intersection could be improved by preventing crossing movements and make Spreckels Drive in reality a one-way road

into the Rio del Mar cove area, and by providing a right-turn lane from Soquel to Spreckels Drive and a left-turn lane from Spreckels to Soquel Drive.

"This would require relocation of the railroad (bridge) abutment and widening of the Soquel Drive bridge across Aptos Creek. Any bridge widening should include a section of five to eight feet for a bikeway and pedestrian walk," Peterson said.

The committee will meet Thursday, Jan. 22 at 7:30 p.m. at Cabrillo College room 514 to discuss these recommendations.