

Aptos Village parking woes blamed on area businesses

By KATHY SALAMON

STAFF WRITER

Aptos businesses on the south side of Soquel Drive that are not in conformity with the county zoning ordinance and don't provide any parking contribute to the parking problem in Aptos Village, Jeff Oberdorfer told the Aptos Chamber of Commerce Thursday.

Oberdorfer, a planning consultant hired by the county to look into ways to improve parking and traffic in Aptos, said the businesses on the south side of Soquel Drive were in existence before the county adopted its zoning ordinance, and therefore are exempt from parking requirements.

Most of the merchants on the south side and their customers, he said, park on the north side of the street.

Oberdorfer made his remarks in an update of his study to the Aptos Chamber.

He has already conducted two public workshops in which he discussed problems and possibilities with Aptos business people and residents.

In those workshops, Oberdorfer discussed how lack of parking is not the real problem since never more than 60 percent of the parking available is utilized. The basic problem, he said, is that the Village is not attractive for pedestrians, so people want to park right in front of the building where they do business.

He also discussed the possibilities of making Soquel Drive one-way in the Village and changing the parking patterns.

A third workshop, scheduled for next month, will deal with the problems of circulation in the area.

In all, four workshops will be held, he said.

A proposal should be before the county Board of Supervisors in June, he added.