

Capitola Wharf Renovation Passed By Coast Commission

Capitola's proposed uses of its soon-to-be renovated wharf were unanimously approved by the Central Coastal Commission Monday afternoon.

Commissioners on a 12-0 vote welcomed the city's proposals to reconstruct the century-old wharf primarily for fishing/pedestrian uses. Conformity to Coastal Act priorities, which center around tourist-related access, was repeated during the short hearing.

The city has been working on the \$600,000-plus wharf renovation since February and it is expected to be completed in August. It has been closed for two years, due to storm damage.

Commission concerns about traffic and parking problems that were cited during the first hearing in April were resolved and an additional report on the city's circulation and parking plan was detailed.

The parking problem in Capitola Village was expected to worsen once the wharf was completed. The city, however, will encourage motorists to use remote parking lots and its shuttle bus program.

Two remote lots, for example, will be utilized with the potential of 200 to 400 parking spaces. Additionally, the city is leasing the Southern Pacific Railroad's right-of-way along Cliff Drive which will provide another 37 parking spaces.

Commissioners restricted parking on

the wharf in order to encourage pedestrian uses. Vehicle access will be limited to emergency service and boat launching activities.

Another commission condition called for the reservation of 10 parking spaces along Cliff Drive for the storage of boat trailers.

The launch operations proposed by Capitola involving circulation, hours and pedestrian conflicts were other concerns by commissioners. A one year review was placed on that aspect in order to alleviate any problems that might occur.

Commission Executive Director Ed Brown summed up the sentiment of the commission by terming it an "ambitious" project and "one that is certainly supportive of Coastal Act policies."

Besides the boat launching facility, wharf uses will include a bait and tackle shop, snack bar, storage building and mooring area.

The latter was estimated for 35 to 50 boats between 25 and 45 feet long. It will be a seasonal use from May 1 to Sept. 30.

Capitola City Manager Steve Burrell noted afterward that work on the approved buildings might start in three weeks. Wharf renovation then is expected continue beyond where the buildings are to be built.