

Kalich building to house deli, offices

By KEN McLAUGHLIN

Detailed plans for pumping new life into the 67-year-old Kalich building were unveiled today by Watson Valle Enterprises, the investment group that bought the building in March.

The building, which sits next to the renovated Mansion House on Main Street, will again be known as the Brewington Block, its name when it was built by George Brewington in 1914.

According to Glen Olives, a partner in Watson Valle Enterprises Ltd. (a limited partnership), the born-again building will feature professional offices and a cafe-deli with an outside deck on the second floor.

Olives said Watson Valle will work with the current tenants on the first floor so that the entire building will be renovated inside and out. Estimated cost of the historical rehabilitation project is \$400,000.

Both the front and rear of the building will be spruced up. The old, handsome brick will be treated with acid to clean it. "Earth-tone" awnings will put on the front and back, Olives said.

The architects for the renovation are Kravitz and Elmore of Soquel. Their plans call for creating a "greenhouse effect" on the second floor. Existing skylights will be used to create an atrium-like walkway to the offices, employing passive solar techniques.

The second floor of the Kalich building, once a nice hotel, has been vacant for 20 years. At one time, the bottom floor housed a 600-seat theater.

The building will be "double-fronted" to go hand in hand with the city's redevelopment plan,

which calls for a good portion of the downtown parking to be located in the rear of the stores.

The plan will also entail demolition of the old Pacific Telephone building on East Beach Street in order to hook up Union and Alexander streets, designed to create a peripheral "loop" to take traffic off the Main Street. Granite Construction is scheduled to begin the demolition and realignment within the next couple of weeks.

"The (Kalich) project is geared for the realignment," said Olives.

The restaurant, Olives said, will be "something like an Eric's Deli." It will be the third new deli-type restaurant to open in the Plaza area in about a year's time.

Olives said, however, that he didn't think it would siphon off much business from the other two delis (Apple City Deli and the Ice Cream Deli, which have already been dubbed the "dueling delis"), nor would it compete with the Mansion House restaurant.

"We hope to get some of the overflow from the Mansion House," he said.

If the financing of the project all goes well, Olives said, he hopes rehabilitation work will begin by Feb. 15. The work should be complete by the end of the year, he said.

The rehabilitation work will be done in a way that will allow substantial tax advantages for historical rehabilitation, Olives said.

The new tax bill recently signed by President Reagan allows for a 25 percent tax credit for renovation of buildings that are certified as historical by the U.S. Department of the Interior,

and Olives said Watson Valle Enterprises has begun the process of getting the building certified.

If possible, Olives said, the investors will utilize federal funds available for rehabilitation work. "There has been some cutback in those funds, but there are still viable programs," Olives remarked.

Olives said he viewed the Kalich project as "part of the total redevelopment picture."

He said he thought the project would tie in nicely with the Mansion House, the proposed movie theater at East Lake Avenue and Alexander Street and the proposed semi-mall on Main Street.

Following years (some oldtimers say decades) of discussion about downtown redevelopment, the City Council in late August adopted a specific redevelopment plan that calls for the creation of a new shopping center in the south Main Street area south of Riveriside Drive, in addition to a semi-mall on Main between Riveriside and Lake Avenue.

The Kalich building was sold twice earlier this year. Robert Jackson, a Salinas accountant, bought it in February for \$320,000 from descendants of the Kalich family. A month later, Olives' limited partnership purchased it for \$389,000.

Olives, a lifelong Watsonville resident, explained at the time that he and his fellow investors had been looking into purchasing the building for several months. They were disappointed when the building was sold to Jackson, so they decided to make him an offer.

Jackson couldn't refuse.



Drawing shows how the front of the rehabilitated Kalich building will look.