

Public hearing set on Rispin conversion

The first of perhaps many public hearings on the controversial proposal to develop Capitola's Rispin Mansion into a 100 unit senior citizens facility will be held Thursday, April 7, by the Capitola Planning Commission.

Planning Commission member Howard Dysle is proposing to rebuild the 60-year-old Rispin mansion as the hub of a senior residential care complex that will stretch for nearly 100 yards along the west side of Soquel Creek.

Dysle's proposal calls for construction of 87

apartments on the north side of the present mansion and a 13-bed nursing home-like facility on the south side.

The proposal has stirred up opposition among Capitola residents and others who have formed "Friends of the Rispin Estate" — a group that wants to see the mansion acquired by the city for a cultural center/library, and then restored to the condition it was in when Henry Rispin lived there in the 1920s.

The public hearing before the Planning

Commission (during which Dysle must step down as a commissioner) was scheduled after Integrated Land Services, the consultant preparing the environmental impact report, completed work on the final version of the EIR Monday and delivered it to the Capitola Planning Department.

Copies of the comments made by the public and governmental agencies to the draft EIR and the consultant's responses to them are available at the Capitola Planning

Department.

The soundness of the soils underneath the proposed building area has been questioned by some representatives of the "Friends" group, but a soils engineer who designed the foundations for the condominiums north of the Rispin property and also did design work for the city at the Stockton Avenue bridge, believes subsurface structure is sound.

Myron Jacobs told City Planning Director Richard Steele that five test borings were made for the Riverview condominiums north of the mansion, and drillers found a thin layer of top soil, then firm terrace deposits of medium brown sandy clays, and finally, very hard sandstone.

Other test borings, a home construction project, and examination of exposed soil in the basement of the Rispin Mansion indicate the hard sandstone extends all along the west bank of Soquel Creek.

Jacobs said the material appears to be stable.

But he says actual design of the proposed buildings' foundations will have to wait until the project is approved by the city and a "detailed soil and geologic investigation" is completed.

A second issue — destruction of part of a Monarch butterfly nesting area by removal of some eucalyptus trees on the south end of the property — has been put off, Steele said, by a decision to postpone construction of the 13-unit nursing facility.