

Aptos Neighbors assume task of preserving Village character

By BUD O'BRIEN

An organization of Aptos area residents intends to do all it can to preserve the "quaint" character of Aptos Village.

At a meeting attended by about 50 people last night, Aptos Neighbors Association gave notice that it will monitor projects and developments in the Village and its immediate environs to ensure that what happened on 41st Avenue won't happen there.

Association chairman Peter Carr agreed that a plan for the Village adopted by the Board of Supervisors more than five years ago was a "good plan" that, if followed, would protect the special character of the Village. But he and other spokesmen for the association stressed that Aptos residents should work closely with county planners to make certain that future developments

do not conflict with the area's character.

Aptos Village was the topic of the meeting, which was held at Mar Vista School and was the first general meeting of Aptos Neighbors in six months. On hand to explain the county-approved plan for the Village were John Warren, a supervising planner in the county's comprehensive planning division, and Ron Marquez, chief traffic planner for the planning department.

The upshot of their report was that not much has been done to implement that plan, particularly the traffic portion of it, since adoption. Mainly, that is because not much in the way of development has occurred in the Village since the plan's adoption. Marquez pointed out that the financing of the traffic program — the main feature of which would connect Hopkins Way with Cathedral Drive —

was dependent on contributions from development projects as they were approved. The only major project to be completed in the last few years has been Aptos Station, which provided some of the improvements on Hopkins Way.

But Warren pointed out that several other projects have been approved or are in the application stage — including Aptos Junction, a combined commercial-residential project behind Aptos Station; the 56-unit Village Glen project above the Village park; the La Mirada project of 35 affordable units for senior citizens and 15 "market" units at Trout Gulch and Quail Run Roads, and a large housing development on Trout Gulch Road about a half-mile from the Village known as the Carlino Project.

As these projects proceed, it was explained, money will be

pumped into the Village road fund — which now contains less than \$7,000 — to pay for the traffic improvements called for in the plan.

The audience was reminded that, because of concerns voiced about the proposed La Mirada project, the county is re-examining the area general plan to determine if the densities allowed in that plan are in conflict with what actually exists in the Village now.

After considerable discussion, the association voted to

urge the county that priority be given six particular needs in the Village: (1) A parking study; (2) a left-turn stacking lane onto Trout Gulch Road off Soquel Drive; (3) extension of Granite Way to make the connection between Cathedral Drive and Hopkins Way; (4) stop signs, crosswalks and striping at certain spots on the road network; (5) an automatically-operated gate at the Hopkins Way crossing of the SP tracks, and (6) the widening of Trout Gulch Road from Soquel

Drive to Cathedral Drive.

The group was to present those recommendations to the county at a public workshop on the county's capital improvements program Thursday at Mar Vista School. The association will also work to see that the street lights that are to be installed along with the undergrounding of utility lines — a project that is to start this spring — will be of an "antique-like" appearance to accord with the Village character.