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students would

Group hopes to buy old mansion

Historic Houses

An ad hoc committee of the Mid-County Historical Society has taken an option to purchase the 86-year-old Martina Castro-Lodge home at 919 Capitola Ave.

The group has indicated it will turn the old mansion over to the Mid-County Historical Society if the club gives its approval for use as a museum.

The action was revealed this week by Vincent Leonard, president of the Mid-County Historical Society. He did not reveal the names of the committee members, who took the option on the property, however.

The old house was being offered for sale by the present owners, the Misses Lulu and Julia Lodge, at a reported asking price of \$75,000, through Real Estate Center of Santa Cruz.

Leonard said the Mid-County

Historical Society will decide whether or not to accept the property at its next meeting at 12:30 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 21, at the Hotel Bayview in Aptos.

The ad hoc committee reportedly took out a 90-day option on the property to thwart any purchase of the property by the city of Capitola.

The Capitola Planning Commission had recommended purchase of the Lodge property to the City Council upon the recommendation of Commissioner John Battistini, recreation and conservation committee chairman.

"Mayor (Phillip J.) Walker called me and asked what it was all about, and I had to tell him I didn't know," Leonard said. "Mr. Walker said the interest of the city of Capitola was in having the

house preserved and restored."

Leonard said that the venerable mansion still contains some of the original 1884 furniture. Burglars broke into the home recently and stole a roomful of furniture, he added.

When the Planning Commission recommendation to buy the Lodge property came before the Monday council meeting, Walker read a letter from Real Estate Center expressing interest in city purchase of the property.

The mayor then reported briefly that "a group has placed a 90-day hold on the property," and no action was taken on the recommendation.