

New group jumps on Aptos' issues

By KEITH MURAOKA
Sentinel Staff Writer

APTOS — Pothole parties are gaining popularity in these storm-ridden days of funding deficits. First, Old San Jose Road residents, then Rio del Mar and now Aptos.

The newly-formed Aptos Neighbors Association Tuesday enthusiastically endorsed a Saturday work day to fill the potholes along a one-mile stretch of Soquel Drive in Aptos Village.

About 85 persons attended the group's first-ever town meeting at Mar Vista School. A constitution was adopted, 11 directors elected and Second (Aptos) District Supervisor Robley Levy spoke.

Levy pledged her support of the pothole work day, saying she would work with the group to overcome liability concerns. As proposed, association members will attempt to gain funds for materials from Aptos Village merchants and the Aptos Chamber of Commerce. Members would supply all the labor.

The specific area of Soquel Drive targeted involves from State Park Drive through the Village.

Also, a majority of members voted to sponsor an informational forum on the controversial Wingspread Beach proposed development on the 67-acre Porter-Seson property. The forum will be held after the final environmental impact report is released in the upcoming two weeks.

Other topics discussed centered on development growth, increased traffic and the fear of

Aptos turning into "another 41st Avenue."

Resident Mary Ann Kaplan expressed concern that a business in Rancho del Mar shopping center had been sold and was rumored to become a Kentucky Fried Chicken. "Does that lead to McDonald's, Burger King and Chuck E. Cheese?" she asked.

Resident Jim Warnock opposed "the kind of traffic" that the proposed Seacliff Inn would bring to State Park Drive. The 140-unit application already has been approved by the county Planning Commission and goes before supervisors on April 12.

Resident Don Karleen maintained there was "too much control on single-family residential developers, but not enough on large developers like Barratt" (now building the 128-unit condominium complex Seabreeze next to the freeway).

Levy advocated the people "get involved" in the county planning process and "voice your concerns" about particular projects before they are approved.

She congratulated the members for forming the association. She noted one of the best ways to be heard was in numbers — the numbers of a community group.

Very early during the meeting, discussion involved the basis of the association considering there are no fewer than five other community groups in the Aptos-Rio del Mar area.

John Watkins, president of the Aptos Terrace Improvement Association and a director on the Council of Improvement Associa-

tions, broached the subject. The council represents the Aptos Terrace, Rio del Mar, Seacliff, Seascape and Rolling Green Estates associations.

Norman Spector, moderator during the meeting, replied that those organizations simply "did not appeal to me." He mentioned the "parochial issues" those organizations often address.

To say the least, the make-up of the Aptos Neighbors Association involves the gamut of ages. The crowd at the town meeting, however, was decidedly younger than those of the Council of Improvement Associations.

Peter Carr, spokesman for the Aptos Neighbors Association, told The Sentinel afterward that they formed "simply because there was a feeling we weren't being represented by an existing organization.

"We don't have any bones to pick with those other organizations," he quickly added. "We just want to promote a sense of community with residents among Aptos' rural and urban areas and fill the gap for a community organization."

He noted that the Council of Improvement Associations' area takes in more of Rio del Mar, while they included the "flatlands" of Aptos, as well as the Aptos Village area.

Newly-elected association directors include Carr, Sharol Gilbert, Don Karleen, Rosalie Kraft, Richard Lundquist, Leah Parks, Donna Saposnik, Wells Shoemaker, Hartley Taylor, Jack Turner and Helen Wallis.