

# Flood-plain parking lots get rejected

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Rapid City aldermen gave a big thumbs down Wednesday to a request by a real estate company that wanted to build a parking lot on public park land created after the June 9, 1972, flood.

The whole idea behind buying that land, clearing it and making it a park was "because people were killed" in the 1972 flood, Alderman Delores Coffing said.

"I would not under any circumstances open that up for anything because it (a flood) can and probably will happen again," Coffing said during Wednesday's meeting of the Rapid City Common Council's legal and finance committee.

Aldermen responded to the parking lot request from Kahler Realtors by voting unanimously for a policy that would tell busi-

nesses contemplating similar requests: Don't even ask.

Bonnie Hughes, director of community development for the city, said she had received, to date, five inquiries from businesses that wanted to use park land to build parking lots.

The latest request was made by Kahler Realtors, whose office is at Omaha Street and Mountainview Road.

Hughes said the city could not sell park land unless city voters approved.

"If the council determines that parking areas are an appropriate use of park lands, parking lots must be located by a park improvement or a recreational facility that the public would benefit from the improvement," she wrote in a memo.

David Kahler of Kahler Realtors said the business wanted to build a 2,200-square-foot addition to its building, as well as more parking, which would create more jobs and increase the tax base. He said the public already uses the existing company parking lot because it is close to the bike path.

But aldermen voted unanimously to recommend a policy against parking lots in the park lands. Their recommendation will go before the full council Monday night.



Coffing