

Parking ramp location gets tentative approval

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Rapid City's new downtown parking ramp will be in the 500 block of St. Joseph Street — maybe.

The Rapid City Common Council voted Monday night to give tentative approval to that location. That will allow time for downtown merchants and others to comment on the selection before the vote on a final site selection.

The ramp, chosen from eight options, would stretch from the corner of Sixth and St. Joseph streets east along St. Joe to the Schneider Music Co. building at 509 St. Joseph. The ramp would fill just more than one-quarter of the block and provide 240 parking spaces.

A smaller one-level city parking lot and several commercial buildings now occupy the proposed site.

Council members also discussed how much money was available for the parking ramp project.

Mayor Art LaCroix said there is the \$1 million originally budgeted for it, plus a \$150,000 donation from downtown businesses and a 10 percent contingency fund.

Cost estimate for the ramp option chosen Monday is about \$1.3 million. Of the eight, that option comes closest to meeting the parking ramp budget, LaCroix said.

Council members also decided to go to court to explain their reasons for denying an off-sale 3.2 beer license to Keith and Patricia Brugger at the June 18 meeting. The Bruggers have filed a petition in 7th Judicial Circuit Court, asking that the council be required to reconsider the decision and grant the license for their 7-Eleven store at 1507 E. St. Patrick St. The hearing is set for 9 a.m. July 10.

The council said reasons for denial were neighborhood protests and an improper location near a residential neighborhood.

Assistant City Attorney Mike Diedrich told the council it had the option of reconsidering the decision before the court date instead of appearing in court.

In other business, the council approved the Pinedale Heights Annexation Study without discussion or protests from the audience.

Council member Karen Means and LaCroix both said they had received phone calls from people who wanted the city to spray for mosquitoes.

Some spraying has been done, LaCroix said, but none would be done near water supplies or on private property.

The city simply can't afford to spray effectively against mosquitoes, he said.