

Packing shed plan approved

Davenport
Blufftop meadow will be home to visitor center; parking lot proposal killed 12-16-00

By **ROBIN MUSITELLI**
SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

Davenport's blufftop meadow won't become a parking lot.

DAVENPORT

The state Coastal Commission unanimously approved plans

to convert an old Brussels sprouts packing shed into a visitor center and restaurant late Thursday.

Approval came with the condition that the building stay the same size, and the roof not be raised. Plans to build a parking lot in the upper bluff were eliminated.

"We're very, very pleased there will be no parking there," said Susan Young, a Davenport resident who had opposed earlier plans by Odwalla co-founder Greg Steltenpohl and his partner Fred Bailey, who proposed converting the building.

Bailey said he also was satisfied with the outcome.

"We're happy," he said. "Everything is intact but with a somewhat reduced profile in that we're not raising the roof."

The project has been a source of contention in Davenport for years. The building on the ocean side of Highway 1, once housed Odwalla juice operations, but county zoning officials

objected, saying it should be used for tourist services.

What Bailey and Steltenpohl proposed, however, was opposed by those who said it was too large for Davenport, population 200. Opponents also said that parking on the upper bluff would ruin a popular, albeit informal, spot for whale watching.

The project was scaled back several times.

The approved version limits parking to a lower site. The building can have a second story, but the roof can't be raised.

The center will have a restaurant, gift shop and day spa and five overnight accommodations.

Developers will also dedicate four public trail easements, a public pathway and stairway down the bluff.

Bailey said that although it was a long and divisive process, he was satisfied with the outcome.

"I hope the other side feels the same way," he said.

"We'd like to see the community put this aside. It's status quo on the upper field. So be it. It's what it is. Everyone can continue to use it as before."

Contact Robin Musitelli at
rmusitelli@santa-cruz.com.