

# Porter-Sesnon Developers Get Their Wings Clipped

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The future of the proposed Wingspread cultural center and condominium project is in doubt today after the county Board of Supervisors Tuesday agreed to limit the size of each condo to only 600 square feet.

As developers looked on in disbelief, a majority of supervisors agreed to limit the size of each condo, an action which one project opponent said opens the way for the state to buy Porter-Sesnon as a park.

The opponent, Vickie Powell of the Friends of Porter-Sesnon group, said, "We are very happy with this decision. It puts us in a better position and we believe the state Parks Department will now purchase the property."

State Parks Director Peter Dangermond said Tuesday that based on the board's action, the state will now do an appraisal of the site.

The board decided Wingspread could build anywhere from 115 to 130 "visitor accommodation" units — each containing 600 square feet. It wasn't the number of units that horrified the developers, but the size selected by Supervisors' Chairman Robley Levy and Supervisors Joe Cucchiara and Gary Patton.

State Sen. Henry Mello, D-Watsonville, was responsible for getting \$4 million placed in the state parks budget this year for the possible purchase of the 67-acre site which stretches from the coast near New Brighton State Beach to Highway 1.

This money could be used to purchase the 99-year lease that developers Hare, Brewer and Kelley have on the site. The lease was purchased by the development firm from the University of California for an estimated \$1.5 million.

The board's action Tuesday put an end to speculation that the \$4 million wouldn't be enough to buy the lease from the developers.

Powell said after the meeting, "The \$4 million that senator Mello got in the parks budget will be reasonable because the value of the property now will go down considerably. I think Kelley's development is inappropriate for the property. The county — community-wide — now is saying that."

Powell pointed out that the state Parks Commission will be meeting here in November to decide whether to allocate the \$4 million for the Porter-Sesnon site.

While Powell had plenty to say about the board's action, developer Ryland Kelley was rendered almost speechless.

All he could say after the board meeting was, "We need to study the impact of what they've done."

The board's vote to limit the units to 600 square feet came during consideration of ordinances designed to implement the land use plan of the county's Local Coastal Program.

The land use plan states that the preferred use for the Porter-Sesnon site is for a state or regional park with 115-130 campsites, but that an alternative use would be a private

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## PORTER-SESNON

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convention center development with 115-130 visitor accommodation units.

As part of the Local Coastal Program ordinances, supervisors rezoned the Porter-Sesnon site to a park and recreation zone. The question they grappled with Tuesday was how large such visitor accommodation units should be in a park and recreation zone in order to be equivalent to 115-130 campsites.

The county planning staff put out a chart suggesting that each unit consist of two sleeping rooms of 400 square feet each, a kitchen and bathroom.

At first, Patton misunderstood the staff proposal and got a

majority of supervisors to agree to limit each unit to a total of 400 square feet.

But after Planning Director Kris Schenk pointed out the misunderstanding and suggested 600 square feet as a more reasonable limit, the board upped the maximum allowable size to 600 square feet.

Supervisor E. Wayne Moore Jr. objected to the limit. Supervisor Dan Forbus was out of the room during the vote, but had been on record as opposing the original limit of 400 square feet.

This action by supervisors, along with all their actions on Local Coastal Program ordinances, now goes to the state Coastal Commission for consideration. After the commission acts, the ordinances will come back to supervisors for final consideration.