

# County should return to original plan for Wingspread, Moore says

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APTOS — Fourth (Watsonville) District Supervisor E. Wayne Moore received nothing but concurrence from the Aptos Chamber of Commerce Thursday in advocating the original Wingspread Beach proposed development.

That original proposal, which is in conflict with both the county General Plan and the Local Coastal Program, called for the construction of 630 housing units, theaters, shops and a conference center on the 67-acre Porter-Sesnon property across from Cabrillo College in Aptos.

Among current proposals by developers Hare, Brewer and Kelley, however, is a scaled-down development of 295 motel-type units to serve convention facilities.

The chamber board last year was among the first organizations to back the original concept. Last month, they reaffirmed support of any alternative discussed as long as the performing arts facilities are included.

Moore maintained that the Wingspread development was needed and would also bring important tax dollars to the county.

"I always hear people crying we don't have enough money to run the government," Moore told the chamber. "Wingspread would bring in a lot of money from the tenant occupancy tax.

"I make no bones about it," he added. "I hope Wingspread can be developed as it was originally was proposed."

Moore spoke out against the current scaled-down proposal, which includes the lease of up to 40 percent of the land to the state for campsites and public access. Hare, Brewer and Kelley are now negotiating with the state on a suitable price.

Moore said a state park use would still cost the taxpayer money in paying for such things as litter control and park rangers.

In answer to a question about the possibility of another convention center in the city of Santa Cruz, Moore replied, "Frankly, I'm for as many as we can get."

He said the county's economy depends on the tourist trade and such conference/performing arts facilities would enhance things.

In other business, chamber members heard for the second time a report on Measure A, the fire protection benefit fee coming

up on the June 7 election. For the second time, the chamber did not take a stand on the fee.

At stake, according to Aptos Acting Fire Chief Al Forbes, is the closure of the department's Rio del Mar fire station. The acclaimed paramedic emergency unit could also be lost.

The fee will be instituted only if the fire district loses special district augmentation funds from the state. At this point, it is not known whether Aptos will receive any or all of the \$609,000 in state funds it received this year.

Forbes called the fees a "just in case" measure.

Chamber concerns have centered on the proposed \$200 to \$250 yearly charge to commercial businesses. Residential units like single-family homes and condominiums would be charged \$75 a year if Aptos loses all its special district funds.

If, however, Aptos were to lose only a percentage of funds, that same percentage would be collected in the form of a reduced fee, added Forbes.

Fire insurance policy rates could possibly double, as well, if the Rio del Mar station is closed, he said.