

CAPITOLA
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EIR review begins on new Rispin Mansion plan

A new environmental impact report on the old Rispin Mansion, now the center of a 14 unit subdivision that foresees the mansion's eventual restoration as a bed and breakfast inn, is being reviewed.

A public review of the 100-page-plus document ends on March 1, Capitola Planning Director Steve Russell said last week.

Howard Dysle is proposing to subdivide the eight-acre parcel on the west side of Soquel Creek into 13 building sites plus the mansion — a total of 14 lots.

The plan is the second submitted by Dysle to the city for approval. Dysle lost a bid to restore the mansion and build a 99 unit senior citizens complex there.

A summary of the extensive EIR indicates that the mansion, first built in the early 1920s and later used as the Poor Clares Monastery before being abandoned, is now at risk of irreparable damage because it is open to vandalism. "Fire damage beyond the damage which has already taken place could severely diminish the potential for restoration or rehabilitation of the mansion."

But on the other hand, subdivision of the property, the EIR says, "will lead to construction of new dwellings in close proximity to the mansion on both sides. This may have an adverse visual impact on the mansion."

To minimize the impact, the EIR recommends relocating the buildings on lot 5 (south of the mansion). Plans for any

rehabilitation should be prepared by an architect or building designer experienced in historic building restoration. An architectural historian should be included in any city review of the restoration plans for the mansion. Those plans should also be submitted to the State Office of Historic Preservation and finally approved by the city before the final subdivision map is approved by the city.

The reinforced concrete shell of the mansion, structural engineers believe, is strong enough to resist any probable ground shaking from an earthquake. But any new buildings to be built on the property should be built to withstand the effects of an 8.3 magnitude earthquake on the San Andreas Fault, 8.5 miles away.

The city should also approve grading, erosion control and revegetation plans for each lot before building permits are issued for each lot.

The property is within 1,500 feet of the freeway and the Capitola General Plan requires completion of a noise study for any development in the corridor, the EIR adds.

A major issue the first time development of the Rispin Mansion was proposed centered around a winter colony of Monarch butterflies in the eucalyptus trees on the southern portion of the property. The report recommends a series of measures to minimize the impacts on the colony, including putting all undeveloped portions of the southernmost five



Newest plan for Rispin Mansion includes restoration as a bed and breakfast inn.

Photo by Kurt Ellison

lots into an open space easement, minimizing tree removal on the southernmost six lots, and the planting of additional

trees along the southern property line to serve as a windbreak.

On the northern portion of the

property, however, all invasive eucalyptus and acacia trees, ivy and periwinkle should be removed and replaced with

native trees and shrubs. Construction should be limited to the dry season — April 15 to Oct. 15.

REFERENCE

GREEN SHEET
February 6, 1985