

WINGSPREAD / Dispute over number of rooms could delay decision

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SANTA CRUZ — Another dispute on the controversial Wingspread Beach project in Aptos is in the winds and will likely cause a decision to be delayed until after the June election.

The latest quarrel sprang up when county planners discovered that the proposed 295-unit project for the "condominium resort hotel" contains blueprints for lock-out rooms.

These rooms can be rented separately, so that nearly twice as many units exist, according to Planning Director Kris Schenk. He maintains the actual number of rooms is 585, not the 295 figure that developers Hare, Brewer and Kelley have talked about.

The latest information means parking and traffic impacts will need to be re-studied, said Schenk. And that could take months.

Wingspread Beach is the name of a resort being designed by Conference Associates. The plans include three round-top performing arts theaters, playing fields for the public, restaurants and condominiums.

Much of the controversy has surrounded its location on 67 acres of meadow near New Brighton State Beach, formerly known as the Porter-Sesnon property. The UC Regents have leased the land to Conference Associates for 99 years.

The new housing information must pass through two hurdles — the Planning Department's environmental review team and Planning Commission — before it goes to the Board of Supervisors, said Schenk.

The delay means the fate of the Wingspread Beach development will remain a question mark for Second District residents when they go to the polls in June.

That district's supervisor, Robley Levy, has not revealed her position on the project, instead maintaining a stance of waiting until all the information is known.

Two challengers in that race, retired Soquel businessman Dave Tunno and Rio del Mar housewife

Beverly Moore, have endorsed the project, with certain guarantees. Tunno wants the developers to pay bonds so that they will carry through

with their promises, and Moore has honed in on the issue of traffic impacts.

Louis Darrigo, a fourth candidate,

has said while he's unfamiliar with the specifics of the plan, he's generally supportive of growth.

Schenk raised the issue of the units

in a letter April 26 to Ryland Kelley, one of the partners in the project.

Kelley responded with a letter May 2, in which he said, "I am amazed that

staff is raising this as an issue at this late date, almost four years from beginnings of public discussion of the Wingspread project."

Kelley said the original plans for 633 units showed 200 lock-out units. When the project was revised down to 295 units, "we were told that detailed room arrangements were not required as a part of the application so long as the total square footage and numbers of bedrooms and baths were set forth..."

Schenk said, "All along we've been operating with descriptions."

The first time planners knew of the potential for more than the 295 rooms was in December, when the environmental review team asked for the blueprints of the floor plans.

"In the course of doing that (review), it became clear that the majority of units had two kitchens, at least four bedrooms, and they had their own entrances onto the hallways," said Schenk. "They were designed to be used as two separate rental units."

Kelley countered that 295 was the number of "salable units." He said the draft drawings which went to the review team "inadvertently ... showed some expanded wet bars in various locations within the units, which could have been utilized as kitchens."

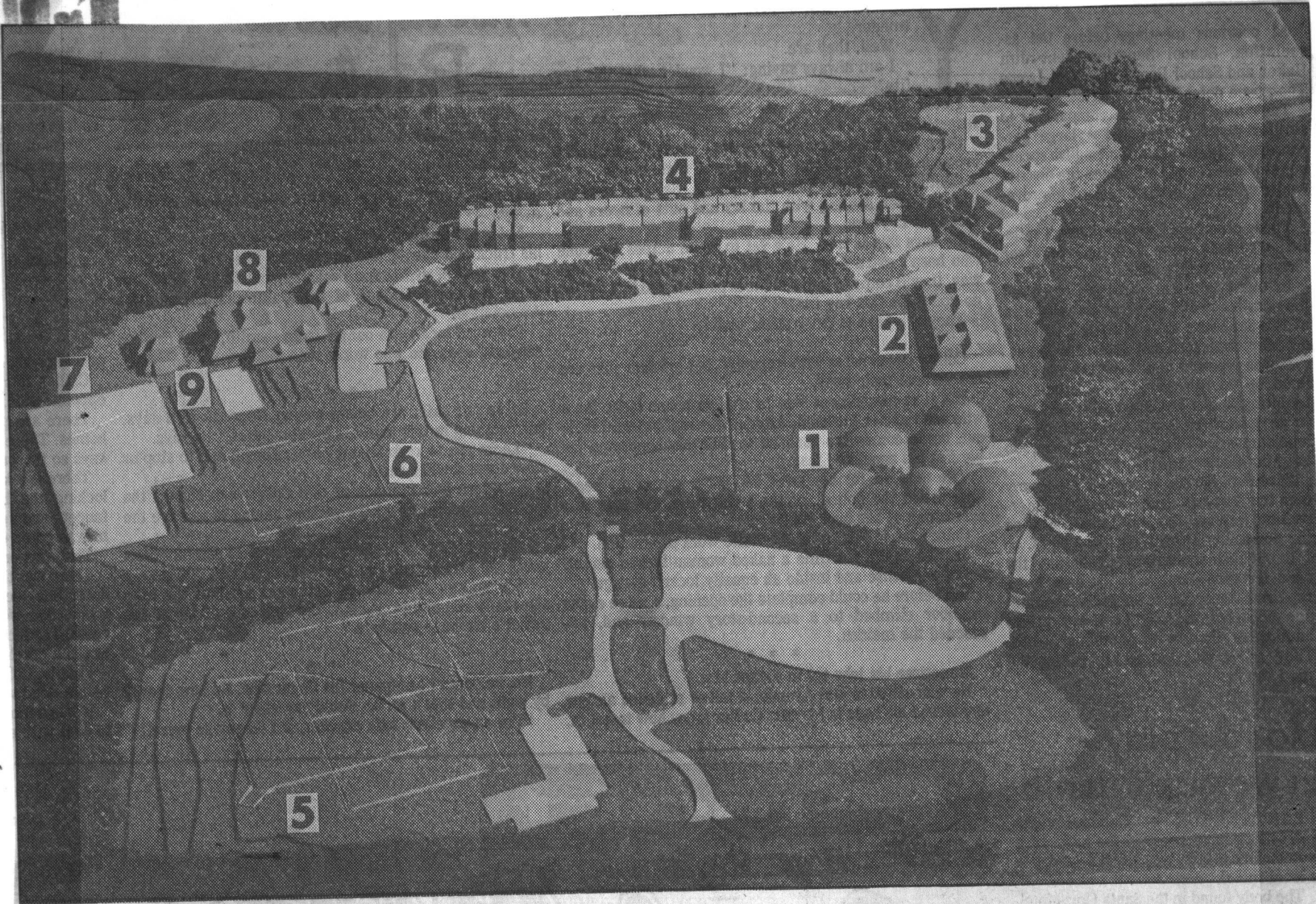
"This was a mistake of the architect ... and since it was never our intention to create more than one kitchen for each salable unit, we are at this time resubmitting these draft plans with the single kitchen, which was always intended," Kelley said.

Schenk said the 585-unit figure means that 11 more acres of parking will be required. The parking space requirement is 2,000 spaces, or 1,100 more than needed under the 295-unit plan.

Kelley countered that all the parking and traffic studies which have been done to date have "absurdly overstated probable (traffic) loads."

A more "sane" traffic study would reduce the traffic projection to approximately 40 percent of the volumes in the study, Kelley maintained.

REFERENCE



The Wingspread plan

APTOS — The schematic for the proposed Wingspread Beach development includes the following: 1) theatre district, 2) conference center, 3) sea lodge, 4) meadow lodge, 5) sports fields, 6) pool, 7) tennis courts, 8) rec club and 9) tree lodges.