

# Controversial Wingspread proposal faces new delay

By BUD O'BRIEN

That controversial proposal to construct a condominium-conference center-performing arts complex on the Porter Sesnon property in Aptos has been imperiled by the prospect of another long delay, a requirement for a new environmental impact report (EIR).

For nearly five years, the Palo Alto development firm of Hare, Brewer and Kelley has been trying to devise a project for the 66-acre beachfront parcel across the freeway from Cabrillo College that would satisfy the county's land-use regulations.

Strong opposition to any of the proposed developments has come from neighborhood groups and environmentalists, who want the property either to remain as is or be taken into

the state parks system.

But Ryland Kelley, head of the development firm, has won the support of a sizable number of people by proposing a development that would include a performing arts complex and playing fields which would be turned over to the community.

At present, Kelley has two alternative plans before the county planning staff. One would call for the construction of a 198-unit hotel-conference center, and would not include any performing arts or playing field facilities. The other, the most controversial and the one Kelley would clearly like to see approved, would include a complex of 295 (some say 585) vacation rental units and the performing arts and playing field facilities.

The smaller project is ready

to be submitted to the Planning Commission. But the bigger project has now been hit by an opinion of the county counsel that before the project can be approved, a complete new EIR must be prepared.

Kelley had claimed that a former, comprehensive EIR, done for the much larger development that was originally proposed for the property, should be sufficient for the smaller developments now being studied.

But County Counsel Dwight Herr has concluded that the state's environmental quality act requires a complete new EIR for the bigger of the projects now contemplated. The smaller project has already been given a "negative declaration" (meaning it does not need further environmental review).

Tim Welch, a spokesman for Conference Associates, which was formed by Kelley to develop the Wingspread Beach project, said Friday that his firm had been confident that the original EIR was sufficient.

He indicated that Kelley would be "reluctant to spend another 12 months or so of

time" that it would take to prepare another EIR. But Welch said Kelley was on vacation and he wasn't certain what the next step would be if the county insists that another EIR is required.

Meanwhile, John Warren of the county planning staff said that the smaller project is just now ready for submission to the Planning Commission for its recommendation.

REFERENCE

GREEN SHEET  
September 5, 1984