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Commission Passes County Coastal Plan

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On a 7-3 vote Wednesday, the state Coastal Commission approved the county's local coastal plan, giving final approval to a park site designation to Porter-Sesnon, and designating Punta La Selva as a rural parcel.

The commission's decision went against its staff's recommendation on Punta La Selva and a small parcel at 17th and Portola avenues. It was agreed the land should be designated for low-cost housing.

It was a clear win for Supervisors' Chairwoman Robley Levy and her two liberal colleagues, Supervisors Joe Cucchiara and Gary Patton, who fought to

stop Punta La Selva from becoming a tourist use site.

The 11-acre Punta La Selva parcel, near Manresa State Beach has been proposed for visitor lodging of around 30 units, and such use had the policies of the Coastal Act behind it, said Regional Coastal Commission Executive Officer Ed Brown.

The commission's decision, in effect, was in opposition to Brown's recommendation, but this morning he took it in good stead, saying of the overall county plan for its coastal sites, "It's an outstanding plan."

Also on the losing end is Supervisor Dan Forbus, who fought longest and hardest to allow the 17th Avenue parcel to be used for a tourist serving facility. He lost out

when Patton and Cucchiara got Levy to vote for low-cost housing there in order for her to get their votes for Punta La Selva.

Levy said this morning she opposed any development at Punta La Selva beyond the rural residential (which will allow around four homes) because the liberal board wants to make it clear they will not allow urbanization of the south county coastlands.

Going into the LCP process a couple of years ago, the major on-going struggle was over the Porter-Sesnon property—67 acres adjacent to New Brighton State Beach and south of Cabrillo College—that Hare, Brewer and Kelley has leased for 99 years from the University of California.

Hare, Brewer and Kelley proposed a major development including a theater complex and more than 600 rental units.

It drew a lot of opposition and the liberal board got state approval designating it as a priority park site. However, it still means the state has to come up with money to purchase the land, or the county may again have to look at it for development.

The commission's approval opens the door for the county to draw up ordinances to back its land use restrictions along the coast. When those ordinances are approved, expected this summer, the county will be allowed to approve building permits within the coastal zone.