

Wingspread plan: No stand taken

By BUD O'BRIEN

Santa Cruz County's Parks and Recreation Commission took no position Monday night on the latest application for the development of the Porter-Sesnon property.

Applications for use of that 66-acre ocean-front parcel across the freeway from Cabrillo College must be passed on by the parks commission because it is designated in the county General Plan as a regional park. The property, however, is held on a 99-year lease by the Palo Alto development firm of Hare, Brewer and Kelley, which wants to develop it as a combination vacation rental-conference center-performing arts complex.

The development firm has met strong opposition in its efforts to get approval of any sort of private development on the prize piece of property. It now has in the county planning department applications for two separate projects — one of which calls for the development of a 295-unit condominium-conference center complex, with a performing arts center that would be turned into a community foundation, and provision for recreational uses, such as soccer and baseball fields, thrown in.

The parks commission, however, had the other application before it Monday night. That one calls for the development of only a 197-unit hotel-conference center and provides for no "extras," such as the performing arts complex and the recre-

ational fields.

The county parks staff recommended that unless the designation on the parcel is changed, the county consider joining with the state in purchasing the Porter-Sesnon property for park use. The state Legislature has already authorized \$4 million to purchase the land, but Ryland Kelley, head of the development firm that holds the lease, has made it clear he won't sell for that price.

County parks staff also recommended to the commission that it urge the state to use its condemnation powers to acquire the land.

The commission split 2-2 on the staff's recommendations. Commissioner Joanne Ferguson was absent.

The commission decided it wanted to hear details of the larger application before taking any further action. It was agreed that a meeting will be held Nov. 7 at Aptos Village Park for that purpose.

Kelley has indicated his proposal for the smaller development is little more than a fall back position, and that it is his preference to build the larger development, which would include the performing arts and recreational facilities for the community. But for that to be possible, the county would have to approve an amendment to the General Plan, which would ultimately be up to the Board of Supervisors.

Whatever recommendations are made by the parks commission would only be advisory.