

Wingspread EIR challenged

City officials in Capitola are questioning the thoroughness of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) on the proposed 497-unit Wingspread development on the 66-acre Porter Sesnon property next to New Brighton Beach State Park.

In a set of statements approved last week by the Capitola City Council, the city is challenging the report's conclusions on the impacts traffic and public safety will have on the city.

The project is in county territory, east of New Brighton Beach state park, but much of the vehicular traffic to and from the center will use the city's Park Avenue freeway offramps.

City officials also fear that the Sheriff's Office will be unable to supply the needed patrol and emergency services at all times, and will require help from the city police department.

Both Police Chief Bob Allen and Planning

Director Dick Steele point out that the Park Avenue intersection will be heavily affected by Wingspread, even with the installation of automatic traffic signals at the off-ramps as proposed as a mitigating measure by the EIR.

Allen is recommending that the county consider requiring construction of a new set of on- and off-ramps between Park Avenue and State Park Drive, and construction of a vehicular bridge over the freeway, connecting Cabrillo College Drive with McGregor Drive, in place of the EIR-recommended pedestrian overpass.

Then, says Allen, the present and future traffic problems at the Park Avenue interchange would be solved.

Steele is also critical

of the traffic remedies proposed by the EIR, but also points out that "the Sheriff has indicated that his manning capabilities would not be adequate to deal with the level of activities associated with a performing arts center.

"Parenthetically, his additional manpower needs would most surely have an impact on the city of Capitola's police activities, though there is no discussion of that within the EIR.

"The EIR," Steele said, "does propose mitigation using on-site security patrols with additional manpower available as deemed necessary by the Sheriff's Department for summer months, concerts, and large conventions. The performing arts center would be responsible for the additional county staffing costs."

But the center should also be required to pay any costs incurred by the city for its extra police work in relation to center activities, Steele said.