

Lighthouse Field gets coastal panel's OK

SAN FRANCISCO — The state Coastal Commission here Thursday unanimously approved the draft general plan for development of Lighthouse Field State Beach, but rejected Santa Cruz city's program to resume permit authority in the coastal zone.

Approval of the Lighthouse Field plan clears the way for the document to be presented for final adoption by the state Parks Commission, which is scheduled to meet in Santa Cruz in September.

The plan previously had been approved by the county Board of Supervisors and the Santa Cruz City Council. The state owns the land, having purchased it after Santa Cruz voters overwhelmingly rejected a private convention center proposal in 1974. The city and county have agreed to share in park construction costs and upkeep.

The general plan reflects the desire expressed at the polls to keep the area in a natural state, although limited development of parking lots and picnic and open-field recreational areas are included.

Also included is a controversial realignment of West Cliff Drive, which calls for moving 1,000 feet of roadway inland some 200 feet near Lighthouse Point.

A Santa Cruz resident protested the realignment at Thursday's Coastal Commission meeting, touching off the major point of discussion on the plan.

said city planner Joe Hall. The commission, however, adopted the plan with the realignment.

The Coastal Commission, Hall said, rejected the city's Local Coastal Program (LCP) implementation plan, approval for which is needed for the city to take over permit authority from the Coastal Commission within the city's coastal zone.

The Coastal Commission has had ultimate authority over all construction with the coastal zone of seaside communities since voters passed an initiative calling for coastal preservation. The legislative act which followed and set up the Coastal Commission called for an eventual phaseout of Coastal Commission permit authority once local jurisdictions completed their LCPs and all implementing ordinances.

Hall said the city's plan was denied because the commission felt zoning proposed for the Seabright area is inconsistent with the Coastal Act and because the commission wanted stronger archeological provisions.

The city, Hall said, calls for supervision by an archaeologist on all major construction and for notification to the city of finds at small project sites. The commission wants all earth-moving done within sensitive areas to be supervised by an archaeologist.

The City Council now must resolve differences in those two areas and resubmit its plan to the Coastal Commission.