

Levy calls for action on Wingspread plan

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By BUD O'BRIEN

Supervisor says it's time for a public hearing

Kelley immediately called for a commitment from a majority of the supervisors that they at least support the concept of the Wingspread proposal. Without such commitments, Kelley indicated he would look for alternative ways of developing the property. One of the alternatives, it was revealed, was the possibility of selling the 99-year lease now held by Kelley on the land

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Board Chairwoman Robley Levy will urge the Board of Supervisors at its next meeting to take action that will ensure that the controversial proposals for developing the Porter Sesnon property "be brought to public hearing as soon as possible."

Specifically, Levy will ask the board to instruct the county planning staff to put a priority on processing the plans for the

proposed Wingspread Beach "Project B" development on the 66-acre beachfront parcel near New Brighton State Beach. The Project B proposal includes the development of a performing arts complex and recreational facilities.

Levy, in whose Second District the property is located,

has been under some fire recently for her refusal to take any position on the Wingspread proposal until it makes its way to the Board of Supervisors for hearing.

An alternate application by the developer — the Palo Alto firm of Hare, Brewer and Kelley — is already scheduled

for a public hearing before the Planning Commission on Oct. 24. But that relatively small project would not include the performing arts or recreation facilities, and nobody, including the developer, is very excited about getting it approved.

The larger Wingspread devel-

opment proposal recently ran into another delay, one that developer Ryland Kelley hints could be fatal, when it was ruled that another environmental impact report (EIR) would be needed before it could emerge from the planning process for board consideration.

Wingspread

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to the state, with Kelley's firm then acting as a "concessionaire" for an Asilomar-type development.

Levy, who is the swing vote on the board in the matter, stuck to her position of not taking a stand on Wingspread until all the facts are laid out before the board and the public.

The Wingspread debate has become a key issue in Levy's current campaign to retain her supervisorial seat at the Nov. 6 election in the face of a strong challenge from retired Sequel businessman Dave Tunno. Tunno has come out in favor of "the concept" of Wingspread Beach, although he's left himself leeway to change his mind, and has made no iron-clad commitment.

Levy's latest proposal will be on the supervisors' Oct. 16 agenda.

In her letter to the board placing the matter on the agenda, Levy writes: "I believe that it is critical for the

Board of Supervisors to give clear direction to staff of our intent that these projects be brought to public hearing as soon as possible."

She goes on to say that she is disappointed in the dispatch with which the planning staff has handled the Wingspread application, but notes that the developer is also responsible for much of the delay for failing to submit plans in a timely fashion.

"Although bringing (the projects) to public hearing depends in large part on timely submissions by the developer," Levy says, "I believe the county must hold its own staff strictly accountable for prompt responses and processing."

To assure that is done, Levy will ask the board to: (1) employ a "task force approach" to assure swift processing; (2) assign the assistant planning director to take personal responsibility for assuring "timely and prompt" action by the task force, and

(3) establish a "time line" to assure that the all environmental review documents now required be finished by Jan. 31.

"The projects proposed for Porter Sesnon have evoked strong feelings pro and con, both because major issues of public benefits are involved and because Porter Sesnon is an especially significant property in the Midcounty," Levy said. "The debate on the projects so far has taken place without full detailed submissions by the developer, without analysis, without the balance of benefits' study called for by the Board of Supervisors . . . but most important, without the opportunity for the public to make their case, except in the media. These projects must reach the public hearing stage before the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors so that there is a sound basis for decision making, and so that the public can speak and be heard."