

# Capitola Planning Commission decision on Rispin Mansion site rests with council

CAPITOLA — Last week's Planning Commission approvals setting the stage to allow a reduced number of senior citizen units at the restored Rispin Mansion site here has been appealed to the City Council by both sides.

The newly-formed citizens group Friends of the Rispin Estate has appealed both the commission's decisions regarding approval of the Environmental Impact Report and the Local Coastal Plan.

Applicant Howard Dysle — who is a planning commissioner but did not participate in discussion of the plans or voting — has appealed the five to 10 units per acre limitations placed by the commission. He maintained it would destroy the economic viability of his project.

Such a density would cut the proposed senior citizens facility nearly in half, from about 100 units to a maximum of 65. Dysle was requesting 15 to 20 units per acre on the 7½-acre site.

The appeal to the City Council is tentatively set to be heard on April 28.

At stake, according to the Friends' group, is the chance to restore the Wharf Road site into a cultural center similar to the Nelson Center.

Friends' spokesman Barry Staley told The Sentinel this morning he was surprised the commission gave their preliminary approvals so quickly. He is confident, however, the council "will see it our way."

Staley maintained the commission should not have validated the EIR when several issues were not adequately addressed.

"The EIR stated that more study was

needed on the Monarch butterfly, soils and geology and sound analysis issues," he said. "Yet, the commissioners accepted it."

While Staley contended the approach violated the California Environmental Quality Act guidelines that control how EIRs are prepared, the commission took the view the EIR had fulfilled its role of simply identifying hazards and alerting the need for mitigation.

Meanwhile, "funding possibilities" by the Friends' for the alternate cultural center use is

"looking real good," said Staley. His group has a list of 75 potential sources of money that the

city or a private group could tap to buy the Rispin property from the present owner.

Dysle currently has an option to buy the property for \$950,000. He reiterated that his project also calls for the restoration of the mansion back to its 1930 condition.

As proposed originally, the senior units would be built on either side of the restored mansion, which would be used as the hub of the facility. He recently postponed the decision, however, to build the 13-unit nursing home-like facility on the south side of the mansion near a grove of eucalyptus trees populated by Monarchs.