

10/29/82
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Coastal board approves Porter-Sesnon rezoning

SAN PEDRO — A decision by the county Board of Supervisors to rezone the Porter-Sesnon site in Aptos to a park and recreation zone was given the final stamp approval by the state Coastal Commission here Wednesday.

Commissioners also discussed proposed changes to the land use plan of the county's Local Coastal Program concerning a salamander habitat, the PG&E property in Live Oak and timberland. They delayed any decision on these items until December, however.

The 66-acre Porter-Sesnon site, which stretches from the coast to Highway 1, is being eyed by developers for the Wingspread performing arts/convention center complex. The state also is attempting to acquire the site from the developers for an addition to New Brighton State Beach.

The rezoning of this site was part of the implementation segment of the land use plan that was approved by commissioners 11-0.

Until now, the Porter-Sesnon site was zoned for a recreational use which allowed a minimum of 20 acres per residential unit.

The rezoning brings the property into line with a policy in the land use plan which states the preferred use for the site would be as either an addition to New

Brighton State Beach or as a regional park.

The policy further states an alternate use could be a privately-developed, public recreation and visitor accommodations/conference facility with between 115-130 motel-type units.

Hare, Brewer & Kelley, the development firm proposing the Wingspread complex, hope to build 630 residences and motel rooms, shops and restaurants, three small theaters, an amphitheater, a 35,000-square-foot performing arts center, a conference center, cabana building and six tennis courts.

The developers would need to get the land use plan of the county's Local Coastal Plan amended considerably to allow such a project.

Developer Ryland Kelley said today his firm plans to request such amendments after the environmental impact report for the project has been certified.

It's the recently-released draft environmental impact report which details where the Wingspread project is out of sync with the land use plan.

The developers also plan to try to get a land use plan definition changed which now limits all visitor accommodation units to 600 square feet each. This definition, approved by county supervisors, was certified by the state commission recently.

The developers contend such a limit would make it economically impossible to build Wingspread.

Commissioners Wednesday also discussed the controversy over the supervisors' approval of an amendment to the land use plan which would allow development in the salamander habitat in Aptos.

They put off any decision on this matter until the December meeting so the Coastal Commission staff can look into ways nine undeveloped parcels in the

habitat could be purchased to protect them from development.

Also in December, commissioners will take up the supervisors' rezoning of the PG&E site on 7th Avenue to a commercial zone, a rezoning that goes against the land use plan.

They also will consider whether the county should be required to issue coastal permits for timber operations on parcels of three acres or less in the Coastal Zone.

The meeting will be held Dec. 1-3 at the State Building, 350 McAllister St., in San Francisco.