

Action irks Rio residents

Members of the Rio del Mar Improvement Association's board of directors were indignant Monday afternoon after the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors apparently ignored public testimony in adopting very restrictive land use designations that will be applied to two Aptos area parcels under the county's Local Coastal Plan.

The improvement association directors were extremely voluble during their monthly meeting in their criticism of the county supervisors for the restrictions placed on development of the Porter-Seson property by Hare, Brewer and Kelley into a conference center-performing arts facility, and requiring a sizeable chunk of the Dennis property on Rio del Mar Blvd. to be turned over to the county for a park as a condition to further development there.

"The part that shakes me up," said Al Collins, "is that as a matter of credibility, as anyone every read or heard testimony supporting these moves?"

"I can't understand how the local supervisors can go 180 degrees against their constituency," Collins added.

Others suggested that the public hearings held by the supervisors on the Local Coastal Plan were a farce.

"Are the sunshine (public hearing) laws being flouted," wondered director Frank O'Connell, who briefly suggested the idea of a court suit. "Even if you lose, it might make people aware that the sunshine laws are being openly flouted."

"It makes no difference

whether you listen or not," added Mel Fields, referring to the supervisors' conduct during the hearings, "the public hearing process was held.

"The relationship is strictly adversary," O'Connell added, referring again to the county supervisors and their attitude towards the public that have testified at the LCP public hearings. "They have had all the public input they would need for a representative decision but that is contrary to their viewpoint."

The association directors were not clear Monday afternoon on what action the supervisors had taken on requiring developers of the Dennis property to donate a park site to the county. Some believed the county was demanding four acres of the most developable land and others thought the county was asking for the least developable land.

The association directors indicated Monday that the county should be eyeing the least developable land on the property for the park — the heavily wooded slope separating the Dennis property from the Deer Park shopping center.

"It could be the most unusual park in the county," Collins added. "That is where the view is."

But others believed Monday that the supervisors had demanded a chunk of the most developable, flat part of the property for the public park.

Aptos Seascope general manager Dean Wise said he thought the board approved the "least developable" language in the final resolution, and said the final vote was for a four

acre park site, and up to 53 units of some type of residences with 25 percent available as "affordable housing."

"The present low density designation does not support that use," Wise said, "and I suspect that the Coastal Commission will rezone it to medium density."

"The (apple) orchard will remain agriculture."

The supervisors, Wise said, included a surprise for Rio del Mar landowners Carlyle and Delores Miller. The Seascope general manager said the supervisors designated 600 feet of beach front property owned by the Millers at the south end of Beach Drive as permanent open space.

"That might surprise (the Millers) since it has never been a subject of public discussion before," Wise added.

Wise said he still doesn't know what the supervisors will do with the Seascope property inside the Coastal Zone.

"Gary (Patton) is now looking at half of an 18-acre benchland parcel (Parcel D) as park and half as affordable housing," Wise said Monday afternoon. "That should make the residents there very happy."

"(Joe) Cucchiara wants it all in public park."

"I have no idea what is going to happen and I'm left with my feet planted firmly in the air," Wise added.

In other action, the directors were given copies of a proposed letter from the Association to the Pajaro Valley Unified School District's desegregation plan.

Drafted by Association vice president Ray Garcia, who chaired a districtwide citizens committee on desegregation, the letter asks the school district trustees to consider "whether a desegregation plan is now necessary for this district."

"In our opinion, the overwhelming voter support for Prop. 1, coupled with the recent actions of the State Supreme Court to declare the proposition constitutional and its subsequent refusal to hear appeals on the subject negates any prior State Department of Education regulations expanding the requirements of the Civil Rights Act of 1964."

(Prop. 1 last year outlawed forced school busing in California as a remedy to de facto segregation.)

The Council is suggesting four separate actions for the school trustees to follow:

- The current desegregation plan presented to the State Department of Education be withdrawn by the district.

- A voluntary-participation desegregation plan be drawn up by the district and presented to the state.

- Positive programs to improve the quality of education district wide be developed and implemented on an accelerated time table.

- Reverse the decision to close Linscott elementary school.

"To take actions contrary to the above recommendations would perpetuate a fraud on the voters of this district and state who so strongly supported Prop. 1," Garcia added.