REMODEL

Commission endorses La Bahia hotel plan

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SANTA CRUZ » The Santa Cruz Planning Commission voted 5-0 on Thursday to est of three put before city and sales tax revenue, exrecommend the City Council approve a transformation of the La Bahia Apartments into a 165-room fullservice hotel, a plan that structure but was not finan- main environmental imrestores part of the Span- cially sound, and the state pacts. ish Colonial Revival struc-Street fixture for 88 years.

On behalf of property owner Santa Cruz Sea- tall in some parts. side Co., French Resources 200,000-square-foot high-stories, without the perand many residents have proval can be appealed to sought for years to elon- the Coastal Commission. gate the tourist season and boost beach-area revital- process, the city also must lak of Santa Cruz said a fed- two previous La Bahia proization.

Cliff. Drive resident who tifies the loss of historic re- advantage of rather than erty. walks by La Bahia fre- sources and an increase in seeking demolition.

quently, said, "The area is area traffic. While the deprone to an excess level of veloper will be required unsavory activity, and any to document and salvage improvement in this area historic elements and pay would be an improvement traffic fees to improve key to the community overall." intersections, city plan-

leaders in the past decade. panded visitor-serving ac-Developers abandoned a commodations and new plan OK'd in 2003 that jobs are public benefits saved more of the original also mitigate those two Coastal Commission denied

Group proposes saving La Francisco firm of Leddy union contractors, an issue Bahia's ornamental bell Maytum Stacy, the newest that caused political probtower and the southeast- proposal requires a planned lems for the 2011 plans. The ern portion of the run- development permit to ac- hotel will be constructed down structure. The re- commodate a height of to the city's green-building mainder of the 1926 struc- 43 feet in a few portions, standards and may seek nature would be demolished whereas zoning calls for a tional green-building certi-room conference hotel. to make way for the nearly maximum 36 feet, or three fication, French said. end conference hotel with mit. Historic demolition, concerns about preservaa restaurant and spa, the design and coastal permits likes of which city leaders also are required; final ap-

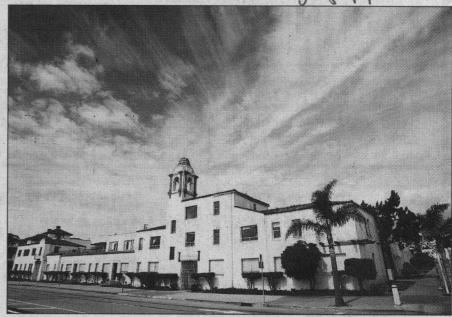
certify a final environmen- eral tax credit for historic

The proposal is the larg- ners said increased hotel

Developer Craig French ture that has been a Beach a proposal in 2011 that re- said the building would quired a zoning variance to bring an estimated \$1.4 milstand more than five stories lion annually in new hotel lodging taxes and construc-Designed by the San tion bidding will be open to

Some speakers raised tion, traffic, parking and the public trade-offs.

If the building was placed on the National Register of As part of the approval Historic Places, Joe Micha-



DAN COYRO -SENTINEL FILE

A developer has proposed remaking the historic 1926 La Bahia Apartments into a 165-

not taking the building to said, noting that after she the dump."

Commissioner Mari Tustin, who served on the panel for the beach plan and the posals, said the time has

velopment," he said. "It is would have been made," she nity." ago, she was willing to "pull up the ladder" and oppose change. "But that can't happen anymore."

Commissioner Mark Pri-Khristina Horn, a West tal impact report that iden- renovation could be taken come to develop the prop- mack, whose work can be the Historic Preservation seen throughout Santa Commission Aug. 13 and "If anything could have Cruz, called the new La Ba-the City Council Sept. 9.

"This is sustainable de- been made to fit the site, it hia "a gift to the commu-

Commissioner Christian moved to Santa Cruz years Nielsen recused himself Thursday because his firm has worked for Seaside Co., and Commissioner Peter Spellman was absent.

The plan heads next to