

Hard News

✓ Supes Shoot Down Plan C

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2-13-86

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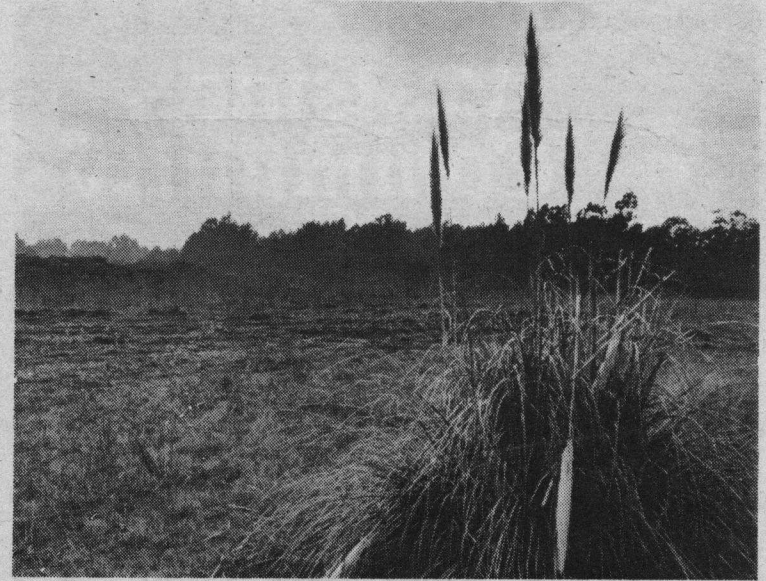
The Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors this week inched closer to a final decision on the long-running Wingspread controversy. After hearing lengthy public testimony at a special Aptos High School meeting, the Supes vetoed developer Ryland Kelley's Plan C and promised to vote on his remaining Plan B March 11.

Kelley wants to build a 600-unit condominium development and conference center on 66 acres of beachfront property near Aptos and

for years has been trying to come up with a plan acceptable to the county. In an effort to increase his chances of getting the project accepted, Kelley added a major performing arts facility to the project — that development is known as Plan B. While Kelley has won some local residents to his side, there is still strong opposition to any development of the land — opposition led by the group Friends of Porter-Sesnon, the local Sierra Club, and the City of Capitola.

Complicating the whole issue was Plan C, a tentative agreement reached between Kelley and County Administrative Officer George Newell. Under Plan C, the county would purchase Kelley's 99-year lease on the property, then lease the land back to him for development. According to Newell, the plan could have netted the county \$27 million over the next 10 years and after 50 years the county would have taken ownership of the whole thing.

The Supes were openly skeptical



C YOU LATER. Ryland Kelley's curious Plan C for his even more curiouser Wingspread development was grounded by county Supervisors Tuesday night.

of the Newell proposal, especially because of Newell and Kelley's failure to reach any firm financial agreement on the leaseback plan. Supervisor Joe Cucchiara questioned Newell's projected income figures.

Board Chair Gary Patton closed public testimony on Plan C soon after 10:30pm Tuesday, although some project opponents still wanted to speak. Patton said it seemed clear that a majority of the Supes opposed Plan C. Supervisor Joe Cucchiara moved that the idea be dropped, and Patton and Supervisor E. Wayne Moore backed him up. Moore said he based his objection to the project on opposition to the project on opposition to county involvement in private

enterprise. Supervisor Robley Levy, widely believed to be the swing vote on Wingspread, made it clear that her failure to oppose Plan C was not an endorsement of it, but was based on a desire to complete all public testimony before making a decision.

Supervisors Patton and Cucchiara were ready to dump Wingspread entirely at Tuesday's meeting, but other Board members wanted more time and more information before taking a final vote. The Supes voted to continue discussion of Plan B at its regular 1:30pm session on Tuesday, March 11, with a final decision scheduled for a 7:30pm session that evening Aptos High.