

Appeal in Wingspread backup plan

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SANTA CRUZ — Seeking to keep his options open, Wingspread developer Ryland Kelley has appealed a recent Planning Commission denial of the smaller of two projects proposed for the 72-acre Porter-Sesnon property in Aptos.

Acknowledging that the smaller proposal is a "fall-back" plan for the Palo-Alto based developer, Kelley spokesman Tim Welch said this week that Kelley had decided to appeal the decision on Wingspread "Plan A" — in the face of tentative commission approval for his larger "Plan B" — because Kelley doesn't want to lose valuable time in the event Plan B is ultimately turned down by the Board of Supervisors.

"We want to retain the right we

believe we have to build that project (Plan A)," Welch said.

Plan A calls for construction of a 197-unit hotel-conference center on the Porter-Sesnon site, which Kelley leased from the University of California for 99 years in 1978 — for \$1.75 million.

Plan B calls for construction of a conference center, 295 condominium units, a three-hall performing arts complex, and several athletics fields. The condominiums would have locking interior doors and could be subdivided into 595 separate rental units.

The latter plan will eventually be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors. First, the Planning Commission, which approved the proposal "in concept" last week, must discuss and vote on specific legal findings to support its action. That discussion is to take place next

Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the commission's denial of Plan A has already been sent to the board, which is to consider the proposal Dec. 10.

One of the key grounds for Plan A's denial was a finding by the commission that the 197-unit proposal violated a county Local Coastal Plan (LCP) restriction limiting visitor accommodations on the Porter-Sesnon site to 130 units.

Ironically, the commission's recommendation for approval of Plan B calls for that restriction to be relaxed to make way for the larger development.

Kelley paid for the studies and county staff work needed to draft the LCP and related county General Plan changes required for approval of Plan B. But he declined to pay for similar work on Plan A, according to county officials.

Welch said Wednesday that no LCP changes were needed to accommodate the Plan A hotel-conference center.

"The LCP and the General Plan do permit a hotel of that (size) on 72 acres," said Welch, who noted that the 140-room Seacliff Inn had been approved for construction on a coastal zone parcel of less than two acres.

Welch said Plan B continues to be Kelley's "main thrust."

"We regard A as a fall-back system or a safety net," he said. "We want the ability to build A if B is turned down."

Welch said that currently, "on the basis of the Planning Commission vote ... things look positive" for Plan B.

But, he added, "Who can foresee the future?"