

# Wingspread debate

## Both sides agree to take part in Aptos forum

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Wingspread opponents and supporters both said yesterday that they would debate one another at a forum to be sponsored by the Aptos Neighbors Association next week.

"We'll be there," vowed Cherie Bobbe of the Committee Against Measure A, the group opposing Wingspread.

Marilyn Johnson, campaign director for Yes on A, said her group would be represented, too.

The debate can be expected to focus on what financial benefits the proposed hotel-conference center-performing arts complex would bring to the county. Opponents say there is no objective financial feasibility study. Supporters say the county will receive at least \$1 million a year in spending money from the hotel for the next 90 years or so, and that the performing arts complex will be supported with a \$500,000 annual donation from Hare, Brewer and Kelley, the developers.

The two sides will also argue over how much traffic will be generated by the 468-room hotel that developer Ryland Kelley hopes to turn into a health spa-conference center that may be modeled a bit along Esalen lines, according to Rowland Rebele, chairman of the steering committee for Yes on A.

Opponents are arguing that public access to the Porter Sesnon site just south of New Brighton State Beach will be reduced from 66 acres to a 6-foot beach-access path. Supporters say public access to the beach there will be guaranteed for the first time ever. Although the public uses the beach currently, much of it is privately owned, but will be dedicated to the county if Wingspread is approved, said Rebele.

Opponents claim the state parks system has \$4 million set aside to purchase the site.



Chip Scheuer

**Cherie Bobbe answers questions on behalf of anti-Wingspread group.**

Wingspread supporters say the parks system has no interest in the site.

Supporters also suggest that if Santa Cruz County does not accept Wingspread as proposed, it will be stuck with something tacky on Porter Sesnon — either a 197-room "lodge" or an RV park. Hare, Brewer and Kelley has plans "ready for submission," should Wingspread fail at the ballot box, says a Yes on A brochure.

"In these cases, of course,

no theaters or sports fields would be constructed and the county would lose vast revenues," the brochure continues.

Bobbe of the Committee Against Measure A, called these statements "an idle threat equivalent to a temper tantrum."

Opponents also argue that even if Santa Cruz County residents approve Wingspread with their votes, the project could still be drastically

altered by the state Coastal Commission, which has final say over its size and scope. For instance, the commission might veto the three performing arts halls that have sold so many supporters on the project. Such halls are not a priority coastal use, according to a Coastal Commission staff report prepared on the project in February.

The debate will be held at Mar Vista School on April 27. A specific time will be forthcoming.