

# Wingspread cut back to 197 rooms

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Developer Ryland Kelley is back at the drawing board, this time with a proposal to build a 197-unit hotel-conference center on the Porter-Sesnon property in Aptos.

Kelley was rebuffed by voters a year ago in his attempts to build a 468-unit project on the site, which would have included a three-theater performing arts center and community playing fields.

The scaled-down plan, which

has not been submitted to Santa Cruz County officials yet, eliminates 271 of the proposed units and does not include any of the performing arts or sports facilities.

"In pursuing Wingspread for over a decade, we always knew that we must have a minimum-development option should the project not be approved, as it indeed was not," Kelley said in an "open letter to Santa Cruz County residents."

"In our 468-unit plan, we had budgeted approximately \$15 mil-

lion for the many public improvements ... This budget almost exactly equals the value of the 271 rooms which have been dropped from the project as a result of the election defeat. Unfortunately, therefore, we do not have the means to provide the public benefits of the prior proposed project."

Kelley went on to say that "voters rejected Wingspread for its size. We are taking the scale back to that certified under the Local Coastal Plan, yet with all the environmental protections

built into the approvals for the larger plan."

Kelley's announcement follows a breakdown in negotiations with the state Department of Parks and Recreation to sell the 72-acre parcel as an addition to New Brighton Beach State Park.

Kelley purchased a 99-year lease on the 66-acre Porter-Sesnon parcel for \$1.8 million in 1978, and owns an adjacent six acres outright.

The hitch in negotiations arose when the two sides came up \$5 million apart in what each side

felt was fair value for the choice coastal property.

Kelley blamed the breakdown in negotiations on the state General Services Administration appraisers.

"We believe the citizens of Santa Cruz County want to know that we have dealt in good faith and complete openness and that the failure of the acquisition is not the result of any unreasonable action or attitude on our part," Kelley said.

Aptos-area Supervisor Robley Levy said this morning that she was "making no predictions on a land-use proposal that no one has seen yet," but felt the public feeling would be pretty much the same.

"The major losers are the people of California over the long run," Levy said, adding that the long-running battle had definitely not run its course.

Kelley said this morning he would not "make an evaluation" on what public sentiment might be toward the smaller project.

Asked how many units he would need to retain and still turn a profit on his investment, Kelley indicated the 197-unit proposal "ought to tell you something."

Kelley said it was "essentially" the same project. Even with the exclusion of the performing arts and sports facilities, he said, there would be "enormous public benefits" derived from the resulting transient occupancy taxes collected by the county.

Supervisor Gary Patton said he was disappointed negotiations between the state and Kelley broke down.

"I'm not sure why the negotiations broke down, although Mr. Kelley can be a very difficult person to negotiate with, as anyone who has dealt with him in the county can tell you," Patton said.

Patton said he felt Kelley would be in for another difficult task in gaining public support and county approval, despite his belief that he has a "right" to build there.

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