



Drawing courtesy of Leddy Maytum Stacy Architects

An artist's drawing shows what a redesigned La Bahia Hotel would look like.

Renovation viewed for historic La Bahia Hotel

By TARMO HANNULA
OF THE REGISTER-PAJARONIAN

SANTA CRUZ — La Bahia Hotel, a 1926 historic landmark in the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk area, is under review by planners with the idea of making the rundown building a 165-room hotel.

On Wednesday the Santa Cruz Historic Preservation Commission explored the plans for the oceanfront property to determine if they go forward with a recommendation to city leaders.

French Resources Group, who drew the plans, aims to restore the landmark, calling for the demolition of much of the structure. Those plans call for preserving eight of the existing rooms as guest rooms. The

ornate bell tower would also be repaired and preserved.

City officials, historians, developers and the community have long wrangled over the idea of what to do with the Spanish Colonial Revival building that is in various stages of disrepair. One plan after another have crumbled once it became evident that the historical lines and character of La Bahia were largely tossed aside in favor of big development.

Historian Carolyn Swift said she was not happy with how the overall plans would largely destroy the historical aspect of La Bahia.

Officials once reviewed the idea of building a large convention center at the spot. The

current plans are by Leddy Maytum Stacy Architects of San Francisco. A review on their web page reads: "The Seaside Company plans to transform La Bahia into a new 165-room four-star hotel for the Santa Cruz waterfront by engaging the history of the site and creating a new authentic hospitality experience for visitors and the Santa Cruz community. The design approach will be to respect the history of the site, incorporating the historic tower and elements of the landmark building, and to create a new hotel that is a contemporary reinterpretation of the Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival style of the historic La Bahia."

Santa Cruz City Council will visit the topic Sept. 9.