

# Kelley ready to submit plans for new project

By KATHARINE BALL  
STAFF WRITER

Wingspread developer Ryland Kelley, describing himself as "completely stunned" by the project's defeat at the polls Tuesday, said today he plans to submit new development plans for the Porter Sesnon property within a month.

The Palo Alto developer said he will probably apply for permits to build a 197-room hotel with conference center, although he is still analyzing the benefits of establishing a recreational vehicle campground on the 66-acre site near New Brighton State Beach.

"From the standpoint of economics, the two uses are very close, but the hotel seems to

have preference in terms of investment, and benefits to the county," Kelley said, noting that the county would receive income from room taxes but not from an RV park.

Kelley maintained such a hotel is "already approved in effect, because that's the zoning on the property."

The county's Local Coastal Plan says that at Porter Sesnon, a hotel or campground of 115 to 131 units may be built. Kelley said his hotel could have 197 units under a county ordinance that allows a hotel builder to have more rooms if individual room size is below certain dimensions. That couldn't be verified with the Planning Department this morning.

Kelley said the Local Coastal Plan would also allow a conference center and restaurants and shops associated with the hotel. In effect, he was describing Wingspread with a smaller hotel and without the performing arts halls and the playing fields he had promised had he been allowed to build his 468-room hotel.

Kelley owns a 99-year lease on the Porter Sesnon property, which actually belongs to the University of California.

Kelley said he thought Wingspread had been defeated so decisively because a large number of county residents never understood that Porter Sesnon was already zoned for a visitor-accommodation business of some sort.

Kelley said of the defeat, "I'm completely stunned myself, because every reading indicated at worst a very close race."

He said, "Either the campaign arguments of the opposition dramatically frightened voters or our original projections were wrong, or we failed to communicate effectively."

The rejection of the three performing arts halls "will crush the cultural spirit of the county," he predicted.

"Santa Cruz could have become a cultural magnet," Kelley said.

Some opponents of Wingspread said they thought Kelley's \$340,000 campaign budget might have offended

county voters. Anti-Wingspreaders said donations began pouring into their campaign after Kelley's campaign expenditures were made public May 21.

Kelley defended his tactics, however, saying he had a countywide race to run. "Well, nobody knew our story. We had to get it out," Kelley said. "We had such a communication job on our hands. There was shocking misinformation about the project. We were running around putting out lie-fires during the whole campaign."

He was also critical of news coverage of the campaign.

"Reporters were covering a tennis match. The editors

should have said, we should do our own analysis of the contract (between Kelley and the county), and call on third-party experts.

"When you get into the he says-she says thing, it always ends up with the negative side winning," Kelley said.

He also said that in retrospect, he perhaps should have done more campaigning himself. "We tried to remove me from the issue. There was an outpouring of damaging statements and lies about me and my firm. (Advisers) told me, you can't get into that sort of skunk match. I became the faceless developer, and I think that hurt."

REFERENCE

WATSONVILLE  
Register-PAJARONIAN  
June 9, 1988