

UC SANTA BARBARA

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Coastal Commission Votes Approval for UC Santa Barbara Housing Projects

The California Coastal Commission today unanimously approved a proposal by UC Santa Barbara to build affordable work-force housing for its faculty members on a 26-acre parcel of land owned by the university and known as its North Campus.

The Coastal Commission, meeting in Huntington Beach, also unanimously voted its approval of UCSB's planned Sierra Madre family housing project on a separate 15-acre parcel located off Storke Road in Goleta.

The two projects are related to an overarching plan developed by the university in concert with Santa Barbara County and the City of Goleta to dedicate an expanse of land on the coast for open space with enhanced public access and recreational opportunities. The Ellwood Devereux Open Space Plan, first announced in 2001, provides for more than 650 acres on a 2.25-mile stretch of coastline to be preserved and made available for public use. Under the plan, the university shifted some sites for proposed UCSB housing away from the coast and bluffs to the North Campus tract.

Providing access to affordable housing for its faculty, staff, and students is a priority for UCSB. The high cost of housing in the Santa Barbara area has made it increasingly challenging for the university to recruit and retain top-notch faculty and

staff members.

"We have worked diligently over a great many months to reach agreement with the Coastal Commission staff on our planned housing, and we are extremely pleased and grateful that the Commissioners have today granted their approval for these projects," said UCSB Chancellor Henry T. Yang, who headed a group of campus officials and faculty who made presentations to the commission.

"While housing for members of our campus community is a UC Santa Barbara priority, we also recognize that access to coastal natural resources is a major priority for all who live in our beautiful region," added Yang. "The proposal to preserve coastal land, which we were partners in developing, offers tremendous potential benefit to the region's population, while helping our campus meet its housing goals. Preserving this magnificent stretch of coast will be a legacy that we all can be proud of."

Donna Carpenter, UCSB's vice chancellor for administrative services, said that over the past four years the university had consulted and worked closely with environmental advocates, city and county officials, the campus's neighbors, and other constituents as the housing proposals evolved to address important issues and concerns.

"The faculty housing project on the North Campus began as a plan for a total of 236 units, and today what has been approved is a plan for 172 units," Carpenter explained. "This fact alone illustrates how we modified our plans to address environmental issues as well as concerns raised by neighbors in the community. We feel strongly that this is a very good housing plan."

Construction is expected to begin in late 2007.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the

edge of the Pacific Ocean.