

## Fix-up of final 17 historic Crystal Cove cottages OK'd by Coastal Commission



The Coastal Commission approved a plan Wednesday to refurbish the final 17 cottages in Crystal Cove State Park. (Mark Boster / Los Angeles Times)

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The remaining 17 cottages in need of restoration at Crystal Cove State Park will get that care after the [California Coastal Commission](#) on Wednesday unanimously approved the work. Commissioners at their meeting in Ventura granted a coastal development permit to the California Department of Parks and Recreation, which owns the coastal enclave between Laguna Beach and Newport Beach, and the nonprofit [Crystal Cove Alliance](#), to renovate the final group of 46 cottages that date to the 1930s and '40s and are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The vote marks a major step forward for the cottages, which faced demolition at one point when a developer proposed a luxury resort on the land. But plans never materialized amid a wave of opposition led by Laura Davick, whose family has had ties to Crystal Cove since 1937.

"It's a huge milestone for our organization and Crystal Cove State Park to finally move this project to the next stage," Davick, who founded the alliance and is its current vice president, said in a phone interview after the vote.

Decades ago, the cluster of vintage cottages were favorites of people who loved the bohemian feel of the beach colony. But the property was sold, and the tenants were told to leave.

After the development scare, the cottages sat empty and in disrepair. Finally renovation began, and the first 22 restored cottages opened to the public in 2006.

The latest restoration will involve partial dismantling of the structures, with every effort being made to reuse the original materials, according to a Coastal Commission staff report.

The project includes construction of a 650-foot-long boardwalk on caissons and a 20-by-120-foot wall to protect two of the cottages from potential erosion, as well as the addition of eight spaces to a bluff-top parking lot, according to the staff report. Proposed rental rates range from \$35 per night in a dorm-room bed to \$245 per night for a cottage that can hold six or more people, the staff report said.

One of the cottages would have at least 11 beds and be available for up to 36 nights per year for students from low-income families as part of an education program.

Students and park visitors will learn about our dynamic and changing coastline because of the effects of climate change and experiment with innovative solutions, according to an alliance news release.

"This is an exciting project," Coastal Commission member Gregory Cox said. "It's going to be one of the crown jewels of the state park system."

The cost for restoring the 17 cottages and infrastructure, which includes undergrounding utility lines and building retaining walls, is estimated at \$30 million, Davick said.

The state and alliance will work through this year to finalize cost estimates for construction, according to the news release. Restoration could begin as soon as 2018.