

Coastal Commission Considers Crystal Cove Cottages

Posted On 03 Mar 2017

By : Sara Hall



Some of the Crystal Cove cottages to be restored on North Beach. The Crystal Cove Alliance is seeking a permit for the restoration, among other work at the park, which will be heard by the California Coastal Commission on Wednesday. — Photo courtesy Crystal Cove Alliance ©

The California Coastal Commission will consider a permit application next week from California Department of State Parks and Recreation and Crystal Cove State Park to renovate several of the historic cottages and other work around the park.

The CCC will discuss and vote on the permit on Wednesday in Ventura, but the meeting is typically streaming live online. The application aims to: Renovate 17 historic cottages on North Beach of Crystal Cove Historic District and convert for overnight visitor serving uses; construct utility lines, beachfront boardwalk and service pathway upon caissons, soil debris wall at toe of the bluff, and caisson and grade beam system for slope stabilization of North Beach Road; reconfigure bluff top check-in parking lot and install new landscaping; construct low-cost overnight accommodations; and implement overnight educational program using mitigation funds. Coastal Commission staff is recommending approval with conditions.

Each cottage renovation generally includes: Construct new caisson and grade beam foundation, complete interior restoration with structural integrity measures, reconstruct exterior stairways, restore architectural features, install new roofing and replace



Some of the Crystal Cove cottages to be restored on North Beach.
— Photo courtesy California Coastal Commission ©

façade materials where necessary, reconstruct retaining walls immediately behind each cottage and install new utility extensions to each cottage.

Crystal Cove officials are also asking to construct a 650-foot long, 4-foot wide beachfront boardwalk upon caissons and adjacent 8-foot wide service pathway, among other work. Project includes a proposal to construct one low cost hostel cottage and conduct an educational overnight program, which will be funded with previously acquired mitigation fees for lower cost visitor serving overnight accommodations.

Coastal staff raised a few concerns in the staff report and pointed out a few times the project is not consistent or conflicts with the Coastal Act.

“This application raises questions about whether or not the proposed development will create the need for additional shoreline armoring and/or bluff protection, or become increasingly reliant on the proposed caisson foundations, either now or in the future,” CCC staff explained.

On the other hand, “Denial of the project would interfere with the Commission’s mandate to maximize access, protect special communities and provide lower cost public recreational facilities,” staff noted.

The special conditions ensure that, among many other things, that the development, occupants, and marine resources are safe during storms events, that the overnight accommodations are offered to the general public at affordable and lower cost rates, and any impact to the local vegetation is mitigated.

For more information, visit coastal.ca.gov or crystalcovealliance.org.