



The Dream Inn's new owners plan only a few decorating touches

Big Plans Dropped After Dream Inn Sold

IT'S BEEN ALMOST two weeks since the Dream Inn was purchased by Southern California conglomerate Hotel Systems International, but few questions about what the purchase means to beach-area redevelopment have been answered.

Repeating what he told reporters at the close of escrow, project manager Lee Jenks said his company, which owns eight major hotels around the nation, does not plan any major expansion in the near future.

"We are not developers, so we're not going in there with the idea of development," said Jenks. "Our number one priority is to make some changes in the quality of the Dream Inn, to improve it and make it a first-class facility in Santa Cruz."

Jenks said plans, which are in their infancy, will include sprucing up the exterior, interior and grounds of the Dream Inn and the smaller Seaway Motel next door. No extra rooms or conference center are in the works, however.

After discussing the project with Hotel Systems International, city officials agree that nothing major seems to be in the works except for a few decorating touches.

"I think they bought the hotel 'as is,'" said city manager Dick Wilson after talking to the new owners. "Clearly, they have not made any commitment to expand. They indicated they weren't familiar with the expansion plans" of the former owner, which called for adding 240 rooms across the street.

"I didn't get the drift that they plan to move ahead and press on," said city planning director Peter Katzberger. "The only thing we know is that all the rumors about ownerships changing have been concluded."

One group of people who should not be affected by the change in ownership are the residents of Clearview Court, the mobile-home park across the street from the Dream Inn that was to be relocated as part of the planned expansion.

Katzberger assured Clearview Court residents that they would be protected by the city from any immediate forced relocation, and that the relocation "might now be more in the distant future than the immediate future."

The change in ownership is also not expected to affect a beach-area traffic study that was to be paid for by the Dream Inn's former owners, Senior Corp. Katzberger said that Senior Corp. had already put up the money, and the traffic study is not in jeopardy.

City council members also appear to be mostly in the dark about the implications of the change in ownership. Councilmember Mardi Wormhoudt said she was "a little disappointed" with the news because it probably means a delay before the beach area receives a new convention center.

"New awnings on the front of the building are nice," Wormhoudt said. "That's a start, but it's not quite what a lot of people had in mind" in terms of major expansion of the Dream Inn. •

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