

Carl Swenson Co. to build Deer Park

By Linda Koch

Carl N. Swenson Co. Inc. of San Jose will develop and build Deer Park Community Center.

The Voice learned this week the transaction was completed last week between Robert Marani, president of Community Research Institute, and representatives of Swenson Co.

According to a spokesman for Swenson Co., the development firm will develop and build Deer Park as originally created by Marani and the architectural firm of Ellmore and Titus.

Plans call for development of nine acres of Deer Park, or 80,000 square feet including a 20,000 square foot food market, a 5,000 square foot pharmacy, a liquor store, savings and loan branch, bank branch and a variety of speciality shops.

Swenson was responsible for the construction of Dominican Hospital, the medical complex adjacent to Dominican and the San Lorenzo Redevelopment Project in Santa Cruz.

According to urban planner Jerry Tucker, who has been with the project from the beginning, "I have worked with Swenson before. They are a reputable firm, good developers and will do a decent job. I am satisfied with the agreement. The key to

the whole deal is that Jim Ellmore is retained as the architect."

Ellmore, according to the Swenson spokesman, will be retained to carry out the design as presented to and accepted by the people of Rio del Mar.

One source said Marani was expected to announce the agreement to the directors of the Rio del Mar Improvement Association at their regular meeting Monday night.

The development has had a shaky history dating back to Sutter Hill, the first to try to develop the acreage into a shopping complex. The Rio del Mar community overwhelmingly turned thumbs down on the proposed shopping center by Sutter Hill.

It was not until Marani approached the Rio del Mar Improvement Association, asking for community input, that the people turned a favorable ear to the project.

After several hearings, rejections and appeals the Deer Park Center was finally approved in a 3-2 vote by supervisors sitting in an appeal hearing.

Rumors of financial problems have plagued the Deer Park plan and not until \$64,000 was posted in bond to guarantee the widening of Rio del Mar Blvd. did the people really believe the project was going ahead.