

Good Times

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A New Dream Inn?

Secret negotiations are underway to add a hotel annex

Homeless Hotline

A HOTLINE SERVICE for the homeless in Santa Cruz began taking calls last week.

The service, the work of a shelter task force made up of SC Mayor Bruce Van Allen, local church leaders and community organizations, maintains a number where callers can contact volunteers who might lead them to temporary housing.

The number of homeless here has jumped drastically over the last two years, due to the increase in unemployment and home foreclosures, according to Van Allen.

For help in finding a temporary shelter, or to donate time or money to the effort, call 429-ROOM. •

THE OWNERS of the Dream Inn, Senior Corporation of Miami, are planning a major addition that could double the size of the existing hotel, GOOD TIMES has learned. This follows news reported last month that local elected officials now favor the construction of a major hotel and convention center.

The Senior Corporation has been secretly negotiating with city officials for construction of a new building located along West Cliff Drive, across from the existing 163-room hotel. The details of the proposed additions have been kept under wraps for fears that a planned expansion could cause an uproar with local residents.

A source close to the negotiations told GOOD TIMES Tuesday the new structure will not be a high rise, but a "carefully

planned" building which may go up a few stories but will remain lower than the existing 10-story tower.

Negotiations with Senior Corporation, which took over the Dream Inn two years ago, have been going on every few weeks, the source said, but that the silence was due to concerns by the corporation and city officials that plans might startle locals if they were not carefully revealed. Senior Corp. officials planned meetings Wednesday with City Manager Richard Wilson to discuss the proposals but withheld comment.

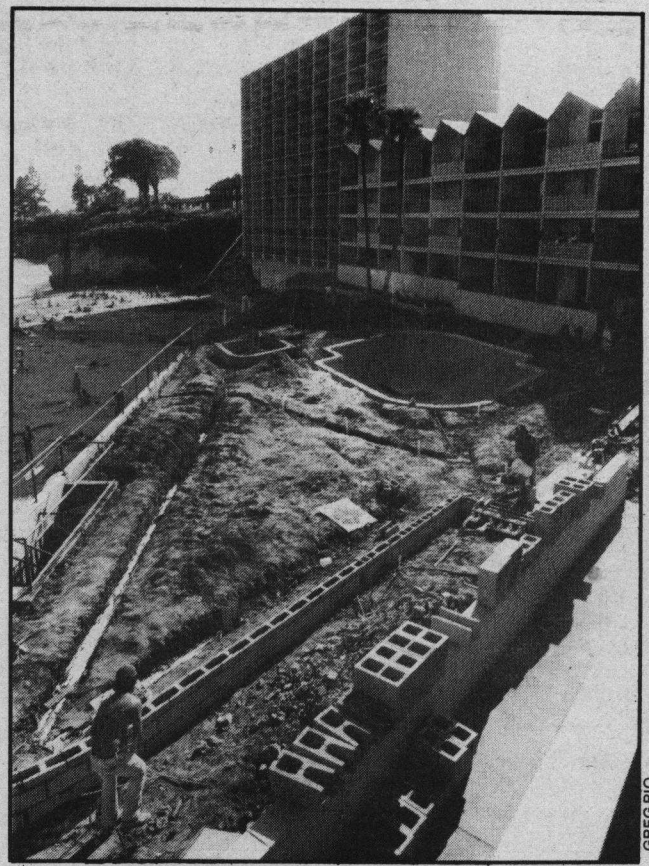
A consortium of Florida banks, Senior Corp. owns three other hotels but considers the Dream Inn the "flagship" of its holdings, according to Dream Inn General Manager Tom Knowlton. Knowlton declined comment on any future plans for the hotel, claiming he was kept uninformed by his Florida superiors. One source told GOOD TIMES the corporation may be sprucing up the Dream Inn to sell it to major hotel operators, but such plans were premature.

After touring the property during the past

two years, Senior Corp. executives admitted the existing facility was "run down and unacceptable," Knowlton said. "Looking at the numbers (of guests), they could see the hotel wasn't productive enough for the present location."

Since January, Senior Corp. has pumped \$2 million into renovating the hotel inside and out, and the project is nearing completion. "They decided to make it a first-class operation," said Knowlton. "This is going to be the jewel in their crown—their showcase."

Knowlton said of the repairs: "It's like they took
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Part of the Dream Inn's \$2 million renovation.

GREG PIO