

# Dream Inn Expansion

*Hotel owners will study options for a major addition to the 164-room resort*

THE OWNERS of the Dream Inn will announce their plans to greatly expand the hotel within the next two weeks. In an exclusive interview Wednesday, Allan O'Connor, architectural consultant for Senior Corporation of Miami, owners of the Dream Inn, revealed that he's been studying expansion scenarios for the past four months.

He said it was the recent improvements at the Municipal Wharf and a \$9 million facelift at the Boardwalk that sparked the current \$2 million renovation of the Dream Inn. This, coupled with recent moves by the city to create an atmosphere for progressive hotel development, encouraged Senior Corp. to study expansion.

"When we heard that the city was actively investigating a convention and conference facility, it tied up with Senior's own thoughts about the property," O'Connor said. "We want to find out what kind of project Santa Cruz can

support economically and politically. There's a lot of promise on the surface of it.

"An expansion is very sensitive politically and that's why we're not being aggressive about it," he said. "We want to meet with every available group because we're sensitive about community involvement. We'll be glad to be totally open as soon as we have some direction."

O'Connor said Senior Corp., which owns 10,000 hotel rooms nationwide, was encouraged by a recent city-financed study which revealed the need for a quality large hotel and convention center in Santa Cruz.

While the corporation has been quietly doing its own homework, city officials have told Senior to put its intentions in writing. That's why a formal announcement is forthcoming, O'Connor said.

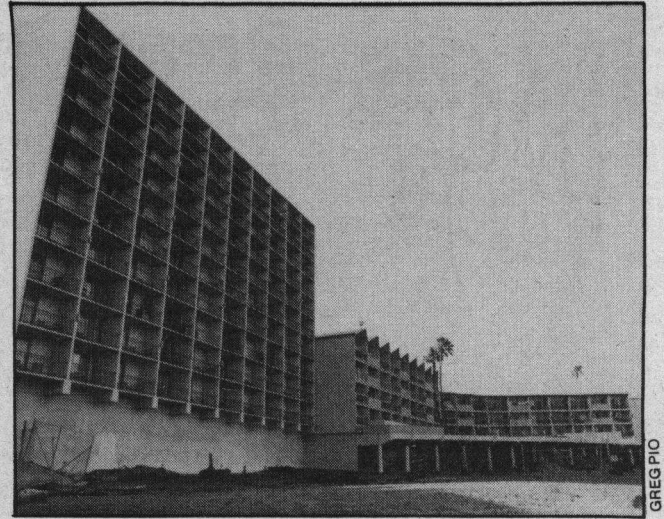
"It's no secret that the Dream Inn is not revered by the community and the (architectural) structure of the hotel is not highly prized by Senior either," O'Connor said. Senior Corp. took over the existing 20-year-old hotel two years ago. As a gesture of intent to turn the hotel into a showplace, O'Connor said he will recommend to Senior Corp. that the block-shaped elevator tower and its glowing green insignia be scrapped as soon as possible.

"Being an architect, I can't help but drive by and feel what much of the community must feel," he said. O'Connor dispelled rumors that Senior was dressing up the hotel to put it on the market. "They'd rather make it their prized holding," he said.

The corporation owns hotels in New York, Chicago and at various airports across the country. "I'm trying to convince them that Santa Cruz deserves the kind of quality

place you'd see in Hilton Head, South Carolina and elsewhere," said O'Connor. "My preliminary findings show that Santa Cruz can support hotel and conference facilities if they were built and promoted with tender-loving care."

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GREG PICO

## Group W Plan Assailed

*City and County politicians want a better deal or else*

A STUDY released last week critical of Group W's proposal for improved cable service has prompted SC councilman Mike Rotkin and county supervisor Gary Patton to suggest the city and county might have to look for other cable options.

"We'll be considering other companies or public ownership, if Group W doesn't come up with a better deal," Rotkin told GOOD TIMES.

The city and county commissioned report, written by media consultant William Marticorena of Costa Mesa, compared the Group W proposal here with seven of its recently obtained franchises in Southern California. Marticorena wrote that it appears Group W "is attempting to extract a far higher level of profit in the Santa Cruz system than it is attaining in (the other seven) communities."

In Southgate and Hawthorne, cities which Marticorena cites as having two of the best systems out of the seven, officials said bids from other companies were requested before Group W offered its final attractive proposals.

"We had an existing contract with Group W when I contacted a number of cable companies," Gary Babcock, an administrative officer in Southgate, told GOOD TIMES.

"The final bidding was competitive between Group W and California Cable. In the end we got a good rate structure—nine channels for \$1.95 per month and full service including 105 channels for \$6.95 per month and \$2.95

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## Wingspread Talks

*Kelley and state seem to be talking different terms*

NEGOTIATIONS to sell the proposed site of the planned Wingspread project continue between the state and the lessee Hare, Brewer and Kelley, a government official said this week.

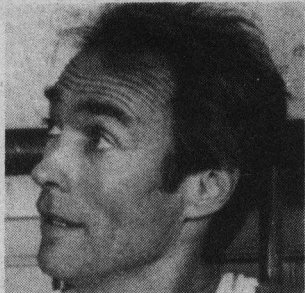
Developer Rye Kelley has said he is only interested in selling the state a portion (40 percent) of the Porter-Sesnon property, but Andy Zolnay, in charge of state land

purchases in Northern California, told GOOD TIMES, "We're only interested in acquiring all 67 acres, and he (Kelley) is still participating in the negotiations for that."

When told that the state was negotiating for only the entire property, Kelley said that he was not prepared to sell all the acreage across highway 1 from Cabrillo College.

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## ...to Shoot Santa Cruz



...movie might damage our reputation.

Hollywood in the last decade has found Santa Cruz quite a desirable spot for film making. In July a TV movie, *The Shadow Riders*, starring Tom Selleck, had several scenes shot here. Other films with local scenes have included *Tilt*, *East of Eden*, *The Entertainer*, *Harold and Maude*, and *The Sting II*.

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O'Connor is currently designing a range of options which include expansion on the property across

from the existing hotel. One option is construction on land which currently is occupied by a trailer park, but O'Connor pointed out

the land may not be needed.

"Depending on the hotel and city's needs, Senior may be able to expand and do their own thing nicely without impinging on others. We have absolutely no intention of arbitrarily reducing the affordable housing stock of Santa Cruz. We're considering a whole raft of options which include leaving the trailers there forever."

O'Connor said Senior might even help the city find financing to build a convention center, but added the corporation could not afford to construct one of its own. •

## Cable Plan Under Fire

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per additional outlet," said Babcock.

The rate structure offered to Santa Cruz sets the cost of a 27-channel system at \$9.35, and the full 60-channel service for \$11.95. Each additional outlet would cost \$10, and service to outlying areas such as Bonny Doon would run an extra \$4.

"The average monthly cost per channel in Santa

homes per mile. Santa Cruz, on the other hand, has an average of 80 to 90 homes per mile."

Other areas deficient in Group W's proposal include channel capacity, public access and local programming, and franchise fees to the city and county, according to the report.

Community reaction to the proposal has run strong. Local political