

# City rethinks Heiner House offer

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SANTA CRUZ — City Council members angered a representative of a local low-income housing corporation Tuesday when they decided to seek more proposals for moving the Heiner House.

"I consider this to be highly unfair," said Bruce Van Allen, a project planner at Community Housing Corp., after the vote.

"It's clearly politically motivated. Councilman (Louis) Rittenhouse wants to help one of his friends with a proposal that's two months late."

The council's decision came on the heels of a proposal submitted late last week by local architect

Michael O'Hearn to pay the city \$2,500 for the historic house, move it to 116 Myrtle St. and restore it to a turn-of-the-century duplex.

Before O'Hearn's proposal, CHC had submitted the only idea for the 114-year-old house — and in time for the Aug. 14 deadline established by the council in June.

The CHC's proposal, however, called for just a \$1 payment to the city.

The non-profit organization proposed moving the home to 419 Center St. and renovating it for use as a group home for low-income elderly or earthquake-displaced tenants.

Rittenhouse, a longtime opponent of CHC, said during the afternoon discussion that he wanted the

house restored as a historic duplex, rather than "chopped up in a bunch of rabbit hutches."

But Van Allen strongly disagreed with Rittenhouse's characterization of CHC's plan for the city-owned house.

"We're not cutting it up into rabbit hutches," he said. "It's going to be one large house with six rooms."

The city's Parks and Recreation Department administration had used the Heiner House as an office since 1974, but was displaced when the building was declared unfit after the Oct. 17, 1989, earthquake.

O'Hearn estimated he could buy, move and restore the house for \$140,000, and then rent it as a duplex.

CHC estimated it would cost about \$276,495 to move and renovate the house. Officials have applied for a loan from the California Disaster Assistance Program.

"Our budget is more realistic," he said, adding that he felt at a competitive disadvantage now because O'Hearn had seen all of CHC's figures and plans.

"We'd be happy to pay \$2,501, for that matter," said Van Allen. "We may choose to change our proposal."

New proposals for buying the Heiner House, now located at Church and Chestnut streets, and moving and renovating it may be submitted to the city through Dec. 1.