

Christ Circle Faces Injunction

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Santa Cruz county counsel will request an injunction Friday to force Christ Circle, the controversial religious-philosophical institution in the Santa Cruz Mountains, to comply with all conditions imposed by county building inspectors for a residence hall built without permits.

The hearing has been delayed several months to allow Christ Circle to comply with conditions issued by Judge John Hauk in a February ruling. Friday's hearing is set for 2:30 p.m. in Superior Court, said Assistant County Counsel Dwight Herr.

Herr said that if the conditions have not been complied with, the county will seek an order to have Christ Circle vacate the building in question. Herr noted, however, that in previous hearings, Hauk has refused to issue such an order.

Another hearing scheduled for Thursday evening could also have bearing on Friday's action, said Herr. Christ Circle is requesting that the Building Appeals Board turn down a County Planning Department classification of the residence hall as a D-3 occupancy.

Inspector Phil Sanfillipo said the building is currently classified as a home for children, a statement disputed by Christ Circle's attorney, James Coyle. "It's been classified as an institution," said Coyle. "Nursing homes are D-3 buildings, and all we're asking for is the same classification as Eddy Hall, another residence hall we have."

The hearing on Christ Circle's appeal is scheduled for Thursday at 7:30 p.m. in the planning department conference room in the county center.

Meanwhile, Christ Circle has apparently avoided losing its property on Kings Creek Road in Boulder Creek through a trustee's foreclosure sale. That sale, scheduled for 11:30 a.m. July 28 at First American Title Insurance Company's local office, has reportedly been postponed for six months.

Coyle and John Griffiths, attorney for the property's former owner, Fred Achelis, would only state that "tender" negotiations were proceeding.

According to published legal notices, Christ Circle owed \$406,456.56 as the remaining principal sum due on the note of purchase. Sources indicate that Achelis does not want the property back, and that Christ Circle will probably be able to get an extension in deadlines for payment.

When contacted at the "Circle Community", Christ Circle's founder and leader Arthur Hempel said his group had no intention of leaving the property. When asked if he would vacate the premises if the ownership passed to another party, Hempel replied, "No, we wouldn't vacate. We intend to remain as owners."