

Hospital Retracts Opposition

By **BILL NEUBAUER**
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Community Hospital of Santa Cruz this morning withdrew its opposition to Dominican Santa Cruz Hospital's proposed 87-bed expansion.

The withdrawal was announced to Administrative Law Judge Muriel Evens, who is presiding at a state hearing today at Santa Cruz City Hall on Dominican's application for a certificate of need for a \$14.7 million project.

Evens was told also that Community Hospital is terminating its party status in the hearing unless the proposed Dominican project is changed during the hearing.

Patricia Hildebrand, attorney for the state Division of Certificate of Need, sought to have Community Hospital totally eliminated from the hearing, arguing that by reserving the right to re-enter the hearing Community Hospital could put a cloud over the proceedings.

Evens said she is accepting Community's party status withdrawal, but under the condition given by Community.

Sister Josephine Sullivan, Dominican administrator, stated

this morning "We're very happy that Community Hospital of Santa Cruz has decided to withdraw its opposition to our project, and we look forward to working with it and the county in cooperatively planning for Santa Cruz' health care future."

In an agreement made public this morning Community said it can accept the 87-bed expansion project by Dominican and at the same time stated it anticipates that Dominican Hospital will welcome any construction at Community Hospital which seeks to rectify what it perceives as shortcomings at Community Hospital.

It is stated that Dominican Hospital has previously recognized that certain of Community Hospital's ancillary services are smaller than is customary for hospitals of its size.

Community administrator Anthony Daigle states in an agreement signed by Sister Josephine Sullivan and himself that Community's offer of settlement is expressly conditioned upon support from Dominican for Community's planned project to renovate its ancillary services, administrative areas, and intensive care unit.

Both hospitals agreed to begin constructive planning efforts for their mutual benefit and the benefit of the community.

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