

Councilman Rotkin says:

# High tech park another Lighthouse?

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SANTA CRUZ — The controversy around UCSC's proposed high tech park could escalate to another Lighthouse Field battle, Councilman Michael Rotkin warned Tuesday night.

"Unless the university is willing to subject itself to the local planning process so that the people of this community can control a major development that affects what happens there, there will not be an industrial park.

"If that means legal action on the part of the city and if that means people lying down in front of bulldozers, whatever it takes: that thing's not going to happen," Rotkin said.

His comments came as the council was considering whether it should include the 108 acres that will cradle the high tech park in the city's sphere of influence. Such spheres designate possible lands for annexation.

On a 4-2 vote, the council turned down the idea of including the acreage above Crown College. The vote to include the acreage was made by

Councilman Spiro Mellis and supported only by Joseph Ghio. The third leg of the minority vote, John Mahaney was absent.

Rotkin and Mayor Bruce Van Allen, along with Councilmembers Mardi Wormhoudt and John Laird, defeated the move to bring the university land into the sphere after being advised it's not an easy task to amend the city's sphere, approved only a few months ago.

Pat McCormick, executive director of the Local Agency Formation Commission which approves spheres and annexations, said the process would be difficult.

He reminded the council that the commission turned down Capitola's request for the pristine Porter-Sesnon lands that are adjacent to New Brighton State Beach Park.

Rotkin said he opposed Mellis' motion because to add the university acreage would be to further agree that the research park is inevitable.

He said the reason the city staff wanted it included was to collect future property taxes from the industrial development.

"When Lighthouse Field was ori-

ginally proposed for a convention center, I think the biggest danger the city ever faced around that proposal was the feeling that many people had that the thing was inevitable.

"An inertia set in. Fortunately, the city residents said, 'look, it's not inevitable, we're not going to put up with a convention center, a shopping center, we're going to defend it for not only the people of Santa Cruz, but for the State of California.'"

The battle over Lighthouse Field went on in the courts and before planning bodies. The issue was resolved at the ballot box when city voters said the city could not include its small land holdings at the point in such a venture as the convention center.

It was the final, winning round for the environmental movement in Santa Cruz.

The city is scheduled to vote on the high tech park Nov. 8. The measure directs the council to officially petition the university to come through local planning and asks the state legislature to withhold building funds, until the university complies.

U.C.S.C. 10/19/90