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Work on housing center continues

By Kristin Hargrove

THE EAST COUNTY CALIFORNIAN
EL CAJON — Work on the El Cajon Resource Center is under way again — or is it?

Officially, the attorneys for the parties involved in the controversial transitional housing facility will meet on Friday, Aug. 29 before Judge William Howatt to decide if an injunction should be issued for work to be stopped.

The injunction was requested by an attorney for the grassroots group, Citizens Concerned for El Cajon. Unofficially, however, reno-

vation work has already started at the Fabulous 7 motel, the property the resource center will occupy. The motel is located near East Main St. and Greenfield.

Both the Hamann Companies and Set Free Ministries have begun painting, landscaping, and general upkeep of the property.

Tony Phillips of Alpha Project, the organization that will operate the resource center, says these "cosmetic and aesthetic improvements" are standard routine maintenance in trying to bring the site up to

speed for when the legal issues are settled and in the event the project goes through.

But Everett DeLano, who represents the grassroots group, says the type of work being done at the motel is more than just housekeeping.

Witnesses have seen beds being moved out of rooms and bunk beds being brought in — something that shouldn't be going on, according to the dictates of the lawsuit.

With the improvements have come more transients, and the possibility that Alpha Project has already started bringing

people in to occupy the center, contends DeLano.

"There was no injunction to stop renovation that is already in progress," said Kevin Sullivan, attorney for Alpha Project. He was responding to a local daily newspaper's report that the Superior Court judge had issued an injunction to stop the renovation.

"That will be determined on Friday," Sullivan added.

However, DeLano and his clients are concerned that this latest round of delays is just another way the Hamann Companies, Alpha Project, and

the City of El Cajon are going to try and "sneak the project in," regardless of the legal outcome.

DeLano points to a copy of an e-mail sent to various city officials that outlines John Gibson's (head of Land Acquisitions at Hamann Companies) possible plans to sidestep the lawsuit, and circumvent any outcome that might impede his plans.

Larry Hall of Citizens Concerned for El Cajon and an active opponent of the project said, "The city's going to go ahead with it."