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Sunday, Oct. 14, 1984

Sequoia superintendent's report

East Palo Alto OKs price for school site

By Thomas G. Keane
Times Tribune staff

East Palo Alto has agreed to pay approximately \$1.8 million for the Ravenswood High School site and is currently trying to raise the money for the purchase, a Sequoia Union High School District spokesman said this week.

Merle Fruehling, superintendent of the district, the owner of the property, said school and city officials agreed on the \$1.8 million figure at a meeting in Au-

gust. At that time, he said, the district also agreed to shelve the lawsuit against the city until Nov. 1. He said the city hopes to present a plan for payment on Nov. 1.

East Palo Alto City Manager Fred Howell declined to comment on Fruehling's statement because the city does not talk publicly about issues under litigation.

Howell did say that the city asked the district to hold off on the lawsuit until Nov. 1 in order to continue "acquisition negotiations."

The city, he said, was "actively and aggressively" negotiating for the site. He added that he was "quite optimistic" that the matter would be resolved by Nov. 1.

Fruehling said the lawsuit would be active again if the city failed to come up with the money.

District and city officials have been wrangling over the sale of the site since it closed for educational use in 1976. The city has wanted the land for open space, while the district originally advocated selling

70 percent of the property to private developers. Hare, Brewer and Kelly of Palo Alto offered \$3.7 million for 22 acres of the 30-acre lot, but that bid assumed the land would be rezoned to allow office buildings.

The City Council voted to rezone the property to open space land in January. Shortly after, the school district filed suit claiming the move illegally devalued the property.

Decision