

Odds in favor of new CCSF campus

Judge likely to shoot down injunction against 14-story facility in Chinatown area

By Beth Winegarner
Examiner Staff Writer

A San Francisco Superior Court judge is expected to rule today against the latest legal challenge by a group of residents to a plan by the City College of San Francisco to build a new 14-story, \$122 million campus in Chinatown.

While past legal action against the college has focused on the 14-story height of one of the campus' two new buildings, the newer complaint argues that the proposed restoration of the historic Columbo Building — part of the new school site — was not adequately studied. A final decision in that piece of the legal fight is due this morning, CCSF attorney Alan Sparer said.

"Judge [Paul] Alvarado's tentative ruling was to deny the injunction," Sparer said. Alvarado is expected to deliver his final ruling this morning.

Plaintiffs with the Friends of the Columbo Building and Montgomery-Washington LLC who hope to halt the project filed a complaint in May and charged that the restoration plan's environmental review was faulty. Attorneys for the plaintiffs would not comment on the case.

The complaint is the latest in a long string of legal challenges to CCSF's plan to rebuild the Chinatown campus, now at 940 Filbert St., at the corner of Washington and Kearny streets.

Neighbors with the Montgomery-Washington Homeowners Association have bowed out of another suit challenging the building's height, but co-plaintiffs with the Neighbors for Preservation, Land Use and Community Education continue to pursue litigation, next scheduled in court Dec. 18, Sparer said.

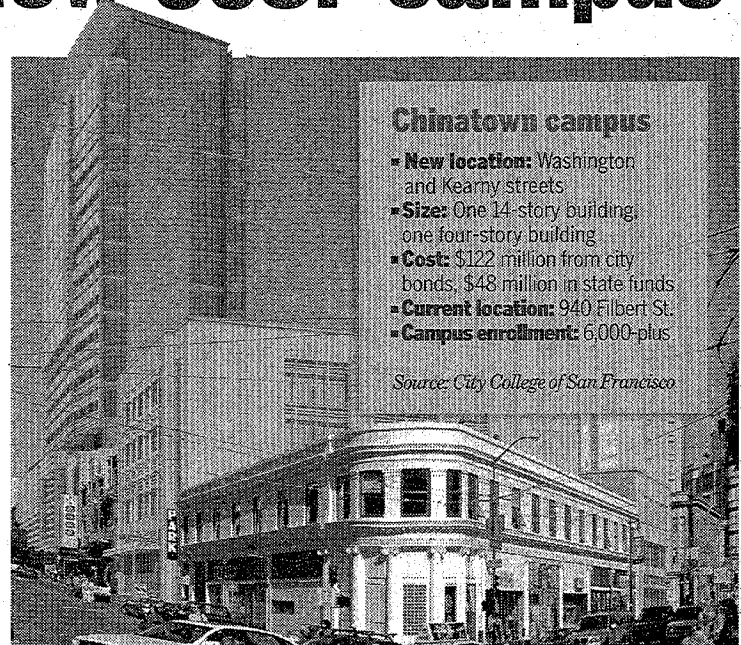
CCSF has offered classes in Chinatown and North Beach since the 1970s, housing more than 6,000 students in a series of scattered, leased buildings, but the college has never had a permanent home in The City's northeast sector.

The current facility, a former San Francisco Unified School District building, is "deteriorating quickly," according to a CCSF fact sheet.

The CCSF Board of Trustees approved final designs for the new campus July 10, and architects with EHDD/Barcelon + Jung are currently at work developing construction drawings, college officials said. No groundbreaking date has been set, said Peter Goldstein, vice chancellor of finance and administration.

"The community has waited more than 25 years for this campus," Goldstein said. "It's critically needed to provide education opportunities for people in that part of The City to improve their lives."

bwinegarner@s Examiner.com



Chinatown campus

- **New location:** Washington and Kearny streets
- **Size:** One 14-story building, one four-story building
- **Cost:** \$122 million from city bonds; \$48 million in state funds
- **Current location:** 940 Filbert St.
- **Campus enrollment:** 6,000-plus

Source: City College of San Francisco

Growing pains: The restoration of The City's historic Columbo Building has been a point of contention in legal action against CCSF's proposed campus in Chinatown.