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Restraining order halts work on park

Promontory residents file suit to keep the lights off athletic fields.

By Cathy Locke -- Bee Staff Writer
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A group opposing lighted ball fields at El Dorado Hills' Promontory Park has obtained a temporary restraining order against the El Dorado Hills Community Services District.

El Dorado Superior Court Judge Jerald M. Lasarow issued the order Friday. District General Manager Wayne Lowery said it prevents further work on the southern 8-acre section of the 18-acre park site at Sophia Parkway and Alexandra Way in the northwestern part of the community.

Bill Majernik, an attorney and Promontory resident, said the Citizens Organization for Responsible Development, which opposes lighted fields at the park, has filed suit challenging the environmental impact report for the project and arguing that the community services district has not followed provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act and the plan for the Promontory development.

The temporary restraining order is a precursor to a writ of mandate, which the group seeks to halt all work until the legal challenge is resolved. A hearing on the request for the writ is scheduled for April 18, Majernik said.

A settlement hearing will be in February, and he said the group is willing to drop the lawsuit if the district agrees to build the fields without lights.

"We want the park," he said. "We still hope they will put in the park without the lights, and we won't object. We just don't want 23 70-foot light poles."

If the legal process progresses, Majernik said, the group might ask that the district adhere to the initial plan that Promontory residents maintain called for a 10-acre neighborhood park and 4 acres of open space.

The lawsuit is not delaying the project, Lowery said. Grading has been completed on the affected acreage, and the district won't be ready to seek bids for construction for four months, he said.

If the court issues a decision by June, Lowery said, the construction time line will not be affected.

Majernik said the lawsuit also names El Dorado County, but the temporary restraining order applies only to the community services district because the county agreed not to issue permits for park development activities until the legal issues are resolved.

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