

Local News

Renovations to create housing, remodeled soup kitchen

By Lee Strong

Details are still being confirmed, but the conversion of the above-ground floors of Ss. Peter and Paul School into apartments is all but assured. A \$600,000 renovation project will create 12 low- and middle-income dwellings and is expected to begin next spring.

According to several sources, the project will be funded by a grant from the New York State Homeless Housing and Assistance Program. The grant award and its exact amount are expected to be announced in late November.

Linda Berger, executive director of Housing Opportunities Inc., an affiliate of the Rochester Housing Council, confirmed that the grant had been approved, and said it will officially be announced sometime around Thanksgiving.

Housing Opportunities Inc., which orchestrated the successful apartment conversion at Mount Carmel School, will supervise renovations. Completed last November, the converted Mount Carmel School now contains 12 units occupied by low- and middle-income families.

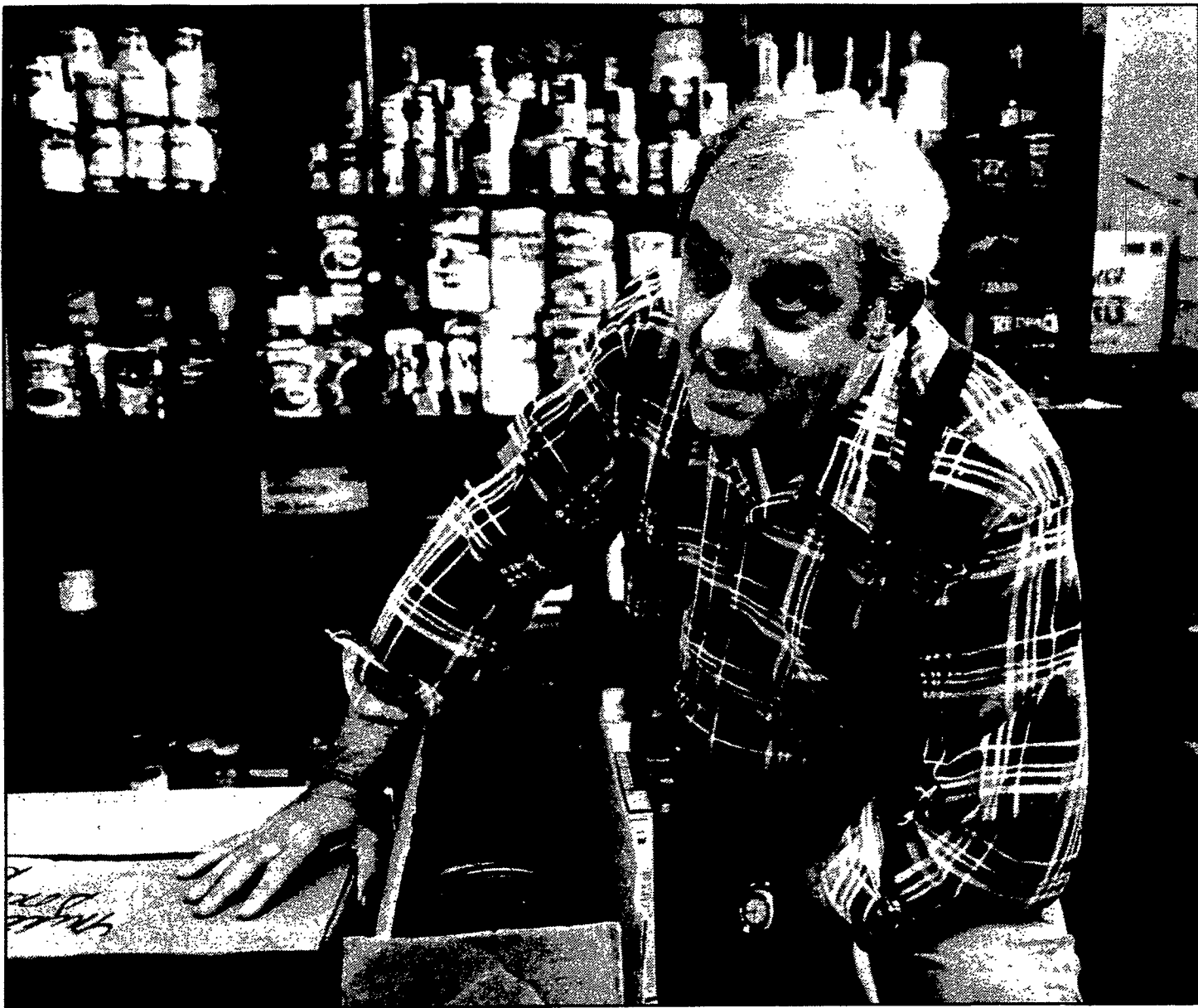
According to the terms of Ss. Peter and Paul's grant, the monies may be used only for creating housing units. The construction, however, will directly affect St. Peter's Kitchen, located in the basement of the school. According to Ed Gennarino, director of the kitchen, the kitchen will have to raise \$70,000 on its own to pay for kitchen renovations the apartment project will necessitate.

The kitchen will have to deal with one change immediately after the project begins. The school's old heating system will be removed to make way for a system that will only serve the apartment dwellers. As a result, the kitchen will be forced to install its own heating system. Other costly repairs will be plumbing and wiring overhauls.

Seventy-thousand dollars is a lot of money to be raised by an organization supported by donations, but Gennarino isn't worried. Donations, he remarked, always seem to arrive just when they are most needed. Two months ago, for example, someone stole meat from the kitchen's freezers, and the next day Gennarino received a donation of meat. When he needed 30-40 turkeys for Thanksgiving, Gennarino "put the word out," and a man called to offer him 40.

In addition to the changes required by the conversion project, Gennarino plans other improvements for the kitchen. He would like to see storage centralized and consolidated, instead of being split among several rooms. The kitchen, he said, needs new stoves and a larger cooking area. Gennarino would also like to install a cafeteria-style serving line to speed up and simplify the serving of meals — 300-400 each day.

Gennarino expects the money for the kitchen's renovations to come from a variety of



Bonnie Trafelet/Courier-Journal

Ed Gennarino, director of St. Peter's Kitchen, outlines plans to raise \$70,000 for improvements to the meal program's facilities in the former Ss. Peter and Paul School building.

sources. He will place ads in newspapers, circulate fliers, talk in parishes and to groups, and in general "get the word out." He admitted that the amount of money needed was large, but feels confident that it will come in. "Whenever we've needed something, it's been there. We have a lot of good people helping us," he remarked.

Fund raising for the kitchen renovations will begin as soon as the grant for the rehabilitation of the rest of the school is announced.

Several months ago when the parish began planning the housing project, parish officers

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