

Babette G. Augustin/Photo editor

St. Mary's Hospital is targeting this stretch of Rochester's West Main Street in Rochester is being targeted for redevelopment.

## St. Mary's Hospital pushing redevelopment

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — When Patrick Madden looks out on West Main, the street facing St. Mary's Hospital, he sees beyond the present.

Instead of the boarded-up buildings that now create a somewhat bleak ambience, he envisions brand-new medical offices, educational facilities and retail outlets that would make the neighborhood a bustling focal point of city life.

"We want to improve the economic vitality of the neighborhood," said Madden, the hospital's president. "We want to improve the image and vitality of the neighborhood."

To that end St. Mary's, 89 Genesee St., wants to embark with the City of Rochester on a \$10 million redevelopment plan that would add medical buildings, a post office and a branch of Monroe Community College to the Bulls Head neighborhood in which the hospital is located.

In addition, the plan might make the area home to a museum honoring Frederick Douglass, the 19th-century abolitionist who lived in Rochester, and to a Department of Veterans Affairs outpatient clinic.

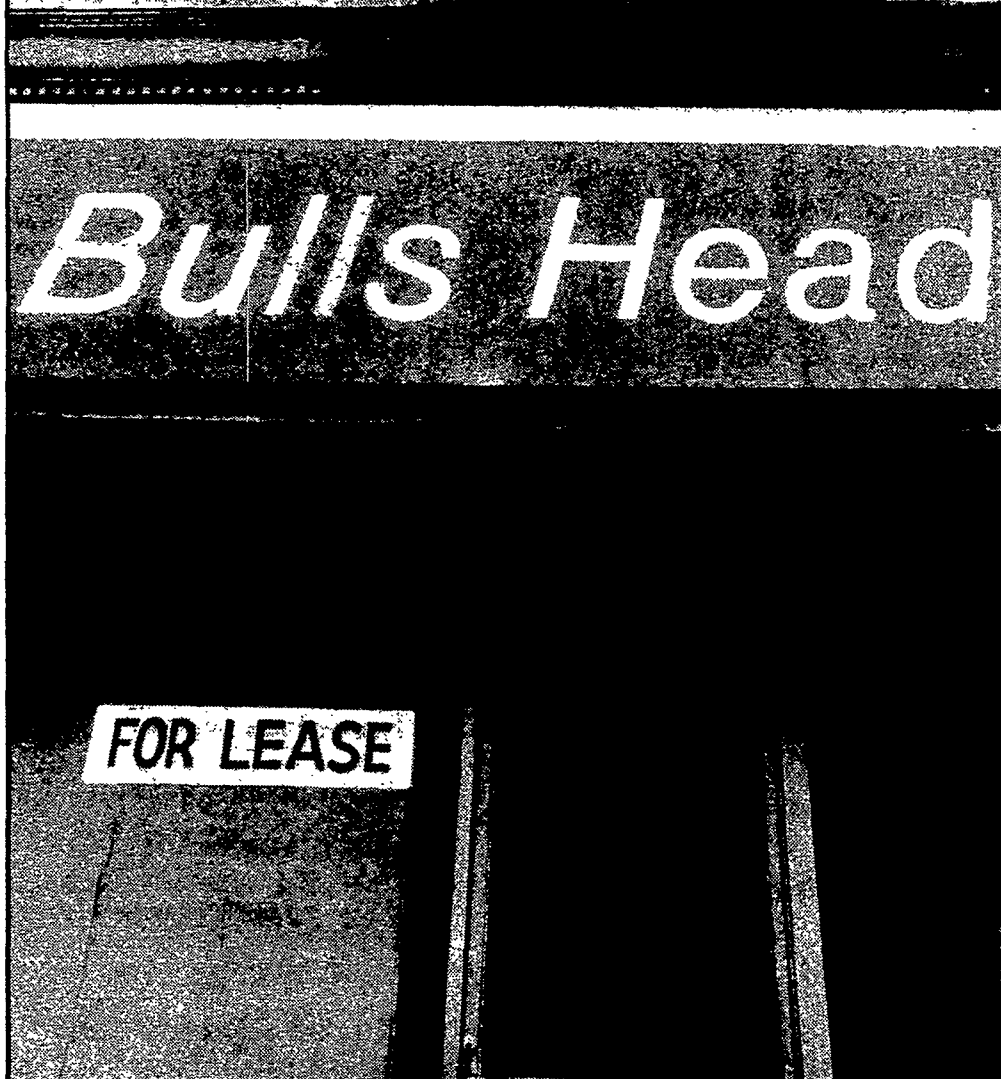
Several buildings along West Main Street near its intersection with Genesee would be demolished to make way for 100,000 square feet of development, according to Madden. But the plan would require "very little" housing dislocation, he said.

Speaking by telephone with the *Catholic Courier* from his Boston office, architect Jonathan Lane said the final plans for the Bulls Head project would be a "hybrid" of three plans presented to about 250 neighborhood residents at a Feb. 20 public meeting at the hospital. Lane, an architect St. Mary's employed for the redevelopment project, described the three proposals as follows:

- Offices for medical and hospital support services would be erected along with retail buildings on a block of West Main Street. A facility for MCC health classes would be located behind the buildings.

- A skyway built over West Main would connect a complex of new buildings on West Main to the hospital across the street. The buildings would be constructed around a courtyard, which would require demolition of most of the buildings currently facing the hospital.

- An entire block of West Main would be redeveloped for new medical offices and college space. This plan also included a retail plaza and grocery store. Due to space considera-



The former Bulls Head Hardware store on West Main Street is among the properties officials at St. Mary's Hospital would like to include in a \$10-million redevelopment plan. The project would include medical offices, educational facilities and retail outlets. St. Mary's hopes to cooperate with the City of Rochester on the project, which also would bring a post office and a branch of Monroe Community College to the Bulls Head neighborhood.

tions, however, both Lane and hospital officials stressed that it was now unlikely that a grocery store would be built.

Redevelopment in the Bulls Head

neighborhood has been under consideration for about three years, according to Madden, who noted that impetus for the project came, in part, from the hospital's need for additional

office space. Ideally, St. Mary's would move its administrative offices into new buildings taking up 50,000 square feet of the redeveloped area, he said. That would make more of the current hospital space available for clinical services, he added.

The hospital has already poured \$200,000 of its own funds into preliminary work on the development plans, Madden said. The hospital hopes to work with the city to find a developer who would see the hospital as the main tenant in any new project.

Lane said he would submit a version of the redevelopment plan to a citizens' advisory committee sometime this week. The new version will include input from community members who attended the Feb. 20 meeting. The committee will examine the revised plan, and send its recommendations to the City Council and the hospital board.

Chaired by retired Eastman Kodak executive Lee Horschman, the citizens' advisory committee consists of leaders from Bulls Head's business, political, law enforcement, social and religious communities. Among the committee members are Father David Reid, SSCC, pastor of St. Peter and Paul Church, and Rosa Wims, director of the Faith Community Health Awareness Center, 176 Genesee St.

Wims said she would welcome the establishment of Monroe Community College health-education facilities in Bulls Head which, as Madden explained, is home to one of the city's largest concentration of adolescents.

Wims said she had met many of those teenagers in her work in the area, and that many of them are interested in careers in such fields as nursing and lab technology. She also pointed out that economic fluctuations make jobs in the health field attractive to teenagers.

"Once they pursue a nursing career, they'll always have a job," Wims said. "You will always have sick people."

Madden also emphasized that the city won't finalize any redevelopment plans until the neighborhood residents and leaders — like Wims — are satisfied with the proposal.

"We will not move on this unless the community wants this," the hospital president said, noting that St. Mary's and the city will hold a few more meetings with Bulls Head community members during the coming months to iron out wrinkles in the redevelopment plan.

The hospital hopes to present a final plan to the City Council by this summer, he said.