

Town puts parish senior home plan on hold

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

GATES — In less than five weeks, St. Jude the Apostle Parish, 4100 Lyell Road, will celebrate the completion of a new church and parish center with a rousing dedication on Sunday, June 27.

But the dream of its pastor, Father John J. Steger, to provide housing on parish grounds to seniors on low and fixed incomes has been temporarily — if not permanently — deferred.

The Town Board of Gates voted earlier this month to reject a proposed change in the zoning of a portion of 10 acres of parish land on which Father Steger had proposed building a two-story, 54-unit residence complex.

The acreage is contiguous to the rest of the parish's land, is undeveloped and borders Elmford and Elmgrove roads. The acreage is zoned residential, and the church wanted the town to change that designation to multiple residential.

On that land, the church would have built a clapboard residence that Father Steger claimed was designed to complement the look of homes in the surrounding area. Access to the site would have been gained through a stub road that meets Elmford Road, and that would have been extended at its current dead end.

Under the proposal, people 62 years and older who meet certain income requirements would be eligible to live at the residence. Although there would be some apartments for senior couples, the site would be geared primarily to



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer

Pictured here is the proposed access road for St. Jude's senior complex.

elderly singles.

However, spurred on by the opposition of homeowners in the Elmcreek subdivision bordering the land, the town board voted 5-0 on May 3 to reject the proposed site. The town did, however, ask St. Jude's to present an alternative site that would be closer to the parish's main buildings and that would access Lyell Road.

Father Steger explained that the parish has considered alternative sites, but that erecting the residence on another part of the parish's land would be far more expensive than the current proposal because of sewer and water costs. He also noted that potential Housing and Urban Development

funding for the project may be jeopardized if building an access road to Lyell Road proves costly.

In addition to homeowners, Gates Town Supervisor Ralph J. Esposito maintained that the original proposed site would unduly increase traffic, possibly decrease property values, and create a housing complex that was isolated from the very parish that supported its construction.

"You don't build a senior citizen home and, in essence, isolate them in a location farthest way from the parish," stated Esposito, who was one of the board members opposed to the proposal.

Father Steger expressed little sympathy for such arguments. He complained that many of the opponents to the proposed site never actually examined the plans when they were presented at a town board meeting in April.

Many of the site opponents mistakenly thought that the proposed residence would be some sort of concrete, low-income housing project, he said, whereas what he was proposing a senior residence similar to other senior housing structures found in suburban communities throughout the state. He summed up the homeowners' attitude by claiming they felt "it's a good idea, but not in my back yard."

Yet one man who lives on Elmford Road across from the church property pointed out that mere mention of the site proposal definitely affected his current attempts to sell his home.

"I didn't have anyone jump for joy when they heard that," said Michael J. Moore.

Both Moore and Father Steger claimed allies among the Elmcreek subdivision homeowners. And Moore maintained that the entire confrontation could have been headed off if Father Steger had consulted the area's homeowners before drawing up the proposal.

"We just felt Father Steger had a lot of land to work with, and he could have been a little more attentive to our needs," Moore said. "He never contacted us."

"This is our property. This is our project," Father Steger said in response to Moore's contentions.

United Way reaches fund-raising goal of \$35.5 million

Pro-life group will continue protest

By Lee Strong
Senior staff writer

ROCHESTER — United Way of Greater Rochester met its 1993 fund-raising goal of \$35.5 million in a campaign that ran from April 1 to May 20.

The goal was reached despite uncertainty about the economy, and efforts by a pro-life group, Citizens for United Way Responsibility, to protest United Way's funding of Planned Parenthood of Rochester and the Genesee Valley, Inc.

According to Neil Haddad, United Way's director of communications and special events, the United Way had received \$35,510,736 in pledges and donations as of May 20.

That money will be shared with agencies throughout the Rochester area — including the Catholic Family Center, which this year is requesting \$1.3 million in assistance for the agency's programs.

"I think some really key things (for success) this year is we asked donors to give more, we asked more people to give and there were some specific efforts that targeted some new businesses," Haddad told the *Catholic Courier*.

Those efforts to solicit from new businesses alone produced \$400,000 in extra donations as compared to last year, Haddad reported.

In addition, Haddad said, donations increased from some corporations that have supported United Way in the past.

"Despite the rough economy and the perceived rough economy, the corporate community stepped up to the plate," Haddad observed.

The drive was also successful despite a pro-life group's efforts urging individuals to give donations directly to member agencies rather than the United Way.

Dorothy Hayes, Citizens for United Way Responsibility's coordinator, reported that the pro-life group spent approximately \$10,000 on radio advertising criticizing United Way funding for the Rochester chapter of Planned Parenthood, which will open an abortion clinic at its 114 University Ave. headquarters in the next few weeks.

Citizens for United Way Responsibility is asking that Planned Parenthood be reassigned from member-agency status — thus sharing in the pool of donations — to non-designation status, so that only the money of individuals who support Planned Parenthood would go to the agency.

Members of the pro-life group do not consider the successful United Way campaign a defeat, however, noted Hayes, a parishioner at St. Thomas the Apostle Church, 4536 St. Paul Blvd.

"We don't look at it as us not achieving our goals," Hayes said. "We look at the fact that United Way lowered their goal to what they made last year. That was \$3 million less than their (1992) goal."

United Way's 1992 goal was \$38.5 million. The organization received \$35.5 in donations, which meant agencies sharing in the pool of money received less support.

The Catholic Family Center suffered because of that shortfall last year, reported Carolyn A. Portanova, the agency's executive director.

"We had to make adjustments to a number of services," Portanova told

the *Courier*. "Services were cut."

Among the CFC programs receiving United Way funds, Portanova said, are the Catholic Youth Organization, Elder Services, the pregnancy and parent counseling program, and the agency's adoption services.

"When the United Way does not make its goal, the whole community suffers," Portanova said, expressing pleasure that United Way had made its 1993 goal. Any future shortfalls, she added, means that the "(Catholic Family Center) could stand to lose a lot in terms of services."

United Way officials attributed the 1992 results to the economy, employee cutbacks at local companies and scandals involving the national — not the local — United Way organization.

But members of Citizens for United Way Responsibility maintain that the pro-life community had an impact, and has the potential to have even greater impact in next year's campaign.

Hayes pointed out that the money for the radio campaign came entirely from donations. She also cited as a sign of pro-life strength this spring's diocesan effort producing more than 20,000 postcards mailed to congressional representatives in opposition to the Freedom of Choice Act. The proposed bill would effectively prevent states from enacting any restriction on abortion during any point in the pregnancy.

Hayes noted that the abortion clinic, which Planned Parenthood said will provide approximately 600 abortions in its first year of operation, will spur even more opposition to United Way support for Planned Parenthood.

"I think that once they are really deeply involved in the abortion business, more people are going to find it distasteful to give to the United Way," Hayes said.

Former Penfield pastor named monsignor

NEW YORK — Pope John Paul II has named Father James M. Moynihan, a Rochester diocesan priest and associate secretary of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association, a Chaplain of His Holiness, or monsignor.

A pastor of Penfield's St. Joseph Parish from 1974-91, Monsignor Moynihan joined the New York City-based Catholic Near East Association in March of 1991.

Monsignor Moynihan also served as chancellor of the Rochester diocese from 1967-74, vice chancellor from 1965-67, and secretary to the late Bishop James E. Kearney from 1963-66. Prior to becoming Bishop Kearney's secretary, Monsignor Moynihan served two years as associate pastor at Rochester's Our Lady of Mount Car-

mel Parish.

A Rochester native, Monsignor Moynihan was ordained at the North American College in Rome on Dec. 15, 1957. He holds a doctorate in canon law from the Gregorian University in Rome. He also studied in Rochester at St. Bernard's College Seminary and St. Andrew's High School Seminary.

Catholic Near East Welfare Association is a papal agency established in 1926 to provide pastoral and humanitarian assistance to people and churches in need in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Egypt, Ethiopia and India. Monsignor Moynihan supervises the association's day-to-day administration, including four divisions based in its New York headquarters and its overseas operations.