

# DIOCESAN NEWS

## Moratorium on building may halt RSM land sale

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff Writer

A proposed sale and development of land owned by the Sisters of Mercy of Rochester may have to face a major obstacle — a one-year moratorium on development in the Town of Brighton, where the land is located. The town may vote on the proposed moratorium at its next board meeting, July 12.

The property in question is fenced-in woodland adjacent to Our Lady of Mercy High School and the sisters' motherhouse. The Sisters of Mercy hoped to sell the land this year, and are concerned that their order's financial ship may be rocked if the sale of half of their 62-acre property doesn't happen soon.

"The problem is we've gone so far down the line ... and we're one foot away from getting the project complete," said Sister Sheila Stevenson, RSM, the order's president. "We absolutely have to sell."

For six years, the sisters have been working to sell their land to NewMark Development Co., a Rochester business that specializes in building senior housing. The company wants to build 11 single-family homes on the property, along with 39 townhomes, and a 95-unit independent living center for seniors. NewMark would also like to build a 150-bed assisted living center for seniors later. One-third of the land would remain woodland and wetland.

However, NewMark wants the town's approval on its plan before it buys the land, and so far, that approval has not been given. The acreage is currently zoned for single-family dwellings, and NewMark wants it rezoned for high-density residential zoning.

Sister Stevenson has noted that her order's pension fund is underfunded by more than 70 percent. Additionally, her order supports 14 outreach ministries. At a June 14 open hearing before the town board, Sister Stevenson outlined her concern that her order's work may be imperiled if it cannot sell its land to NewMark this year.

"We do not have an alternative to our financial difficulties," she said. "We have been pushed to our limit during these six years of waiting to sell our property. We have done everything in our power to improve our situation during this time, but the sale of the land is now the only thing we have left to do to assist us."

But if the sisters are frustrated with Brighton, town leaders also have expressed frustration with NewMark, whose representatives met with town officials June 22 to discuss an environmental impact study of the development proposal. Town officials noted that NewMark had yet to answer certain questions about the proposed development's impact on sewer lines and woodland space, for example, according to Thomas A. Low, Brighton's commissioner of public works.

NewMark's president, Christopher A. DiMarzo, said his company is working to come up with answers to the town's questions. However, he added that his company believes it has worked diligently to provide information to the town on the proposed development's impact.

"This is the most studied property in the Town of Brighton," he said.

DiMarzo said he would like the Mercy land to be taken off the list of properties to be covered by the proposed moratorium. Low said that the town is considering NewMark's request to be taken off the list, but he declined to speculate on the chances of the request being granted.

The moratorium would affect more than 1,200 parcels of land as well as 39 acres of open space in Brighton, according to Rick DiStefano, a town planner. He added that the town is considering the moratorium because it is updating its comprehensive development plan and needs time to study land-use questions.

Connie Goonan, chairwoman of the pastoral council at St. John the Evangelist Church, Rochester, lives in Brighton near the sisters' land and is president of the Pen-Clover Neighborhood Association. She noted that while she opposed NewMark's current proposed development, her association did not have anything to do with getting the town to propose a development moratorium.

She added that she understands the viewpoint of the sisters and NewMark, but she also said that the concerns of her neighbors have yet to be addressed completely. She said that she is not opposed to a senior housing project on the Mercy sisters' land, but that such a project would have to meet criteria that she and her neighbors can support.

"I'm not opposed to anything that meets (the town's approval)," she said. "A scaled-down version — which we have been asking for since day one — would do that."



Andrea Dixon/Staff photographer

### Putt it here

Eric Kreutziger, left, laughs at Dick Hendrickson, who mimics a Tiger Woods celebration shot after Hendrickson missed the hole at the Monroe County Catholic Schools Golf Tournament on June 28 at Greystone Golf Club in Walworth, Wayne County.

### Obituaries

#### Sister Magill, SSJ; schoolteacher

Sister Margaret Clare Magill, SSJ, died at St. Joseph Convent Infirmary on May 20, 2000. She was 93.

Sister Margaret Clare entered the Sisters of St. Joseph from St. Patrick's Parish, Seneca Falls, in 1927. She was a graduate of Nazareth College with degrees in education, social studies and English.

Sister Margaret Clare taught in the elementary schools of the Diocese of Rochester for 45 years. Among the schools where she taught were: St. Monica, Rochester (17 years); St. Francis de Sales, Geneva (five years); St. Patrick, Dansville, where she was also principal (six years); St. John the Evangelist, Spencerport, as teacher and principal (six years); St. Alphonsus, Auburn (nine years); and Im-

maculate Conception, Ithaca, (two years). She remained in Ithaca for an additional 12 years, assisting in the convent in various capacities. Because of failing health, Sister Margaret Clare retired to the St. Joseph Convent Infirmary in 1986.

"She was waiting for the Lord with stout-hearted patience," said Sister Joseph Gilmary Russell, SSJ, coordinator of the infirmary. "She was extremely patient through it all."

Sister Margaret Clare was survived by nieces and nephews as well as her fellow Sisters of St. Joseph.

Her funeral liturgy was celebrated in the motherhouse chapel on May 23. Sister Margaret Clare was buried in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery.

#### Sister Mary Dormail, SSND, 78

Sister Mary Louise Dormail, SSND, died May 30, 2000. She was 78.

Born in Malden, Mass., Sister Mary Louise, a School Sister of Notre Dame, was an elementary schoolteacher more than 30 years. She taught at St. Philip Neri of Rochester from 1968-1970. She retired to the Wilton, Conn., motherhouse in 1982.

Sister Mary Louise's funeral Mass was

celebrated June 2 at the Provincial Motherhouse. She is survived by two nieces, Mrs. Jean Hazen of Browns Mill, N.Y., and Mrs. Christina Corriveau of Orrs Island, Maine; and a sister-in-law, Marge, Tellier of Rochester.

Memorials may be made to the SSND Development Fund, 345 Belden Rd, Wilton, CT 06897-3898.

Catholic Courier (USPS 135-580) Vol.

111 No. 39, July 6, 2000

Published weekly except the last Thursday in December.

Subscription rates: single copy, 75¢; one-year subscription in U.S., \$20.00; Canada and foreign \$20.00 plus postage. Offices: 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624, 716/328-4340. Periodicals postage paid at Rochester, N.Y.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Catholic Courier, P.O. Box 24379, Rochester, N.Y. 14624.

Bishop Matthew H. Clark is on vacation. His column will return in August.

### ATTENTION!

The Monthly Prayer Requests for the Priests Calendar will not be published in the *Catholic Courier* Newspaper.

ALL INQUIRIES CALL (716) 442-4231

visit us on the web  
[www.catholiccourier.com](http://www.catholiccourier.com)