

Huge seniors housing complex eyes '83 opening

By TOM LONERGAN
A \$50 million senior citizen's village is planned for part of the former Wayne County Child Development Center in Northville Township.

The project has a targeted ground-breaking for next spring but is contingent on a number of factors including:

- The Wayne County Board of Commissioners providing the land;
- Commitments from public and private financing sources and;
- A developer.

It's estimated that \$47 million of private financing and \$3 million in public funds is needed for the project, which will use 100 acres of the 710-acre site on Sheldon Road between Five and Six Mile.

The Wayne County Economic Development Corporation (EDC), which may issue low-interest bonds for the project along with the Northville Township EDC, recently outlined the initial plans for the Northville Elderly Village at a press conference in the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Dearborn.

The village would provide housing for 1,800 seniors of low and moderate incomes. Some 25 percent of the residents would be eligible for subsidized rents through the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

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THE VILLAGE would include several types of housing, ranging from a convalescent center to four six-story mid-rise apartment buildings. Also planned is a six-story, 200-unit "congregate" building, 22 two-story garden apartments and 33 cluster housing units.

It would also use an old school on the site for a co-op food store, meeting rooms and a recreation area. A clinic and pharmacy is also planned.

The village, believed to be the only one of its scale in the Midwest, could have its first occupants by 1993.

The child development center, former detention site for juveniles, has been vacant since 1972.

ALTHOUGH NO names were mentioned at last week's press conference, Robert E. FitzPatrick, executive director of the county EDC, said eight developers are interested in the project.

"The key at this point is to put together a package," he said.

FitzPatrick said both the county EDC and Northville Township EDC could issue bonds for the village totaling the needed \$47 million private investment, or less, depending on the developer's needs. EDC bonds allow private developers to finance construction projects at a lower interest rate.

"I think it has a good chance — an excellent chance," he said.

Another public official was not as optimistic, however.

"I don't know which way it's going to go," said Northville Township Supervisor Donald Thomson. "I'll believe it when I see it."

The senior citizens village requires rezoning by the township planning commission. The land is now zoned single family residential.

The project planners said they will

apply for a federal Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) to fund the public improvements needed for the village including a loop road and utilities. Estimated cost of the public improvements needed is \$2 million.

ACCORDING TO Vilcan Leman Associates, a planning group hired for the project, rents in the village would range from \$491 to \$741 a month for the "independent housing," the six-story and two-story apartment buildings.

The estimate is based on market rents for new buildings in the area projected for 1993.

"I agree it's high but you try and go build anything," said Deborah Meyer of Vilcan Leman. "Construction costs are just out of site."

"There are a lot of elderly not living on just social security and a pension," she added.

Ms. Meyer said 1978 costs for convalescent housing in the area averaged \$35 per day while congregate housing ranged from \$725 and \$925 a month. The latter figures include \$300 to \$350 a month for food. "Congregate" living provides partial services, like meals, for the elderly.

IT'S EXPECTED the developer will seek state and federal rent subsidy participation in the project.

One HUD program for the elderly requires the renter to pay no more than 25 percent of his income for housing, no

matter what the market cost, with the government picking up the remainder.

Planners last week emphasized that the federal subsidy sought would not require low-income family housing but only housing for seniors. Low-income family housing tied to senior housing has been opposed by a number of suburban communities the past several years.

The EDC said the county now spends \$47,000 annually to maintain the vacant child development center site.

FitzPatrick estimates the county

will gain \$191,000 in annual tax revenues from the senior village, while Northville Township will receive \$107,000.

It was estimated the Northville School District could receive nearly \$1 million annually in new tax revenues.

The EDC is proposing the county transfer the property to its jurisdiction in return for lease revenues once the project is developed. A 40-year lease could net the county \$2.3 million, FitzPatrick said.

Chest pains a symptom

Do you know what a heart attack feels like? Usually an uncomfortable pressure, fullness, squeezing, or pain in the center of the chest. Pain may become severe or spread to shoulders, neck or arms; you may also have dizziness, fainting, sweating, nausea, or shortness of breath. If you ever feel any of these symptoms, call your local EMS immediately. Or get to a hospital emergency room the quickest way possible. For more information, call the Michigan Heart Association.

Each session will last for two hours and family members are encouraged to attend.

Arthritis classes

The Arthritis Foundation, Michigan Chapter, is offering free educational classes for patients with rheumatoid and osteoarthritis.

Each class will consist of four one-night-a-week sessions dealing with the medical aspects, occupational and physical therapy and emotional aspects of the particular disease. The sessions will be held at the Arthritis Foundation, Village Plaza, Suite 605, 23400 Michigan Avenue, Dearborn (corner of Michigan and Outer Drive) between 7 and 9 p.m.

To attend the classes or for further information call Mary Flugstad at the chapter office, 561-9096.

Immigrants to flood U.S.

In the next 20 years, about half the increase in the U.S. population will be immigrants, says a Michigan State University professor.

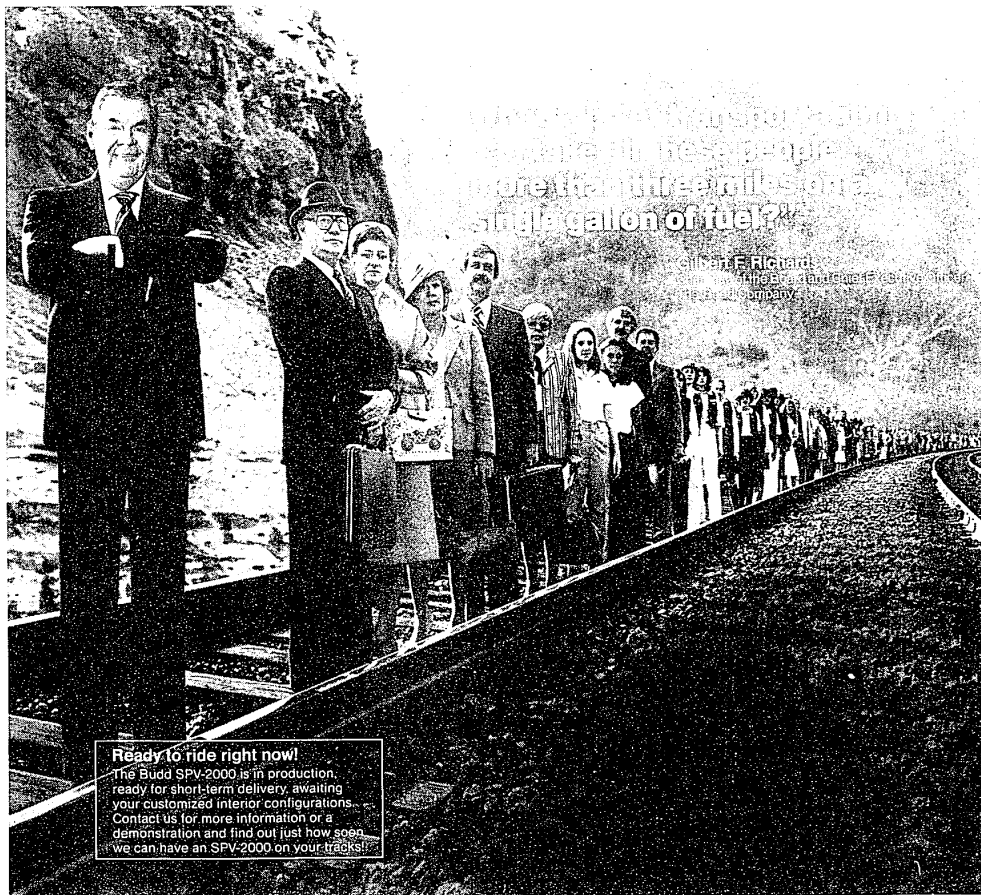
William Lazer, an MSU marketing professor, predicts one of the biggest influxes of immigrants in the past 75 years. He was one of five professors who recently completed a project looking at what the country would be like in the year 2000.

Lazer estimates that about 13 million to 14 million immigrants will relocate in the U.S. by the year 2000, including about six million who will cross the border unauthorized. About five million "illegal immigrants" are now living in this country, he said.

The forecasters predict the official U.S. population, not including the 11 million illegal immigrants, will be 245 million by the year 2000, up from 220 million this year.

Hispanics, including the 114,000 Cubans who entered this country this year, will account for a major part of the immigration, say the forecasters, and Hispanics will become the largest minority in the country by 1990.

The immigrants will relocate mainly in the southwest and a few of the larger cities, says Lazer.



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