

It's not for calculus

Another SUNY building?

By Nicole Fay Barr

GUILDERLAND — A classroom and conference building may soon appear in the middle of a row of houses on a residential part of Western Avenue.

Don Reeb, president of the McKownville Neighborhood Association, told *The Enterprise* this week that the State University of New York at Albany is proposing to buy a lot at 1257 Western Ave., near Knowles Terrace.

"We're opposed," said Reeb, "mostly because it's in the middle of a neighborhood. It will not be pleasant to have a classroom building there with lights on all night and noise."

Reeb and others from McKownville are meeting with University President Karen Hitchcock next week, he said, to discuss the proposal.

Hitchcock or other university staff could not be reached this week.

Reeb said he was told the building would be used for a three-year-old program called Oasis, which provides lectures and courses to adults on various topics.

"It's not for the typical calculus class," said Reeb. "It's not for traditional classes for students."

Retired faculty would also use the building, Reeb said, for conferences, offices, or a place to study.

The plans are very preliminary, he said, and it's not definite what exactly the building would be used for, and when.

The 120-by-331-foot lot on Western Avenue is owned by Armond Quadrini. He told *The Enterprise* this week that he has been trying to sell the land to the university for several years. The property is near the Guilderland

portion of the campus.

Currently, there is a boarded-up house on the land. A decade ago, Quadrini said, he rented the house to students. The house had drainage problems, though, he said, and was shut down because of flooding.

Quadrini also said that plans are preliminary. "They [SUNY] had an interest, but I can't get to first base with them," he said. "We haven't discussed price or anything."

Town Supervisor Kenneth Runion also spoke to *The Enterprise* this week about the possible building. "I heard they [SUNY] were interested, but nothing further," he said.

Asked whether it is a good idea or not, Runion said, "Until you get the proposal, it's hard to go one way or another."

Since he's been in office, Runion said, he has been receiving complaints from neighbors about the condition of the property. The town's zoning enforcement officer had Quadrini clean up the lot, Runion said.

"It may be a tough site to build on," he said, "because of drainage issues."

Reeb told *The Enterprise* that he cannot figure out why the university would want to build on that property. "There's no good reason this should be done," he said. "It deteriorates our quality of living."

A public meeting will be held on Dec. 5 at 7 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Express on Western Avenue for neighbors to speak on the issue.

"It is going to cause extraordinary havoc in the neighborhood to put an office building in a residential neighborhood," Reeb said.