

# NESS & REAL ESTATE

## Manlius faces rezoning decision on housing plan

By Bob Curley  
Staff Writer

Developer Earl Oot hopes to open the first of 500 units in a Fayetteville cluster-housing development by Aug. 1.

But some critics of the \$50 million Erie Village project, proposed for North Burdick Street, don't want the town board to approve construction because the homes will sit in the Limestone Creek flood plain.

A decision to approve or disapprove the necessary rezoning is before the Manlius town board.

Sixteen months ago the undeveloped land was under water — following the October 1981 flood that caused \$1 million damage in the villages of Manlius and Fayetteville.

Neighbors of the proposed site want the project relocated to higher ground.

Valued at \$50 million, Erie Village would add 8 percent to the Manlius township assessment roll of \$626 million, said assessor Gregory Blaisdell.

But the potential problems of building on a flood plain concerns Peter Voninski, of 7161 Taylor Road, a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel and spokesman for opponents of the site selection.

"That whole landscape was under water 16 months ago. It's only been a little more than 10 years ago that Hurricane Agnes caused unbelievable flooding in the Southern Tier (June 22, 1972). If we had another catastrophic flood after they build there, this windfall could become a \$50 million disaster for the taxpayers of Manlius," said Voninski.

The developers, Oot Brothers, seek permission for cluster development of the 245-acre site about a mile north of the Fayetteville Mall and want the zoning changed from agricultural to restrictive residential.

The plan is to link from two to five of the individual one-family units together in buildings around a man-made lake formed from a former gravel pit. About 25 percent of the units, priced between \$70,000 to \$100,000, will be sited on the four 200 to 300-foot wide fingers of land that have been extended into the lake, said Richard Lowenberg, deputy supervisor of Manlius.

Engineers for Oot have said they will have "no trouble" elevating the village area of Erie Village two feet above the highest flooding predicted to result from a once-in-a-century storm, Oot said.

Oot wants the town to vote approval of the project soon. He wants to start construction this spring. The entire project would require 10 years to finish "at a rate of about 50 units a year," he said.

Lowenberg said the O'Brien and Gere Engineering firm was retained by the town to study development plans and certain requirements have been passed along to the developers.

The major items, Oot said, involved elevation above the 100-year flood level, water pollution, protection of the sewer lines and other engineering requirements which are "normally done in any development of this size."

Town Board members are studying a report by councilors Frank Purpura and Fay Piquet and may be ready to vote on the project by March, Lowenberg said.

Following town board approval, the developers must gain the approval of the town planning board. The Supreme Court would hear any appeal of the planning board's decision, Oot said.

"The developer has to meet all of the federal requirements for

building on a flood plain before anyone can get federal flood insurance. We are also interested in safeguards against water pollution, and what a major flood would do to the village sewer lines and other utilities," said Lowenberg.

"Finally, we have to be assured that the elevation of the flood

plain and other changes in the contours of the land will not increase the threat of flooding to downstream communities."

The Oots have received orders for more than a half-dozen homes. They want to finish 50 more units in 1984, the developer said.

"You might expect the total of all taxes in a \$50 million Erie Village to add up to about \$1,350,000," said town assessor Gregory Blaisdell.

"That would include about \$713,000 for the East Syracuse-Minoa School District. The remainder would go to the county, town and various sewer, lighting, water and fire districts."

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Pages C-6 and 7



Herald-Journal photo by Mike Greenlar

Earl Oot's proposed 500-unit development in Fayetteville faces opposition from residents. They say the location (inset at right) represents poor planning — it sits in a flood plain.

