

Groups oppose proposal Hospital parking verdict expected

By JAS SAUND
Of the Emerald

Before this week is over, the State Health Planning and Development Agency (SHPDA) is expected to hand down its decision on the building of Sacred Heart General Hospital's proposed six-story \$1.75-million parking garage on the southwest corner of 13th Avenue and Hilyard Street.

Neighborhood groups like West University Neighbors (WUN), and some merchants in the area charge that the building of such a structure at the proposed site would only add to their "neighborhood's blight." WUN maintains that the proposed structure would increase traffic congestion, create more auto pollution and cause an upswing in an already high area crime rate.

Harold Lannom of WUN does not object to the building of a garage, only its location. He has suggested several alternative sites north of 13th Avenue, which he thinks should suffice the needs of the hospital. Any construction north of 13th Avenue is less damaging to the well-being of the neighborhood than on the south side of the avenue, according to Lannom.

Dick Williams, Sacred Heart's assistant administrator, rejects that proposition.

"Our studies recommend the

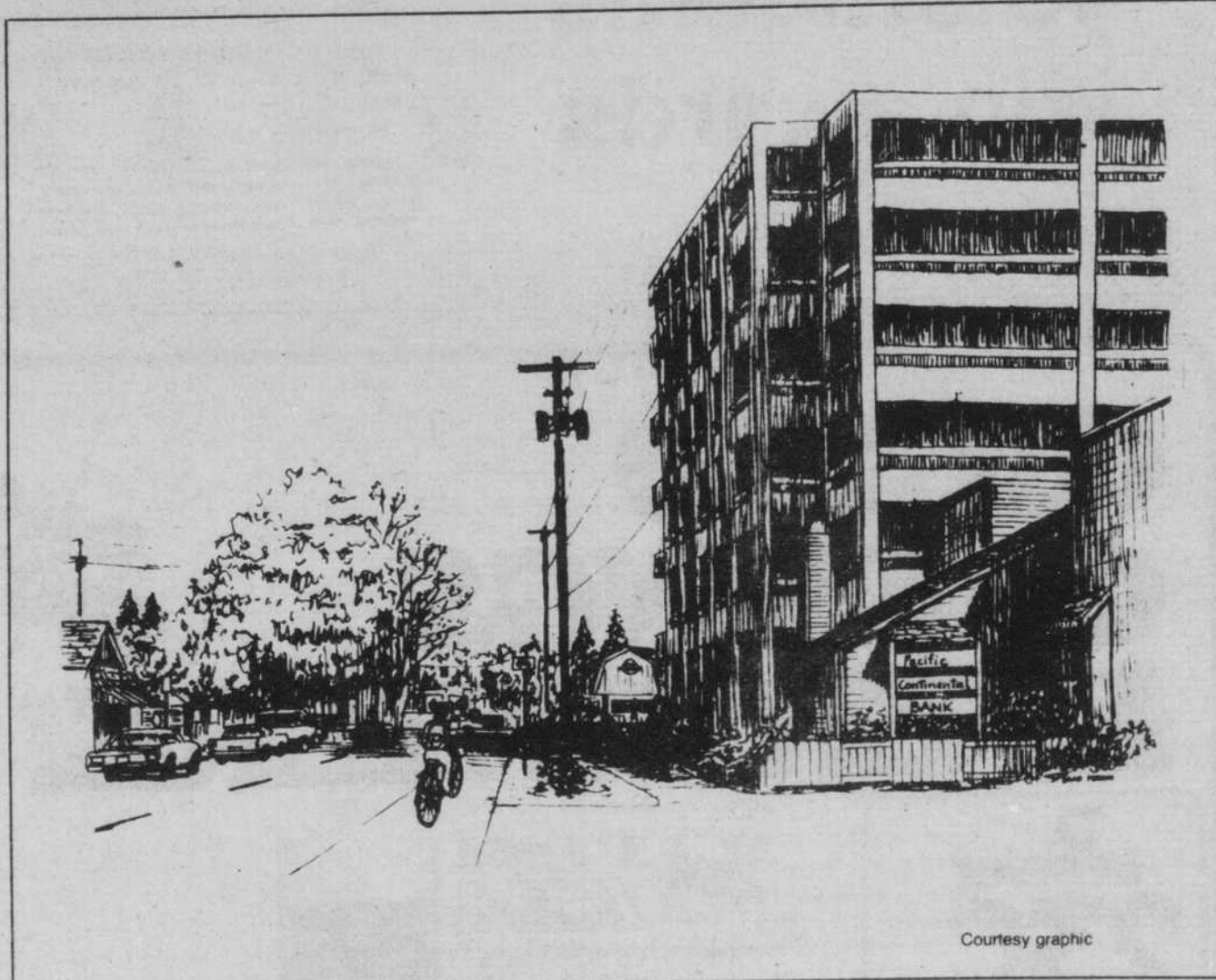
prudent place to put the garage is 13th and Hilyard," Williams says. He claims the parking garage cannot be built north of 13th Avenue because that property is reserved for future clinic and hospital additions.

What are Sacred Heart's plans for future expansion? Lannom claims that plans are vague and that the hospital is deliberately keeping neighborhood people in the dark about its future growth.

But this much is known — a six-story building to house medical offices is currently going up between Patterson and Hilyard Streets on 12th Avenue. Sacred Heart will not directly own the facility, but will lease the land to a Seattle-based Careage Corp.

Additionally, in a year, Sacred Heart plans to build a \$15-million nursing tower on the northeast corner of 13th Avenue and Hilyard Street, according to Williams. The present nursing facilities are old and should be destroyed, he says.

One of the main reasons SHPDA has delayed its decision on the building of the parking garage is allegedly because it is unsure of its authority under state law to turn down the plans on grounds that the structure would be harmful to the health of persons living near it. In March, SHPDA ruled it had no authority to consider the garage's effect on the neighborhood environment, but could only declare whether



Sacred Heart needed the structure and could afford it.

No matter how SHPDA rules on the question of the garage, its ruling is likely to be appealed to the state Certificate of Need Appeals

Board. According to Jim Tsuda of SHPDA, if that were to happen, the grievance party would show to the Appeals Board that SHPDA was arbitrary in its decision making process or that there were

procedural errors committed by the agency during the earlier hearings.

The board's decision is subject to challenge in the state Court of Appeals.

Prevent rape activities will begin Saturday

By KEVIN HARDEN
Of the Emerald

August, according to statistics, is a bad month for assaults on women. But one neighborhood group is trying to prove those statistics wrong.

The Whiteaker Community Council and the Whiteaker People Against Rape are tired of repeated assaults on women in their neighborhood and have begun to do something about it.

According to Marleen Nelson of the council, the groups are planning activities to inform and protect the people in their area. Those activities will begin Saturday with an informal outside meeting that will include self-defense demonstrations, workshops, skits and music.

The organization of people to combat the assaults in the neighborhood began several weeks ago when women reported an increase of rapes and indecent exposures on the bike trail along the

bank of the Willamette River.

The groups are going to do their best to keep August from reaching its statistical quota for assaults, Nelson says. Those statistics show August to be a dangerous month for women in that area.

To protect the neighborhood, the groups are forming night patrols that will walk the bike path at different times during the night. The patrols, which consist of five or more people, will vary their walks to cover the path most of the night, Nelson says.

Although the Eugene Police Department warned the groups against any vigilante action, the Whiteaker People Against Rape see the patrols as something more than a group of angry citizens out to stop assaults in their neighborhood, she says.

The groups are now planning workshops and non-violent training sessions to teach each neighborhood resident how to react if he or she is confronted with an assault, Nelson points out.

"The police don't think there are

any problems in our area," Nelson says. "But that's partly the neighborhood's fault for not reporting all the assaults that happen."

To no avail, the neighborhood organization has asked for police patrols along the bike trail. The police say they didn't have enough time to cover the bike path and the rest of the city.

"It's really just a question of priorities," Nelson says. "Right now they're getting more calls about traffic accidents on the gut. So that's where their priorities are."

The group is trying to convince police the bike path is more dangerous than it seems, she says. By circulating questionnaires to people of the area who may have been assaulted, the group hopes to take the responses to the police and then ask for help.

But for now, the Whiteaker People Against Rape are trying to take steps to make August a safe month for women in the area, Nelson says.

"This year is worse than last year, so we feel we have to act right now," she says. "The main thing we'll try to do right now is to get through August."

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