

Town explores parish center, village building for use as hall

Written by CAROL POMEDAY
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Winker appoints committee to investigate costs for both options

At the Town of Belgium annual meeting Tuesday, Chairman Tom Winker said the town has another possible option for a Town Hall in addition to the current Belgium village offices (see related story).

Winker said Divine Savior Parish in Fredonia is considering selling some of its buildings in Lake Church, including the parish center, which was built as a convent for the nuns who taught at St. Mary's Catholic School and now is used for meetings and religious education classes.

"It is in the Town of Belgium and it is handicapped-accessible, but it will need work," Winker said. "We have two opportunities we should look into and investigate both of them. It's up to you guys. I'm very comfortable being here (current Town Hall at 814 Main St. built in 1894)."

Bob Lallensack, a parish trustee, said Wednesday the discussion with the town is "just in the talking stage."

"We're exploring it. We haven't even talked to our parish council," he said.

He added the sale of any parish property must be approved by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

In November, the parish sold the former St. Rose rectory for a private home and that was approved by the archdiocese, Lallensack said.

Winker appointed Supr. James Blick chairman of a committee to investigate the parish center and village offices. Other members are Tom Peterson, Mike Hoyng, Dennis Dimmer, Jeff Coeur and Karen Wolfe, who all have some construction or real estate expertise.

Resident Al Poull suggested John Riordan also be on the committee because of his financial knowledge and Winker agreed.

Zoning Administrator Charles Parks said the north end of the parish center, which is divided into small rooms, would be large enough for the town's needs if the interior walls were removed and new support beams installed.

The cost of doing that, along with how much the parish wants for the building, will be explored by the committee.

Winker said he will not consider a move to the village site without a long-term lease.

"We want to answer all the questions on both of these opportunities so we make the decision that's the best value for the town," Winker said. "Maybe you guys will say, 'Stay here,' and so be it."

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