

All-Star teams announced; Pudge Rodriguez is lone Tiger — Page B-1



THE FOURTH OF JULY  
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Inside today  
Bikers gather for religious celebration — Page A-3



Today's high 91, low 67; complete forecast on A-2

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# Contaminated site gets authority to clean up

By ANN ZANIEWSKI  
Of The Oakland Press

ROCHESTER — A site where a developer wants to put senior condos is contaminated from years of use as a railroad coal yard.

Rochester's new Brownfield Redevelopment Authority will be a part of its cleanup.

City officials created the authority last week rather than use the county authority for a development proposed where the Rochester Elevator sits.

Brownfield authorities facilitate a

process by which a developer is reimbursed for cleaning a toxic site through captured taxes.

Officials said forming an authority will save money.

"From my personal standpoint, the closer to home we keep everything, the more comfortable I feel about it," Councilman Dave Katulic said.

City Manager Ken Johnson said working with the county's brownfield authority would have cost about \$30,000 annually in adminis-



Oakland Press file photo/DOUG BAUMAN

The Rochester Elevator, a former grain elevator, now houses a store that sells pet food, salt and other goods. The site may be redeveloped into senior housing.

PLEASE SEE REDEVELOP/A-4

## REDEVELOP

FROM PAGE A-1

\$20 million project would include senior condos, stores and restaurant

trative fees. It also requested roughly \$600,000 in taxes generated from the project for a loan fund for the cleanup of other brownfield sites.

Johnson said the city has spent about \$5,000 to have initial documents prepared, and may face additional consultant costs.

The authority will evaluate brownfield redevelopment plans, but the City Council will give final approvals.

The council also voted last week to place the entire city in a brownfield redevelopment zone.

Senior housing company Sunrise Development Inc. and developer Frank Rewold and Son Inc. have proposed three levels of roughly 60 senior condos on top of stores and a restaurant at Water Street and University Drive. The \$20 million project includes underground parking.

Nicholas Maloof, president and general counsel of Associated Environmental Services, LLC, said cleanup of the two acres could cost more than \$3.2 million. He said past testing has found oils and metals.

The contaminants stem from several former uses, including the coal yard, a lumber yard and a mill pond.

Today, the Rochester Elevator sells pet food, salt

and other goods. Wood darkened with time peaks out under peeling red paint.

According to records at the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm, the Griggs Elevator was built on the site in 1880. The Newberry Elevator, built in 1872, was moved and added to the Griggs Elevator in 1909.

Local farmers took their grain to the elevator, where it was stored in a loft and then dumped into train cars.

Members of the Rochester Avon Historical Society have been working on a plan to relocate the structure. Roy Rewold, CEO of Frank Rewold and Son Inc., told them they can have it if it's moved by the end of this year.

"It's part of our heritage," said Rod Wilson, a society board member.

Society President Greg Doyle said it could cost \$100,000 to move. Rather than being disassembled plank by plank like the Flumerfelt barn in Oakland Township, Wilson said it would be moved in large pieces.

The group is researching parcels and is hoping to get land, as well as money, for restoration donated.

Councilman Thomas Werth said city-owned property between the Clinton River and Trail and near the Clothes Closet under the Main Street bridge is being discussed as a potential site. He said the elevator could house bathrooms for trail users.

The city could contribute money or land to the project, Werth said.