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Church proposal draws reservations

By Jeff Gallatin

NORTH OLMSTED

City Council members weren't singing the praises of a proposal to give a church a temporary lease in the existing Westfield Great Northern Mall food court.

Council's Building, Zoning and Development Committee voted 2-1 April 27 to not recommend a proposal to allow the Elevate North Church to locate in the old game arcade in the mall's existing food court for a year. The proposal is expected to be considered by the full City Council at its regular meeting tonight, which was rescheduled from Tuesday because of the May 4 primary election yesterday.

Chairwoman Nicole Dailey Jones and committee member

Paul Barker both expressed reservations about the proposal to give Elevate North, a church which has been meeting at the Chik-Fil-A on Great Northern Boulevard for several months, the temporary one-year permit. The church and Westfield Mall officials sought a one-year permit for the church, but the Municipal Planning and Design Commission recommended a two-year period of time.

However, committee members were not receptive to that, with Jones asking if a six-month period would do.

Barker said he has nothing against the church itself, noting he has supported other zoning moves which would allow a church to move into vacant former businesses. Rather, he said his concerns stem from a church moving

into a mall setting.

"I just don't believe a mall is a proper place for a church," Barker said. "It's not a retail business. A mall is a retail outlet, and I believe that's the type of business or establishment which should be going into a mall setting."

Councilman Mark Mahoney, the only committee member to vote for the proposal, cited the temporary nature of the proposal.

"It would only be for a year," he said. "There have been no reports of problems with the church, and it's of a temporary nature until they get a free-standing building of their own."

The Rev. Dave A. Bever Jr., the church pastor, said the

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Bay Village resident Edwin Grover protests outside St. John Medical Center Sunday afternoon. The contract of his physician, George Randt, was terminated by a hospital related practice last month. (West Life photo by Larry Bennet)

Gym to be named after retiring parks and rec director

By Danielle Toth

ROCKY RIVER

At a party held Friday morning, Rocky River city administrators and City Council members presented Mike Patterson, retiring parks and recreation director, with the honor of a lifetime: a resolution dedicating and naming the gymnasium at the Don Umerley Civic Center "The Michael D. Patterson Gymnasium."

Rocky River Mayor Pam Bobst also presented Patterson, who has been director for 33 years, with a

lifetime membership to the civic center. Although the idea to dedicate the gym was hers, Bobst said she heard from many community members that the city should do something to honor Patterson.

"Mike built a professional staff that rivals any in the area or region," she said. "He has made such tremendous advances in parks and recreation. He cares about the value and what it means to residents and those who come to the city. Parks and recreation is a vital part of any community. It creates a connection. We all gather for Pony League games or other

recreation events."

Patterson, whose last day on the job was Friday, was unaware of the proclamation, as was his wife, Anne. In fact, at City Council's April 26 meeting, the renaming resolution was purposely left off the agenda to keep the secret. It was added during the meeting through a council vote.

"The best thing about this community has always been the people," Patterson said. "I've had the opportunity to touch a lot of lives on a daily basis, and all I've tried to do is make this community the best it can be."

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Patients protest doctor's dismissal

By Kevin Kelley

WESTLAKE

About 50 protestors demonstrated in front of St. John Medical Center Sunday afternoon to protest the termination of Dr. George Randt's contract with Cuyahoga Physicians Network.

Cuyahoga Physicians Network is a for-profit practice organization owned and managed by the Sisters of Charity Health System. Randt had been

seeing patients at Westlake Family Health Center, a Detroit Road practice owned and managed by St. John Medical Center.

In a letter to his patients, Randt said he was informed his contract was being terminated on April 1 by Cliff Coker, president of St. John Medical Center. The reason given, according to Randt's letter, was "lack of productivity and generation of excessive overhead expenses."

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