

A bottleful of excuses

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Let alcoholics get treatment from DayBreak on Main St.

It's a pathetic record: six years to get a Rochester neighborhood — any neighborhood — to accept the city's only complete program for alcoholics.

Now on its third try, DayBreak Alcoholism Treatment Facility deserves help. City leaders and open-minded citizens ought to speak up.

THE LATEST obstacles come in a city zoning report that raises issues dealt with months ago on DayBreak's proposed move to the Sts. Peter and Paul complex on West Main Street. Before getting a permit, DayBreak must show it won't have a negative impact on the neighborhood. The city planning commission makes the final decision.

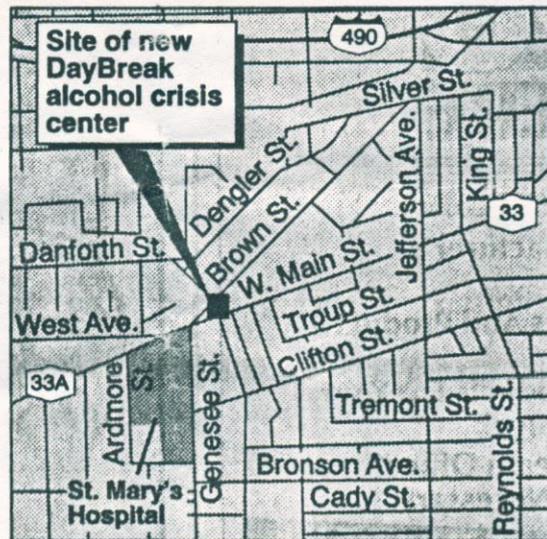
This location offers the right combination of space and financial incentives with a responsible landlord. DePaul Community Facilities, an arm of DePaul Mental Health Services, has worked 18 months on the project.

DayBreak started the search so its programs for alcoholics could be broadened and operate under one roof. With its \$5 million budget, DayBreak offers a continuum of care from a walk-in detoxification unit to an outpatient clinic for people who need regular followup for as long as it takes to end their addiction.

Unlike other alcoholism programs, DayBreak, which would serve about 130 clients on an average day, targets people with chronic conditions who are on Medicaid.

Susan Costa, executive director of The Health Association, DayBreak's parent group, is certain she's been to every available building within the city limits to find an appropriate site. Her options are dissolving fast.

The program is meant to be in an urban neighborhood near the population it serves. It's also vital to be accessible to



friends and family members who also are part of the treatment process.

THE HUNT' for a neighborhood willing to take social services programs is perilous. The NIMBY — not in my backyard — syndrome ignores the needs of the poor, the sick, the hopeless.

DayBreak has heard all the excuses. It's tried to deal with the fears generated by its detractors. This spring, for instance, supporters went door-to-door in the immediate community and heard words of encouragement from almost everyone.

Good neighbors are hard to find. But DayBreak would be a good neighbor and an asset to the clients it would serve.

Time is important. Further review could take four months. Interest rates could shoot up, making the financing precarious; at some point the developers might just look for another project.

That would be tragic. City Hall should find a way to cut through the red tape and get the program approved. There is no good reason to let DayBreak sweat it out a fourth time.