



# ***FINGER LAKES* TIMES ONLINE**

*Geneva, New York*

## **Memorial park may be built at site of fatal fire**

Thursday, November 16, 2006

By DENISE M. CHAMPAGNE

### **Finger Lakes Times**

WATERLOO - A memorial park may be built on the site of the Romulus apartment house where a former Lodi man killed his wife and four children.

That was one option county officials discussed Wednesday when they met about how to proceed with razing the burned-out building at 5692 Main St.

Romulus Town Supervisor David Kaiser said he has had people tell him they would like the house replaced with a memorial park to honor Cheryl Parsons and her four children, who died in a Nov. 5, 2001, fire.

Parsons' husband, Eric Parsons, 30, was convicted in 2003 of setting the fire and is serving 25 years to life in prison at Green Haven Correctional Facility in Dutchess County. He'll be eligible for parole in 2026.

Kaiser said his son was a daycare playmate of the Parsons' 4-year-old, David.

"It was very tragic," he said, calling the house "a constant memory."

Romulus Central School is right across the street, and Seneca County Manager Sharon Secor said officials there have told her that people who knew the family would like to see a park on the site.

Many still place teddy bears and other memorials in front of the fenced-off house, Secor said, noting that many students were friends with David Parsons and his sister, Erica, 6.

The other children were Eric Jr., 2, and Katelyn, 1. Cheryl was 23.

The county owns what many now call the "Parsons House," which it acquired through non-payment of taxes by the former owner. It has remained standing in case Parsons was granted a new trial. His last option was exhausted in late August when the Appellate Division, Fourth Department, in Rochester refused to hear his appeal.

The town has been awarded a \$23,600 Restore NY grant to demolish the house, and Kaiser wanted to know how the town should proceed given that the county owns the house.

County Attorney Steven Getman suggested that the county convey the property to the town.

"I don't think anybody here disagrees that the goal is to remove the reminders of that tragedy," he said. "I think the rehabilitation of that property is important."

Secor said private developers have approached her about buying it.

Getman said it could be sold with the condition that it be used as a public park, and if it's not maintained as such ownership would revert to the county.

"That would be acceptable to the Town Board," Kaiser said.

Getman said it could also be sold to a private individual to rehab into housing.

Secor suggested Kaiser contact IESI/Seneca Meadows Landfill about waiving its fees for taking the waste, which she said it did with a recent public demolition project in Waterloo.

There was also discussion about a possible asbestos survey and whether the amount of the grant will be enough to demolish the house.

"What if the costs exceed the amount of the grant?" asked Kaiser.

"That's something we would have to talk about," said Secor, suggesting the town first draw up bid specifications and get quotes.

Secor also recommended Kaiser contact Flaum Management of Rochester, which is looking into demolishing two warehouses on the former Seneca Army Depot. Kaiser said maybe the projects could be coordinated at a savings. He agreed to get the bid specifications before seeking transfer the property.

"The quicker we start, the quicker we can get rid of that eyesore," Getman said.

• • •

*dchampagne@fltimes.com*

---

Content © 2006 The Finger Lakes Times  
Software © 1998-2006 **1up! Software**, All Rights Reserved