Fieldhouse-Chapel House land swap sought

By Bill Jacob

- Following a May fire which gutted Chapel House, the university and Chapel House are negotiating an exchange of land designed to better coordinate future expansion on the campus.

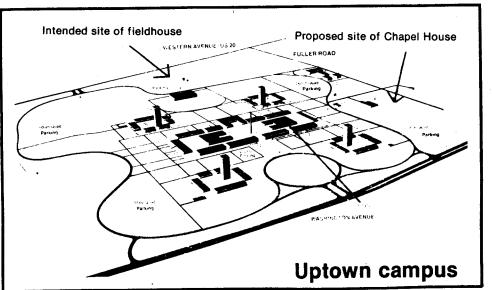
According to Vice President for University Affairs Lewis Welch, the university hopes to use land Chapel House currently owns for the site of the new athletic fieldhouse, which is expected to be completed by 1987.

Chapel House has been offered university property on Fuller Road in exchange, said Welch.

By relocating its building, Chapel House may be able to provide students with greater accessability to Chapel House's programs, Welch said.

"The two situations came together over the summertime and resulted in the identification of a comparably-sized plot of land on the edge of the campus," Welch said. The proposed site for the new Chapel House is located behind the Student Health Services building.

SUNY attorneys must now verify the university's policies and determine exactly what steps must be taken to have the exchange of land legally approved, Welch said, and the process is complicated by the fact that Chapel House's land is privately



The proposed fieldhouse would be located opposite the gym and the new Chapel House would be situated behind the Infirmary.

owned.

Although SUNY Central's Legal Office has not received a specific proposal from the university, Thomas Winfield, an Associate Counsel, said that any exchange of land would have to be approved by the SUNY Board of Trustees and probably by the New York State legislature during its next session.

Chapel House is now situated on ap-

proximately 3.5 acres of land, said Rev. Gary Kriss, President of Chapel House's governing board. Kriss added he believes tha university needs approximately one-half acre of Chapel House's current land for the fieldhouse.

"We have more than enough land to cede the one-half acre and rebuild on our lot," Kriss said, but "if an exchange can be arranged, we can get a location that is

accessible to students."

Kriss said the present location is not easily accessible by car or foot and that Chapel House would benefit from being located closer to the podium. "That's the center for student activity and we would like to serve students," he said.

The new Chapel House site will become more accessible as sidewalks and other facilities are built as part of the new dorms being planned for the area across Fuller Road, said Welch.

Chapel House hopes to complete the construction of its new building as soon as pssible because "it's very important for Chapel House to keep in the public eye," Kriss said. "The longer we're without our building the harder it will be to retain the student interest," he said.

Ground-breaking for the new Chapel Huse is expected to occur sometime next fall, unless problems arise from the exchange of land, Kriss said. "We wanted to break ground during the school year and we hope to be able to dedicate the building the same year," he added.

"The proposed land exchange would make feasible the most practical location of the fieldhouse," Welch said. "Without the swap we wouldn't be able to have the most feasible location," he said.

The fieldhouse, which will seat 3,000 to

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5,000 people, will be a large arena structure and will house sports such as volleyball, tennis, and track, Welch said. "The fieldhouse is fundamentally a recreation facility and not a spectator facility," he added.

Kriss said he expected the exchange to be made on equal value instead of equal acreage. "It's much easier for them and for us if there is no exchange of money."

"I don't expect there to be ay real pro-

blems (with the the exchange)," Kriss said.
"It would be beneficial to both parties...We'll do our best to see that the technical difficulties will be worked out in the simplest way possible," he said.

A Chapel House committee is drawing a conceptual plan of the new building, which is being designed for either of its two possible locations, Kriss said. A final draft of the proposal is expected in early December, at which time an architect will

be hired to sketch plans, he said.

The new Chapel House will most likely include a large general worship area and two small chapels for both the Christian and Jewish faiths, Kriss said. The building will also need office space and botha kosher and standard kitchen facilities, he said. "We hope to make the house more accessible to the Jewish community and a kosher kitchen would do just that."

The new building will require an estimated \$450,000 in funds, Kriss said, all of which he hopes casn be raised through donations from the community. The firm of Button and Button has been hired to coordinate the fund raising project, with SUNYA student T.J. Starr coordinating efforts on campus.

Kriss said Chapel House has already been receiving unsolicited gifts from alumni who have heard that Chapel House burned down in May.

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