

# Condominium construction begins near Asylum Lake

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Construction has begun on a 25- to 30-unit condominium complex near Asylum Lake in the Winchell Avenue neighborhood.

Highpointe Condominiums will include one- and two-story units of 1,350 to 1,800 square feet apiece, said Robert Oudsema, a Kalamazoo Realtor who is a partner in the project.

Project backers hope to have the first phase of construction — nine units — ready for occupancy by mid-September. Project partners are Oudsema, William Maze Jr. and Bill and Deanna Greve of 3405 Winchell.

The clustered condos are going up on a 6.6-acre site just east of Asylum Lake and bordering Winchell Avenue on the north. The site abuts Western Michigan University land on the west and is slightly more than 100 yards from the lake.

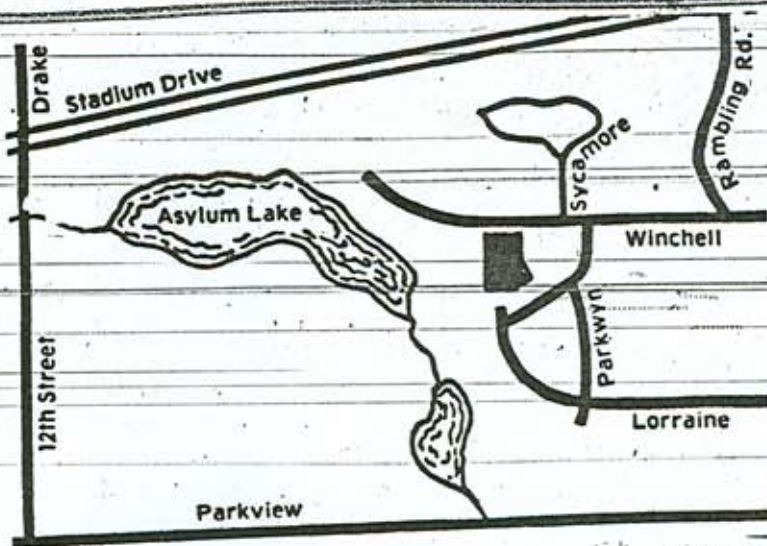
A WMU official has said he will watch the project closely for its potential impact on the university's land. William J. Kowalski, assistant vice president for facilities management at WMU, said in January, "We are always interested in anything that has an impact on the environment of the facilities and property" the university owns, he said.

Kowalski has yet to review a revised site plan Highpointe backers have submitted to the city of Kalamazoo.

Other developments in that area have met with opposition from WMU, which owns Asylum Lake and considerable surrounding property. School officials opposed construction of two apartment complexes near the lake because of potential pollution and erosion problems.

Oudsema and Maze have said no sewage or storm drainage will go from the project to the lake. Drainage will go instead into a low-lying area to the east and north of the project.

"I don't think they should have any problem at all," said Jeff Howe, zoning inspector in the city's Building Division. "They have a natural depression they can



Darkened area pinpoints Highpointe Condominiums site

GAZETTE MAP

drain into."

The development is the first built under a new city ordinance which allows for construction of "one-family dwelling clusters" on land in Zone 8 (single-family residential).

The ordinance allows for such housing to be built on sites of five acres or less. But the city Zoning Board of Appeals in January granted a variance allowing the use of an extra 1.6 acres at Highpointe.

The variance was granted so developers could use the depressed area on the site for drainage.

However, the zoning board denied a request for permission to build 36 units. The board limited construction to 30 units because the clustered-condo ordinance allows no more than six units per acre.

Backers are as yet uncertain how many units will ultimately be built, Oudsema said.

"There will probably be at least 25," he said. "There's an area in the back where the land drops off rather quickly and we don't know whether we will be proceeding with duplex or detached housing in that area."

Prices of the units will probably fall between \$95,000 and \$110,000, Oudsema said.