OSU may get center for treating troubled juveniles

By Tim Deolin
Dispatch OSU Report

A center to conduct research and treat mentally disturbed or addicted juvenile delinquents may be built at The Ohio State University.

OSU and the Department of Youth Services officials are discussing a center for up to 45 juvenile delinquents. The cost would be at least $5 million.

A number of campus sites are being considered, including one east of Kenny Road and north of Kinnear Road.

"Youth Services would operate the institution, and the university would run the research," said Simon Dinitz, an OSU sociology professor who has been working on the project. "This facility would lend itself to new treatment and interest in research in the area of juvenile delinquency."

The center would treat juveniles who are assigned to Youth Services through the courts. About 1,900 males and females between 12 and 21 and convicted of breaking the law are under the care of Youth Services. The average stay is six months.

OSU doctors and researchers would diagnose and treat serious mental disorders or alcohol and drug abuse problems before returning the youths to another Youth Services institution.

Youth Services is already assigning mental health teams to deal with mental and emotional problems, but the agency isn't equipped to handle every case.

"The mental health teams are providing a level of health care, but not the same as (juveniles) could receive from psychiatrists and doctors at OSU," said Carol Rapp Zimmermann, a Youth Services spokeswoman.

OSU researchers in psychology, psychiatry, sociology, social work, education, and social and behavioral sciences would be involved at the new center, Dinitz said.

"The whole point of having the facility on campus is that we would have the resources right here to deal with the issue of delinquent behavior," Dinitz said.

The center would not be the first on campus to treat criminals. University Hospitals has a contract with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction to treat state prisoners.

"There are prisoners housed in University Hospitals, and they would have easier access to the outside than anyone would ever have from our facility," Dinitz said.

Security would not be a problem for the juvenile center because it would be a self-contained building with its own courtyard, he said.

OSU and Youth Services have been discussing the center since December 1987, but several details remain to be worked out before it is built, Dinitz said. Those include:

- A lease agreement between OSU and the state.
- Hiring an architect.
- More money. The state has appropriated $4 million for the project, but another $1 million more is needed, Dinitz said.
- The OSU Board of Trustees must give final approval. A proposal is expected to be submitted to the trustees in three months, Dinitz said.

OSU and Youth Services officials all plan to meet with community groups to discuss the center. Construction won't begin for at least two years, Rapp Zimmermann said.

"We are still looking a long way down the road before anything is built," she said.
Plans discussed for OSU juvenile center

By Kurt L. Leib
Lantern staff writer

Ohio State and the Ohio Department of Youth Services are in contract negotiations to build and jointly operate the nation's first juvenile research and treatment facility near West Campus.

Carol Rapp-Zimmermann, public information officer for the Ohio Department of Youth Services, said the facility will be used to study mentally ill offenders.

"The center will allow researchers to look at a population that is not often examined," she said.

The type of community treatment found in the proposed research center could benefit youth services in the long run by helping relieve the overcrowding in most state detention facilities, Rapp-Zimmermann said.

The 48-bed facility will be funded with $4 million allocated by the Ohio General Assembly for rebuilding several juvenile detention facilities in the state. In addition to building costs, $200,000 will be provided to begin research.

The location of the facility has not been officially announced, but the most likely site is a 2.8-acre plot of land located at the rear of 1960 Kenny Rd. The building at this address is now empty, but will be occupied by the OSU Research Foundation.

Simon Dinitz, sociology professor, represents Ohio State at various meetings with community leaders set up by Youth Services.

"The center would provide many unusual, rare, important opportunities to do research in an area that has been quite neglected over the years," he said.

Dinitz said the youths that will be treated are not "ordinary offenders" but delinquents with serious emotional and psychiatric problems. He said a large number of youths committed to institutions suffer from more than one disorder—some of them also have learning disabilities.

The treatment center will be available for use by many areas of study, including psychiatry, psychology, speech and hearing, social work, sociology and education, Dinitz said.

The facility will incorporate a state-of-the-art security system, but from the outside the complex will look like an ordinary residential research facility, he said.

Dinitz said supporters of the center believe the campus is the only place that has all the facilities to conduct the research. He said if the university does not construct the center it will go to another university and be built on DYS land farther up the Scioto River.

He said he would like to see the research center built here, so students in professional or graduate schools can use it.

But Poitras, superintendent of the Training Center for Youth, 2280 W. Broad St. said some types of research projects could require that juveniles be transferred from the detention center to the main part of campus.

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Judge Charles Petree II, Franklin County Juvenile Court, said he supports such a treatment and research center because juvenile delinquents are the people the community wants to see off the streets.

"When some sex offenders come through this court with 50 to 70 documented victims, obviously some type of treatment is needed," he said.

Youths convicted of sex offenses require as much as eight hours of intensive programming a day, Petree said.

Ricardo Martinez, a doctoral candidate in criminology, said the research center will provide an excellent opportunity to gain hands-on experience and practical experience in management techniques learned in the classroom.

Rapp-Zimmermann said a meeting is scheduled for Jan. 18 between the Ohio Department of Youth Services and representatives from Clinton Township.

Members of the executive committee of the University Area Commission have reportedly expressed reservations over the planned facility. A newsletter, written by Bob Evenson, commission president, alerted citizens of the intentions of Ohio State and the Department of Youth Services.

"I have a whole lot of questions that need answered," Evenson said. "I don't think DYS has been honest and open to the public."

"The most overwhelming concern," he said, is why the center must be built so close to campus.

Evenson said this type of facility does not belong in such a highly populated area, even if security is maintained. He said the executive committee asked the DYS to hold public hearings on the project.

Evenson said that it was only fair to have a hearing to inform the public.

Howard Gauthier Jr., associate provost for academic affairs administration, said the day-to-day operation of the facility will be conducted by the Department of Youth Services while Ohio State will retain absolute power over research projects.

"This is the only reason for having (the center) on campus," Gauthier said, "if it is not, it could be located anywhere."
Center's future topic of meeting

By Kurt L. Leib
Lantern staff writer

 Residents concerned about a proposed juvenile research and treatment center will have a chance to voice their views at a public meeting on Jan. 16 at 7:30 p.m. in the Clinton Township Fire Station, 999 Chambers Rd.

The center would be jointly operated by the Ohio Department of Youth Services and the Ohio State. The proposed site is located to the rear of 1960 Kenny Rd.

The 45-bed facility would treat delinquents with serious emotional and psychiatric problems.

Larry Wilkes, chairman of the board for Clinton Township Trustees, called the meeting to allow the Department of Youth Services to answer questions about the proposed center.

"I hope to have three representatives from DYS, one from the office of state Representative E.J. Thomas, as well as members from the Upper Arlington and Grandview city councils," Wilkes said.

Wilkes did not know if Ohio State would send a representative to the meeting.

The meeting was scheduled to inform residents of "the nuts and bolts of what will go into (the center)," said Carol Rapp-Zimmermann, public information officer for the Department of Youth Services.

The Department of Youth Services will inform residents about current and future plans, Rapp-Zimmermann said.

Residents of University View, an apartment complex located across from the proposed site, have expressed concern over the detention facility, Wilkes said.

"It's not the sort of facility that should be part of a campus," said James Hunkler, a University View resident. "This facility will only make things convenient for OSU graduate students and faculty."

"The university totally neglected their responsibility to the community," said University View resident Ted Jones.

Jones said the university is not even considering another site and if the facility is built, property values for the entire neighborhood would fall.

Kenneth Wilson Jr., a member of the American Institute of Real Estate Appraisers, said property values probably would not be affected. "My best guess is (property values) wouldn't be affected at all."

"I've worked with the university on and off for 20 years and it's been my experience they are a reasonably careful group," Wilson said.
Residents oppose facility

By Kurt L. Leib
Lantern staff writer

The Clinton Township fire station was the scene of a heated debate Tuesday night between about 250 angry residents and representatives from the Ohio Department of Youth Services and The Ohio State University.

Residents from University View, Grandview and Upper Arlington are angry over plans to build a 48-bed research and treatment center for the study of juvenile offenders with serious emotional and mental problems.

Ohio State and DYS are negotiating to build and jointly operate the center. The proposed site for this facility is a wooded area located to the rear of 1900 Kenny Road. The building is currently empty but plans call for offices of the OSU Research Foundation to be housed here.

Larry Wilkes, a Clinton Township trustee, scheduled the public meeting with DYS officials to help address some concerns area residents have about the project.

"The facility we are talking about is one of a kind and we think it is really needed," said Bud Potter, superintendent of the Training Center for Youth, 2280 W. Broad St.

"It (the center) is nothing but a proposal at this time, but Ohio State has given this a vote of confidence," Potter said.

Residents at the meeting expressed concerns over public safety and any effect a facility of this type may have on property values.

"I want to flatly state we don't want this center in our community," Wilkes said. "A pressing concern I have is what will this do to my property value?"

Wilkes also posed the question about who would be responsible in case of a fire or emergency.

"Clinton Township would be the primary unit to respond to a fire," Wilkes said.

Residents at the meeting would like to see an alternative site picked for the center.

"The university is the only place that has all the facilities needed," said Simon Dimitz, professor of sociology.

"Plans call for research to be conducted by many areas of study including psychiatry, psychology, speech and hearing, social work, sociology and education.

"It (the center) is still in the discussion stage, that is why we didn't come to you (the public) before," Dimitz said.

State representative E.J. Thomas addressed the citizens saying, "I know you would like to leave this meeting knowing you whipped this issue and I would encourage you to stay involved in this."

Carol Rapp-Zimmermann, DYS Public Information Officer, talked to Wilkes about the possibility of forming an advisory committee to study the issue.

The advisory committee might include a township trustee, representatives from DYS and Ohio State, a state representative or senator as well as property owners and area residents, Rapp-Zimmermann said.

Wilkes called the meeting a success.

"These people are upset. We all like apple pie but we don't want the oven in our area because of the heat," Wilkes said.

Wilkes still has many questions that need answered.

"They (DYS) never addressed tonight the environmental problems of the drainage problems we have in this area and they never got down to the real security problems."

Many OSU alumni live in the area and if the research facility is built these alumni have said they will stop contributing to the university, Wilkes said.

Citizens from Upper Arlington have formed a group called the "Concerned Citizens Council" and will discuss steps to stop the plans for the juvenile center.
City council opposes detention center

By Melissa Hurd and Kurt L. Leib
Laurens staff writers

The Upper Arlington City Council on Monday passed a resolution opposing plans for a juvenile research and detention facility to be built on OSU property near the city.

At the same time, a group of Upper Arlington residents met to formulate their own plan of attack against the proposed facility.

The Concerned Citizens Council, representing the Upper Arlington residents, does not oppose the concept of such a research facility but considers the location unsuitable.

The Upper Arlington City Council also opposes building a facility of this kind near residential or community business areas because it would have a detrimental effect on personal and family safety.

The city officials recognize the need for such a facility for the long-range treatment of juvenile delinquency, but they would like to discuss the proposals with project planners before any final decisions are made.

"I would like to see, for instance, the department of Youth Services come forward while this is still in the formative stages and have some discussion with us about what they propose to do there and seek our advice and suggestions on this project," Councilman William J. Napier said.

The proposed 48-bed facility is to be built behind 1960 Kenny Road and jointly operated by the Ohio Department of Youth Services and The Ohio State University. The land is part of investment property under the control of the OSU board of trustees. Youth services plans to build a "hacienda style" detention center. This style has a building encircled by a courtyard and enclosed by a wall. Plans call for research to be conducted by several groups from the university. The facility would house juvenile delinquents suffering from identity and personality disorders, major mood disorders, schizophrenia and severe anxiety.

"The Ohio Department of Youth Services and Ohio State want to make a sacrificial lamb out of you (residents)," said Joseph S. Streb, spokesman for the Concerned Citizens Council. It is irresponsible to put a facility of this type where they plan.

Streb proposed some alternatives to the Kenny Road site, such as a rural area where a fence could be built to ensure security.

Streb said he spoke to several employees of youth services who have indicated that there is plenty of room for the planned facility on state property at 2280 W. Broad St.

Councilman Napier expressed regret at not being able to offer an alternative solution.

"It disappoints me that we don't have any alternatives in our resolution here tonight," Napier said. "I've always felt disappointed when people say in response to these kinds of projects: 'I don't care where you put it, just don't put it anywhere close to me.'

Many of these are worthy projects and take care of people who need the treatment they offer," Napier said.

Additional opposition to the proposed facility came from several state representatives and senators from Columbus.

A letter was sent Monday to OSU President Edward H. Jennings and Youth Services Director Gene Natucci-Persichetti, calling the proposed site "inappropriate," and strongly urged project planners to...

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Treatment center site is opposed
5 legislators say OSU area is inappropriate

By Alan Johnson
Dispatch Statehouse Reporter

Five state legislators expressed opposition yesterday to plans to build a treatment and research center on Kenny Road for mentally disturbed juvenile delinquents, and the proposal may be scrubbed.

The Ohio State University and the Ohio Department of Youth Services have discussed building a $6.5 million, 48-bed center on 2.9 acres of university land at 1960 Kenny Rd., north of Kinnear Avenue. It would be used to treat disturbed young offenders and for research.

Area residents and Clinton Township trustees have expressed serious concerns about the proposal.

Reps. William Schuck, R-Columbus, Mike Stinziano, D-Columbus, and E.J. Thomas, R-Columbus, and Sens. Richard C. Pflieger Jr., D-Columbus, and Eugene J. Watts, R-Galloway, sent letters opposing that site for such a center. The letters went to OSU President Edward H. Jennings and Geno Natalucci-Persichetti, youth services director.

The legislators said the proposed West Campus site would be "inappropriate in light of the residential character of the surrounding neighborhoods."

The area borders the University View subdivision and Upper Arlington.

The legislators said they will work with the university and the Youth Services Department to find an off-campus location.

Malcolm Baroway, a university spokesman, said in view of opposition from legislators and neighbors, it is "highly improbable" that the university would proceed with current plans.

Baroway said university officials are willing to work with legislators to find a suitable site.

Youth services spokeswoman Carol Rapp Zimmerman said Natalucci-Persichetti was out of town yesterday and had not read the legislators' letter.

Residents reacted cautiously.

Larry L. Wilkes, chairman of Clinton Township trustees, said, "All is forgiven if they (OSU officials) decide not to build it" on university land.

He said that if the center is built in the general area, he will help launch a campaign to cut off donations to the university.

Wilkes said he opposes the project because of concerns about security and property values.

Joseph Streb of Upper Arlington said residents opposing the center will be happy only if plans for the Kenny Road center are abandoned.

Streb, a lawyer and spokesman for a citizens committee, said, "The object is to have them say, 'We're not putting it on the Ohio State University campus.'"

Legislation authorizing the center does not mention OSU, Streb said. "Now all of a sudden, we have people who want to turn college campuses into prison facilities. There's no amount of security that's enough."
Residentsof Flooded Area

By Carol Ann Lease

CLINTON TOWNSHIP — Safety and property valueswere major issues raised by residents objecting to aresearch and treatment center for mentally disturbedjuveniles proposed for Kenny Road, north of Kinney Road.

"Can you guarantee us that people will not be able to break out?" University View resident Bonnie Price asked officials of the Ohio Department of Youth Services at a meeting last week. Price said she would not have bought her house had the center been nearby.

Youth Services wants to build a 48-bed center in conjunction with The Ohio State University behind 1960 Kenny on the OSU West Campus.

If anyone except the state officials among the audience of about 200 supported the idea at last week's meeting at the township's Chambers Road fire station, that person did not speak up.

Trustee Chairman Larry Wilkes concluded the meeting by saying he will introduce a resolution opposing the center at tonight's meeting.

Many Upper Arlington residents, including Joseph Streb of the Concerned Citizens Council, joined township residents in arguing that the center should not be in a major metropolitan area.

Youth Services officials said the center needs to be near OSU to make it available to students and faculty of all the disciplines that will contribute efforts to find a better way to treat youths who have committed crimes and also have mental problems.

Simon Dinitz, an OSU sociology professor who has been working with the project, said the research and treatment require "enormous amounts of equipment" that are available at OSU.

University View resident Jane Cataldi said graduate students and others will go where they need to to do research. "The question is whether senior faculty want to be bothered," she said.

Cataldi said OSU students will be as much at risk as area residents if someone escapes from the proposed center.

Points brought out at the meeting by Youth Services officials and Dinitz included:

- Money has not been appropriated for the center, which would cost $4 million to $6 million to build, but it is available.
- The proposal probably won't go to the OSU Board of Trustees until early spring. Although Youth Services representatives emphasized that it is a proposal, they said they have no alternative site to the 2.9-acre Kenny Road property.
- The center is to be built like a "hacienda" with an interior courtyard, surveillance cameras and sound devices, and windows too small to crawl through.
- The center must do research, not just house juvenile offenders, or the property will revert to OSU.
- 180 of 1,800 youths sent to Youth Services by judges in a 1987 survey needed special mental health services.
By Connie A. Higgins
Of The NeighborNews Staff

CLINTON TOWNSHIP — Trustee Chairman Larry Wilkes was 90 percent sure two months ago that a research center for mentally disturbed juveniles would be built in the township.

But Wilkes said last week he’s now 90 percent certain the center will not be constructed.

The Ohio State University and the Ohio Department of Youth Services have discussed building a 48-bed center on 2.9 acres of university land behind 1900 Kenny Rd., north of Kinnear Road.

The area borders the University View subdivision and Upper Arlington.

"I hope they find a place that will not affect residents' safety."

— Larry Wilkes

At a meeting last week, township trustees approved a resolution stating that such a facility would not be suitable in or near urban residential neighborhoods or community business areas.

It also said Clinton Township will cooperate with other governmental bodies in finding alternative sites.

Wilkes said the proposal for the center is likely to be scrubbed because about 200 residents and five state legislators joined to oppose the West Campus site at a special meeting with OSU and Youth Services officials two weeks ago. "I hope there are no winners or losers," Wilkes said.

"I hope they find a place that will not affect residents' safety."

Youth services spokeswoman Carol Rapp Zimmermann said the Kenny Road location still is being considered, and the department is to talk with state representatives and other concerned parties.

"The site was never finalized. It was part of fact finding," Zimmermann said.

In other business:

* The trustees declared April 16-30 Clean-Up Awareness Week in conjunction with Clean-Up Ohio month.
* Block Watch Chairman Skip Apple encouraged residents to light up their residential areas to prevent break-ins.
* The trustees approved the resignation of full-time dispatcher Joy Stephens. She accepted a dispatching job with the Grove City Police Department but will continue to work in Clinton Township part time.
TREATMENT CENTER WON'T BE BUILT AT OHIO STATE

COLUMBUS -- A research and residential treatment center for youthful offenders jointly proposed by the Ohio Department of Youth Services and The Ohio State University will not be built at Ohio State.

Howard L. Gauthier, associate provost at Ohio State, said Wednesday (5/16) that the university cannot find a site for the center on the Columbus campus.

"Tremendous support for the program still exists," Gauthier said, "but the question is locating a proper site for the center. In making this decision, we considered the concerns of neighborhood groups."

People living in areas adjacent to the university and local legislators opposed construction of the center at Ohio State because they claimed the campus was an inappropriate place to treat young people convicted of serious crimes.

The Department of Youth remains committed to the idea of providing appropriate mental health care for these youth, as well as research into the constellation of health problems that may contribute to their criminal behavior.

The Ohio General Assembly in 1988 appropriated funds to the Department of Youth Services for a 50-bed research, teaching and
treatment facility. The facility would draw on the expertise of faculty members in a number of fields to treat the mental health problems of youthful offenders and to conduct research into innovative solutions to the problems of juvenile crime.

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Contact: Howard Gauthier, associate provost at Ohio State, at 292-5881, and Carol Rapp Zimmermann, administrative assistant to the director of DYS, 466-4314.

(Steve/69)
OSU scraps plans for youth center

By Tim Doulin Dispatch Higher Education Reporter

Public sentiment has prompted The Ohio State University to scrap plans to build a treatment and research center on Kenny Road for mentally disturbed juvenile delinquents.

OSU and the Ohio Department of Youth Services had discussed building a $6.5 million, 48-bed center on 2.9 acres of university land at 1960 Kenny Rd., north of Kinnear Road. It would have been used to treat young, disturbed offenders and for research.

"We will not be involved in any agreement with the Ohio Department of Youth Services," said Howard L. Gauthier Jr., OSU associate provost of academic affairs. "If the project goes forward, it definitely will not involve The Ohio State University."

Word of the proposed youth center sparked a storm of opposition from area residents and state legislators last year. Residents feared the project would create security problems and reduce property values.

In January, state Reps. William Schuck, R-Columbus, Mike Stinziano, D-Columbus, and E.J. Thomas, R-Columbus, and Sens. Richard C. Pfeiffer Jr., D-Columbus, and Eugene J. Watte, R-Galloway, sent letters opposing the site to OSU President Edward H. Jennings and to Geno Natalucci-Persichetti, Youth Services director.

"Mainly, our decision was based on the notification concerns and the strong opposition of some of the members of the Franklin County delegation," Gauthier said.

Youth Services is giving up on OSU but not the project.

The General Assembly appropriated money for Youth Services for the center, which was to be designed to use the expertise of faculty members in a number of fields to treat the mental health problems of youthful offenders and conduct research on juvenile crime.

"Either the mission of the facility has to change or we have to find a new university," said Carol Rapp Zimmermann, a spokeswoman for Youth Services. "Since we are committed to the need for residential research, we will be looking for a new university."

That means Youth Services will look outside Franklin County.

OSU was the only area university that could provide the medical, social, psychological and psychiatric services required by Youth Services, Rapp Zimmermann said.

"It has to be a multifaceted university," she said.

"We have put out hints to people in the academic community and asked legislators from around the state to please take a look at what is in their area and give us some feedback."
OSU rejects plans for juvenile center

By Kurt L. Leib
Lantern special assignment writer

Ohio State will not be the home of the nation's first residential treatment and research center for mentally ill juvenile offenders, university officials said.

Representatives from the Ohio Department of Youth Services and the university began working together last year in an effort to build and jointly operate a 50-bed facility for research into juvenile crime.

Plans called for the center to house juveniles with serious mental health problems. All these juveniles would be offenders convicted of crimes that would be considered felonies if committed by an adult.

A proposed site for the center was chosen on an area of land located behind 1960 Kenny Rd. But residents in the area objected to this site and formed several neighborhood groups to press officials to drop plans for the center.

Howard L. Gauthier, Jr., associate provost, announced Wednesday that university officials could not find a site for the center.

"Tremendous support for the center still exists but the question is locating a proper site for the center," Gauthier said. He added that the decision was made to drop plans for the treatment center after considering concerns of neighborhood groups.

Carol Rapp-Zimmermann, DYS spokeswoman, said the department is not giving up on the concept of a residential research and treatment center.

Rapp-Zimmermann said to continue dealing with Ohio State would have meant an increase in the cost of the center. She said university officials asked DYS to move the facility off campus and to provide a shuttle-service for OSU researchers. In addition to this, DYS would have had to provide a complete X-Ray facility, larger staffing as well as hardship pay for psychologists, Rapp-Zimmermann said.

"Taxpayers would not take kindly to that kind of spending for 50 kids," she said.

Rapp-Zimmermann said it made more sense to contact other universities in hopes of finding one interested in jointly operating a treatment center.

"We have some feelers out to other universities, but nothing solid yet," she said.

DYS plans to look for a multi-faceted university, similar to Ohio State, to meet the needs of the research and treatment center, Rapp-Zimmermann said.

Ted Jones, an organizer for the Concerned Neighbors group, said he was happy but sad over the news of Ohio State pulling out of the project.

Jones said that the group still believes that the project is worthwhile and would support it at an appropriate site.

He said he plans to contact Gauthier and express the group's interest in helping university officials find another site.

"We feel this is a very worthwhile project and will support it at an appropriate site," Jones said.

He said he thinks the decision by university officials to break away from the project was based on a combination of things. The community action and obvious zoning problems caused officials to back down, Jones said.

OSU officials and Columbus officials disagreed over which zoning regulations would apply to the proposed facility, Jones said.