

Doctor Felix A Osowski

He was born in May 1889 in New York the son of immigrant parents. His father was a blacksmith. See the following article in the Polish Eaglet (Spring 2001) by our esteemed Warren Historian Patricia Hallman. (my source for most of this article) Felix became a doctor and surgeon for 34 years in Detroit.

During the depression he created jobs by having a summer home built near Beaver Creek in Warren. This was built during the depression (1936) and ended up being a 3,300 square-foot Tudor mansion. He was married and had three daughters. He became chief of staff at St Joseph's Hospital. He died in 1949. His wife Mae was an opera singer who died in 1962. (According to a Macomb Daily article by Norb Franz. Date unknown)

One of the daughters sold the home and property to Joseph Elnick who had planned to expand the house and turn it into a nursing home. However business partners backed out and he and his wife Jean decided to stay. Joseph died about 2012 and the widow still lives there. It appears that their children are doctors. The home is probably the biggest mansion in Warren and sets on 16 acres and on both sides of the last wilderness area of Warren the Bear Creek. As the Elnicks aged and their children moved out the mansion became an increasingly burdensome chore to take care of. Master Gardner Tom Turmal did a lot of work there and also was leading efforts to save the mansion when one possible buyer wanted to demolish it. Business man Michael J Monahan wanted to put a 96,000 square foot office complex there but backed out when the city council refused to change the zoning. Councilman James Fouts called the Tudor a "jewel." and that this house may be the last grand home in Warren. Tom Turmel stated that he didn't want the house demolished or moved because "You'll louse the beauty of the way the house is hidden in the pines, and an aura of mystery."

At the time of this writing no one knows what will become of this "jewel" This is certainly the family's business.

But wouldn't it be nice if this beautiful wilderness area could be preserved along with the grandest mansion in Warren. We already have excessive pavement, offices, overcrowding and parking lots. We certainly don't need more offices and parking lots. Warren would do well to preserve this nature area for benefit of all especially as perhaps a nature center. At least let a walkway be established along the Bear Creek. See pictures of the creek area starting at page 301.



Bear Creek at left goes thru GM Tech Center above



an altercation at a Warren nightclub June 4, appeared with his attorneys

concealed weapon — four and five-year felonies, respectively.

oring professional obligations that

See EMINEM on page 9A



Photo by Erin Rossi

The Osowski Estate, at Mound Road and 12 Mile in Warren, was built in 1935 by Dr. Felix A. Osowski.

Efforts being made to save historic home

BY JENNIFER SAKEY
C & G STAFF WRITER

Barely visible behind a line of trees at Mound Road and 12 Mile sits a piece of local history that may be destroyed.

The Osowski Estate, a 3,300-square-foot Tudor mansion built in 1936, may be torn down if a buyer is not found who can renovate it and use it commercially. Local preservationists, however, are making efforts to save the house.

"I always like a challenge,"

said preservationist Patricia Hallman of Shelby Township.

Hallman first became aware of the house when her friend, Tom Turmel of Warren, saw a rezoning sign on the house's property and began attending Planning Commission meetings to learn more about the future of the site. He found that the property was then zoned for commercial use, but heavier rezoning would allow for both commercial and

light industrial use.

Hallman then decided to do research on the house and became fascinated with its history.

She learned that the home's original owner, Dr. Felix A. Osowski, was from a successful Polish-American family. He was a doctor and surgeon for 34 years in Detroit and had a wife and three daughters. Most impressive to Hallman is that Osowski



Osowski

See HOUSE on page 18A

"I can't talk about this right now," said her husband, William Cooper, who was

Acting Battalion Chief Ronald Kibzey said a more likely reason the fire spread so

service will be held at noon Tuesday in Edward Swanson & Son Funeral Home, Madison Heights.

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Demolition plans on hold for Warren mansion

Developer says home stands in way of office complex.

By Norb Franz
Macomb Daily Staff Writer

One of Warren's oldest and largest homes has been saved from demolition — temporarily.

A developer wants to purchase a 16-acre parcel on Mound Road, south of 12 Mile, and build an office complex where the 3,300-square-foot Tudor mansion sits hidden among tall Norway spruces.

But history buffs want the home saved, even if it means moving the house to another location.

"We don't want to block the development, we want to alter it to save this beautiful home," said Tom Turmel.

Turmel, a self-employed landscaper, said he has teamed with a local couple that's willing to buy the home and between 2 and 3.5 acres, and turn it into a bed and breakfast.

Dr. Felix Osowski, a former chief of staff at St. Joseph's Hospital, built the home as a summer retreat in 1936. He died in 1949.



History buffs hope to save this 64-year-old home from demolition.

Macomb Daily staff photo by David Dalton

His wife, Mae, was an opera singer who died in 1962, Turmel said.

The home has five bedrooms, maid's quarters, a wine cellar, a bomb shelter and a library.

Joseph Elnick, 83, bought the home in 1965, and lives with his wife in a section of the large house.

The property is one of the largest undeveloped parcels in

Warren. City leaders are eager to draw high-level investments to those few remaining tracts.

The Monahan Development Corp. has agreed to buy the 16 acres from the Elnicks, contingent upon a rezoning from the city. Company President Michael J. Monahan said he cannot build a planned 98,000-square-foot office center with the Bear Creek split-

ting the property and the home in his way.

"It's really not possible to keep the home where it is and develop the property in any fashion," he said.

Members of the Warren Historical Society joined Turmel in urging the City Council to save the house.

Society member Jonathon Laferty, who lives near the site, wants city officials to at least explore alternative uses for the home. Preserving such a large home built in the 1930s would allow generations of families to go back in time, he said.

Council members delayed a rezoning decision until May 23, hoping a large corporation before then will donate the money to possibly move the home to another location.

Turmel, 42, doesn't want the Tudor relocated.

"You'll lose the beauty of the way the house is hidden in the pines, and an aura of mystery," he said. "We plan on doing a full restoration."

Councilman James Fouts called the Tudor a "jewel."

"I'm taken aback, this may be the last grand home in Warren," he said.

Busy Mount Clemens senior plans to study engineering in

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House

from page 1A
built his estate in Warren during the Depression, at a time when many people could not afford a home at all.

In 1965, Joseph Elnick purchased the home from one of Osowski's daughters. He had originally planned to expand the house and turn it into a nursing home. When his business partners backed out, however, he and his wife Jean decided to stay, and they have lived there ever since. Now that the Elnicks are in their 80s and children no longer live there, the home is simply too big for them to maintain.

"Everything is growing so fast around here. We can't keep up to take care of it," said Joseph Elnick.

At a City Council meeting in May, Hallman spoke to the council about the research she had done on the house. Hallman says the council was impressed and voted to table the rezoning issue for two weeks.

In the meantime, Hallman

learned that the house may qualify for federal and state tax programs that could provide financial incentives for its preservation. After copies of Hallman's research were sent to the State Historic Preservation Office in Lansing, a faxed reply was received stating that the home is eligible for the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

"We are not aware of any other large houses of this type in Warren," the letter states. "The architectural distinction of the property and its uniqueness in Warren make it a very important property to protect."

If the house were placed on the state and national registers, it would qualify for up to 25 percent tax credit for rehabilitation.

This new information was presented to the council, but they still voted in favor of the new rezoning. Now, the property must be used for commercial purposes. Unless a buyer is found with a plan to renovate the house and put it to use, the house is likely to be torn down.

Although the city is not providing money towards saving the home.

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Ed Bayer of the Warren Planning Commission says the city is anxious to work with anyone who would be willing to take on the project.

"The home would be great if someone could preserve it," he said.

The house would need extensive remodeling, including a new roof. Elnick estimates it would cost \$40,000-\$50,000 to make all the necessary repairs. Hallman stresses, however, that if someone were willing to save the house, she would

work with them to put it on the state register and help them receive the tax credit.

"It would be very difficult to do something with the house as it stands," Elnick said.

Because of its location, however, the property is very valuable, and the Elnicks have been negotiating with Eastpointe developer Michael J. Monahan. Currently, Monahan has a purchase agreement on the house but says he has not found any-

one with a use for it or the money to renovate it. Elnick says he and his wife only plan to stay in the house until next spring or possibly into the summer.

"We're sad about it," said Elnick. "Jean doesn't want to move out and the kids don't want to see it destroyed ... They call it progress."

For more information, contact Patricia Hallman at (810) 781-2963.

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The Osowski Family By Patricia Hallman

The American dream of success eludes many people, but through hard work, Polish immigrant Peter Osowski and his descendants achieved that goal.

Peter Osowski arrived in New York City aboard the ship *Trave* on 13 May 1887. He was passenger #799 of 818 and listed as a 28 year-old workman. He had left Europe from the port of Bremen and claimed his last residence as Danzig. He then settled in Buffalo, New York, where he resided for many years at 926 Sycamore Street and worked as a blacksmith. His future wife, Antonia Torlup, arrived in the United States in 1888; and they were married that same year.

According to the 1900 census for Buffalo, Erie County, New York, Peter was born in April 1859 and Antonia in January 1866, both in German Poland. Antonia stated that she had seven children, six of them still living. These children, all born in New York, were Felix (May 1889), Wladyslaw (September 1890), Boleslaw (July 1893), Jaderiga (July 1895), Helena (November 1897), and Edmund (September 1899). The children were all in school or at home. Peter and Antonia could read and write in Polish, but did

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See the deer at front door



