

Corn Hill projects give downtown a new frame

Daschle pursues patients' rights

■ Democrats in South Dakota to act on the offer

GANNETT NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON — For four years, congressional Democrats have tried to pass bills that would allow people to sue health plans over coverage disputes.

One patients' bill of rights passed the House in 1999, but failed in the Senate. Democrats blame Republican opposition and intense lobbying from the insurance industry. Critics say the bills would have enriched lawyers and driven up health care premiums.

With Democrats poised to take control of the Senate, the patients' rights bill could gain momentum.

Soon-to-be Majority Leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota listed a patients' bill of rights as a priority after lawmakers return from their weeklong Memorial Day recess.

The questions now are which of the two measures pending before a Senate panel will come to the floor, and what sort of protections will prevail.

The measures would allow people to go to emergency rooms, obstetricians and gynecologists without having to clear it with their health plans. There would



JAMIE GERMANO staff photographer

Workers rebuild a wall on the eastern bank of the Genesee River across from the Corn Hill neighborhood, an area where more than \$50 million in redevelopment is planned in the next few years.

Housing, walks and bridge on the way up

BY STAFF WRITER
JEFFREY BLACKWELL

Photographers who have captured the downtown skyline from the Ford Street Bridge should consider updating their portfolio, because the best view of the city is slowly changing.

Millions of public and private dollars are being invested along the Genesee River gateway into downtown, between the Court Street and the Ford Street bridges. Three big-ticket projects are under way that promise to change former railroad yards into a riverside community downtown.

"The view is fantastic and it is our connection to

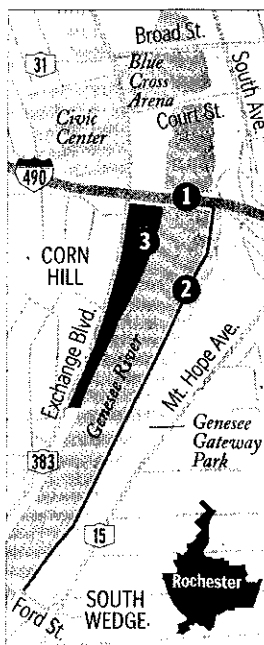
the canal," said Fashun Ku, the city's commissioner of economic development. "This is a very important area to us."

Before the 1970s, both sides of the Genesee River south of Court Street were lined with freight yards from the Erie and Lehigh Valley railroads. Removal of the rails left two narrow swaths of land on each side of the river. Those parcels are receiving a great deal of attention as city officials put new emphasis on the riverside property throughout Rochester.

In the next five years, a housing and commercial

Plans for the riverfront

About \$50 million of public and private investment could spur a new community between the Court Street and Ford Street bridges.

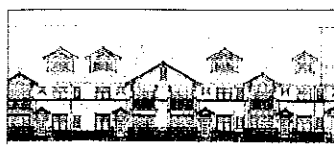


1 **New I-490 bridge span**
Cost is estimated at \$20 million.



2 **Rebuilt river wall/walkway**
The city and state Canal Corp. project will cost about \$4 million.

3 **Apartment/office center**
Mark IV Construction plans to invest more than \$15 million in the project near the Corn Hill neighborhood.



CORN HILL, PAGE 8A

SOURCE: Erdman Anthony Consulting Engineers

TRICIA POWERS staff artist

Bush speeds up WWII memorial

State Sen

Corn Hill

FROM PAGE 1A

center will be built on the west side of the river near Corn Hill. The state will replace the bridge carrying Interstate 490 over the river with a stylish steel arch bridge. On the east side of the river, the state is replacing the river wall and building a walkway. The cost of the projects approaches \$50 million.

"I think it will bring more people to the city and it will showcase the Corn Hill neighborhood and hopefully raise property values," said Jack Herrmann, who has lived in Corn Hill for 10 years. "It will really utilize an area that has been underutilized for many years."

The \$20 million Corn Hill Landing project, announced two years ago, is a major part of the riverside development, Mark IV Construction is planning to invest more than \$15 million in the project. Company plans include construction of 125 one- and two-bedroom luxury apartments, 15,500 square feet of retail space, 15,000 square feet of office space and underground parking.

Construction was scheduled to start this spring, but delays in financing and an agreement between the city and state for the lease of land along the river has delayed the project's start to end of summer or early fall. It will take about 18 months to complete construction, excluding the office facility.

Paul Foti, the company's vice president of commercial development, said Mark IV is working to secure a \$14.5 million loan guarantee from the Department of Housing and



<p>MARK IV MARKETPLACE & FACTORY CONSTRUCTIVE CORPORATION</p> <p>OWNER: MARK IV CONST. CO. INC.</p>	<h2>CORN HILL LANDING</h2> <p>ROCHESTER • NEW YORK</p>	<p>10</p> <p>THE CORNER FOR THE PARTNERSHIP PARTNERSHIP</p> <p>ENGINEER: THE SEAR & SMITH GROUP</p>
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Provided illustration

The \$50 million Corn Hill Landing project will blend retail and office space.

Urban Development for the project. HUD has given preliminary approval and financing should be obtained by the end of summer, Foti said.

"Everything is coming together and starting to become reality," he said.

The state and city are partners in the development. The state Canal Corp. completed reconstruction of the flood wall and built a public walkway south of Court Street, linking downtown with the Canal Landing project. The state project included dockage for boats with hookups to water and electric service. Its cost was about \$1.6 million.

The city spent \$2.7 million to prepare the site for construction, including the removal of contaminated soil.

Mark IV is planning to integrate apartments, retail and office facilities into the riverside improvements completed last year. Foti said community inter-

est in the project is high. The company has preliminary commitments from seven commercial tenants, including restaurants, a coffee shop, ice cream shop and gift shop. The company is also pursuing a fitness club.

"This will be a great place to live," Foti said. "A resident will be able to meet someone for coffee, have their hair done, go work out in the gym right where they live. The fact that it is waterfront and has an incredible view of the city makes it a choice piece of property."

That view will improve with the construction of a new bridge carrying I-490 over the Genesee River. The state is planning to spend \$20 million in federal highway funds to replace the bridge with an arched "signature" bridge painted to highlight the view of the skyline from the river. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2003 and

would take several years to complete.

Design engineer Howard R. Ressel said the bridge should accent the river corridor and add color to the downtown skyline. He said Sherwin-Williams Co. is helping with the paint scheme for the structure.

"We are designing a bridge to last 50 years," Ressel said.

The east side of the river is also receiving attention. The city and state are spending more than \$4 million to rebuild the river wall and to build a walkway similar to one on the west bank. The work is expected to be completed by the end of the year. It will improve the trail between the Erie Canal and downtown.

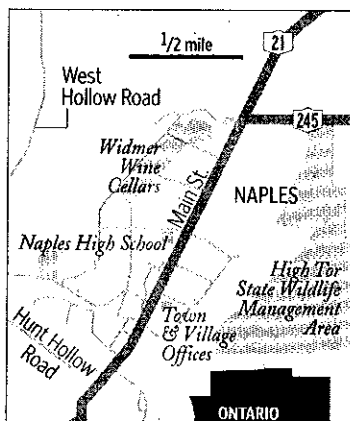
Herrmann said all the development may help the city become more of an attraction. "I think the city and county are beginning to realize the full potential of waterfront areas." □

Naples

FROM PAGE 1A

The five-member Village Board was forced to put the proposition on the June ballot after a citizens group this spring got signatures of more than one-third of the village's residents calling for a referendum.

Recent straw polls have indicated that most villagers favor a merger that would turn over village government to the town.



with his lawyer.

Braun said Rector was fired last year after a state hearing officer found him guilty of 17 charges of neglecting his duties and insubordination. Rector appealed and was reinstated with full back pay.

Rector agrees that village government "is in a state of total chaos." But he denies being a cause of problems, which he said are the result of Braun's efforts to dictate to him and other employees how to do their jobs.

The feud also has resulted