

# Open space question delays decision on Mount St. Mary's

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HOOKSETT -- Planners are stumped on an open space stipulation for the Mount St. Mary's apartment complex. As a result, last night they delayed a vote on a petition to convert it into condominiums.

The owner of the 73-unit former college building is negotiating to sell it to another holding firm, which plans to convert the apartments into condos and sell them off. But a proviso of a 1997 master plan, agreed to by the planning board before construction began three years later, mandates the hilly space in front of abutting Route 3 could never be built upon.

After a 30-minute, closed-door session last night, the board had not decided whether to transfer that clause to the new owners. Subdivision for the condo conversion was held over to the board's next meeting on March 21.

Prospective buyer of Mount St. Mary's, Brady Sullivan Properties of Manchester, agreed to honor the current leases of tenants, who also would have the first look at the units when they come up for sale. Any tenant not signing onto a mortgage and with a lease ending in less than 270 days would have at least that amount of time before having to leave the complex, a company representative said.

The firm has not yet set a sale price for the units.

While planners last night repeatedly went over the sale notice length, the issue of open space -- a matter of concern to the nearby library -- remained up in the air.

When Mount St. Mary's was turned into apartments in 2000 by current owner Dick Anagnost, library officials were told their building would forever have access from the road that snakes around the apartment's facade and nothing would be built in front of it, according to library trustee chair Mary Farwell