

# Storage condos likely for sale in city soon

Permanent homes for boats, cars and the like

**By John Schultz**  
Staff Writer

No need to get rid of belongings that don't fit in basements or garages. New Berlin residents will soon be able to buy a condo — a storage condo, that is — to house surplus possessions.

New Berlin Storage Condominiums will be constructed on a vacant parcel of land at 20050 W. Lincoln Ave. by developer Steven Schwid and builder Anderson-Ashton. Schwid said over the last 10 years, seven or eight such projects, which offer storage units that are owned rather than rented, have been built in cities around the state.

The condos often house items strict subdivision rules prohibit storing outside such as boats, jet skis and recreation vehicles, Schwid said.

The New Berlin Plan Commission granted its approval April 2 to build 43 condo storage units at the nearly 5-acre site.

Schwid said he hoped to start building this summer and have Phase I of the units completed by fall.

Though he did not have final prices yet, he speculated they would sell for between \$40,000 and \$60,000 per unit. Units will be either 1,200 or 1,440 square feet.

Schwid said they would be 14 feet high with 12-foot-high doors so large recreational vehicles could be parked inside. Since there will be no outside storage at the site, Schwid said there are no plans for a fence around the site.

Because the units are condos, an owner's association would exist. The association could decide later to install a fence or make other such decisions about the condos.

## Condo concept catching on

Schwid said there are storage condos in Port Washington, Fredonia, Appleton, Green Bay, Eagle River and La-

Crosse.

"In Port Washington they couldn't build them fast enough," he said. "The concept came from the south and west, where they have expensive cars and RVs to store."

Amy Bennett, a planner in the city's Planning Department, said the use of the land on Lincoln Avenue for the New Berlin Storage Condominiums was consistent with the city's master plan.

Alderman Dave Ament was concerned the aisles between the buildings may not be wide enough to allow fire trucks to maneuver efficiently. Brian Fisher, project manager for Anderson-Ashton, said the road widths were 25 feet.

"Twenty-five feet is pretty common for self-storage projects," he said.

Schwid said he met with city fire officials and assured plan commissioners no hazardous or flammable items can be stored in the units. Just like residential condos, the project requires condo documents with rules and by-laws.

## Brick facade will add to look

One sticking point for commissioners was the disagreement between the city's Architectural Board and city planning staff over the amount of brick to be required on the storage buildings.

Lee Sisson, who is on both the Plan Commission and the Architectural Board, explained the Architectural Board approved brick fronts for the buildings that face Lincoln Avenue and brick wainscoting for buildings on the east and west sides of the property. Staff recommended brick veneer on all sides of the buildings.

Sisson pointed out the area is now considered to be almost a blighted area.

"But we (Architectural Board) were asked to think of what the area could be 20 years from now," he said.

In the end, the commission required all brick on the Lincoln Avenue side and

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**Steven Schwid**, developer  
on the popularity of storage condos

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brick wainscoting on the other three sides. Schwid was agreeable to that.

## Lighting added incrementally

A traffic impact study of the site predicted traffic to be fewer

than 10 cars a day. On seasonal weekends that could be expected to increase to 20 to 40 cars per day.

The commission also approved the project with a waiver from the city's lighting requirements. Fisher explained the project will be developed in phases with the first phase including the development of 12

buildings and all the roads, utilities and grading.

If all the lighting were required immediately, the area would be too bright at night. The lighting will be completed as the project is built.

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