

Retreat for retarded planned

Site near Rolling Prairie will include homes, cabins, lodge

ANNE WATSON
THE LAPONTE HERALD-ARGUS

ROLLING PRAIRIE — A Michigan City charity plans to build a retreat and complex of group homes for retarded adults at a 184-acre site in northeast LaPorte County.

The Share Foundation With the Handicapped plans to start building in the summer at a site located east of CR-300E and north of the Toll Road, near Hog Lake. The project will take more than five years to complete and cost more than \$1 million, according to Rev. Dennis Blaney, president of the Share Foundation and priest at Sacred Heart Church in Michigan City.

The project will be designed to help moderately retarded adults and their families. The site will include 15 group homes for 30 moderately retarded adults, along with four cabins and a lodge for retreats and camps for retarded adults and their families.

Blaney explained that there is a demand for homes for moderately retarded adults in Indiana. Recently, laws have forbidden the admittance of retarded adults into nursing homes, creating a demand for group homes to house them. "There are large numbers of people who have left home or are ready to leave the home," Blaney said.



BY BOB WELLINSKI / STAFF

REV. DENNIS BLANEY looks Thursday across the 184-acre site located north of the Toll Road and east of CR-300E that will be the site of a retreat and home for retarded adults.

The project will also be a year-round retreat and camp site which other retarded adults and their families may visit. The retreats would hold up to 25 people.

Initially, the Share Foundation will build one or two group homes and several cabins and the lodge. Each home will house two retarded adults and a staff member. The Share Foundation will then expand the project when money allows. When finished, there will be 15 staff members.

The Share Foundation has purchased the land for the project and raised \$125,000 to start. It still needs to raise \$40,000 to cover purchase of the land. Blaney is hoping that a combination of grants and donations will pay for the rest of the project.

The Share Foundation was created 10 years ago to help retarded and other disabled groups. It supports short-term or respite care for the parents of retarded in Lake and Porter counties, a service agency for the

deaf and a camp for the retarded. It plans to soon build a group home for the severely mentally and physically handicapped in Michigan City on Woodland Avenue, to be managed by Dungarvin Inc., a St. Paul, Minn.-based company that has opened group homes in Indiana and Minnesota.