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HEADLINE: Residents to discuss pending sale of complex
Calvert School officials plan meeting tonight

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BODY:

As residents of a North Baltimore apartment complex prepare to meet tonight with officials from the Calvert School who want to buy their building for a school expansion, they'll have to decide whether to pursue a more aggressive strategy to save their homes.

A lawyer told a group of Tuscany- Canterbury apartment residents last week that they should publicize their plight as a possible strategy to block a pending sale of their building, 4300 N. Charles St.

Lawyer John C. Murphy told them to spread the word of the " pain and heartache" involved in the transaction, which would entail tearing down the brick apartments for a middle school and playing fields.

Because the pending sale to the private school appears to be legal, he said, the court of public opinion might be the place to turn.

"Stand up for yourself," he said.

Planning session

About 100 residents of the 7-acre garden apartment property met at Second Presbyterian Church in Guilford, also the site of tonight's meeting, to trade tales of being dispossessed.

Some elderly residents said they hoped to live there the rest of their lives.

Some urged the group to describe their feelings to members of the Calvert School board of trustees.

"I'm surprised Calvert would enter into this contract, knowing they would put 130-odd people out into the street," said Allan J. Mead, a resident.

School officials have said they will honor, but not renew, residents' leases and will assist in relocation. A relocation consultant is scheduled to be at tonight's meeting.

Three state delegates from the 42nd Legislative District were at last week's meeting.

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"We will support you," Del. Maggie L. McIntosh said.

"Something about this whole procedure is very unpleasant," said state Attorney General J. Joseph Curran, who lives in nearby Homeland.

He said "it might be appropriate to consider guidelines for the plight and rights of tenants" in such a sale.

Earlier this year, another large residential property in the neighborhood, the Northway Apartments, was sold to a Virginia entrepreneur who plans to turn the building into an assisted-living center for senior citizens.

Neighbors' concerns

Brenda Richardson, an art historian who has lived at the 4300 N. Charles St. property for 26 years, raised the issue of two architecturally significant homes designed by Laurence Hall Fowler.

If the sale goes through, Calvert would own both of those structures.

A third Fowler home is owned by filmmaker John Waters, a Calvert School alumnus who also opposes the sale, according to Richardson.

"This sale would change the face of the neighborhood," Richardson said.

"Hopefully, the Calvert trustees will see that side of it."

One resident, Norman Brubeck, remained pessimistic.

"Our little dream is over," he told his neighbors. "Make plans for the future."

GRAPHIC: MAP(S) Property purchased

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