

\$3.5M Fairhill campaign to create new housing for elderly caregivers

By **SHANNON MORTLAND**

4:30 am, August 4, 2008

After providing for more than a decade programs for older people raising their young relatives, the Fairhill Center in Cleveland now wants to give some of them a place to live.

Fairhill is in the quiet phase of a \$3.5 million campaign to raise money for Kinship Village, a community of 22 apartments and seven townhouses on the Fairhill campus that would house older people raising young children, said Michael Gathercole, associate director of Fairhill, which provides services to the elderly.

The housing units would be created in two existing buildings on the Fairhill campus at 12200 Fairhill Road, Mr. Gathercole said. The buildings, which were constructed in the late 1920s as part of the U.S. Marine Hospital campus, have been vacant for at least 25 years, he said.

Fairhill has raised more than \$700,000 during the campaign, which will enable the center to plan the project, hire an architect and remove lead-based paint and asbestos from the old buildings, Mr. Gathercole said. Demolition will begin soon, and an architect likely will be hired in the coming weeks, he said.

Kinship Village has been in the works for several years because a rising number of older adults are raising their young relatives, Mr. Gathercole said. Though Fairhill has provided education and counseling programs for those families, "one of the most pressing needs is to find secure, stable and affordable accommodations," he said.

The initial 29 units would be the first phase of Kinship Village but Mr. Gathercole said Fairhill eventually hopes to grow the concept outside its campus.

"We're not trying to think big, but we're trying to think ahead," he said.