

Mega Strip Club Set to Open Next to Convent

A \$3 million strip club is planned just steps away from a convent, despite the presence of children and others who find the adult entertainment facility, called Get It, offensive.

Thomas More Society attorneys are demanding that the village of Stone Park, Ill., put a halt to construction of the strip club.

“For over 60 years, the Sisters of St. Charles have devoted their lives to teaching the children of Stone Park—service for which they’re now being repaid with a ‘porno palace’ towering over their convent,” said Peter Breen, executive director of the Thomas More Society. “This facility was located in clear violation of state law, and zoning permissions were given without notice to the sisters, whose convent is located immediately next to this facility.”

In his address to the Village Board this week, Breen identified a state law imposing a one-mile “buffer zone” between adult entertainment facilities and “places of worship,” which he contends prohibits the placement of “Get It” next to the convent and its several chapels.

In April of 2010, the developer of “Get It” sued the village of Stone Park, accusing its officials of shaking him down for cash and part ownership of the club in exchange for permission to build the facility. The village settled the lawsuit in August of 2010.

Even though the village’s ordinances were largely unchallenged by the lawsuit, the village agreed to repeal or amend numerous ordinances as part of the settlement agreement, ending that lawsuit. In particular, the village agreed to repeal a local ordinance—similar to the state statute—that imposed a 1,000-

foot buffer zone between adult entertainment facilities and schools, parks, churches and residential areas.

“The local buffer zone ordinances were never challenged in the lawsuit brought by the developer, nor could those ordinances be challenged, because they were valid and constitutional,” said Breen. “There was no reason to agree to the repeal of the ordinances protecting the people of Stone Park from strip clubs coming into their residential and other child-heavy areas.”

According to the mayor of Stone Park, the village chose not to defend the developer’s lawsuit because doing so would cost the village \$500,000. Village officials have discouraged residents and the sisters from protesting “Get It.” However, this week, the Thomas More Society offered free legal services to the village of Stone Park should it choose to join residents in taking action against “Get It.”

“Get It” personnel have claimed that the facility is set to have its first “dry run” on April 1, and will officially open its doors during Holy Week, the most hallowed week on the Christian calendar, leading up to Easter Sunday.