

NEIGHBORHOODS

WATTERSON PARK

Soccer club renovating building as training facility

Industrial structure to allow indoor play

By Bailey Loosemore
bloosemore@courier-journal.com
The Courier-Journal

A brick building with film-covered windows and an adjacent overgrown field off Poplar Level Road will soon receive a makeover as a soccer training facility.

The nonprofit Louisville Soccer Alliance bought the property at 3001 Stober Ave. in Watterson Park more than a year ago and is working to receive a permit to use the building for training, president Michael Hayes said. The alliance hopes to open the facility by next fall.

The industrial building was previously used for auto repair and steel fabrication, Hayes said, and is one of a few left without support poles scattered through the middle — which is what the alliance needs to create an indoor field. It is also centrally located between the organization's

SUPPORT LOUISVILLE SOCCER ALLIANCE

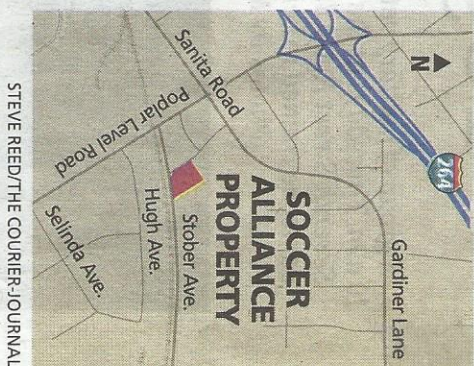
» To donate to Louisville Soccer Alliance, mail a check to P.O. Box 34113, Louisville, KY 40232. For more information, send an email to Gemma Dattilo at admin@louisvillesoccer.com or go to www.louisvillesoccer.com.

four outdoor facilities, near Bowman Field, north of Shively, east of St. Matthews and in Jeffersonton.

The biggest benefit of the new facility, though, will be eliminating the need to rent gym space, Hayes said. During the winter, the alliance had been practicing at gyms in two schools and a church.

"We need our own facility so we're not kicking exit signs off the walls in the church and

See SOCCER, Page A6



STEVE REED/THE COURIER-JOURNAL

SOCCER: Club is renovating building

Continued from Page A5
things of that nature," Hayes said.

Louisville Soccer Alliance has already spent about \$250,000 to buy and renovate the building but is trying to raise another \$450,000 to complete the indoor and outdoor fields, Hayes said.

The indoor field will have two rows of bleachers for family and friends to watch, and the outdoor facility will include three basketball court-sized fields for practice.

"We're not planning on using the facility as a revenue stream, like a lot of people do," Hayes said. "We're truly a nonprofit and pretty much stay that way."

Louisville Soccer Alliance was formed in 1989 and has worked to further a love for soccer not only in players but also in fans across the city. The organization's programs range from children to adults with more than 1,000 people participating this year, Hayes said.

"We're very passionate about the game and trying to develop the game from a grassroots level," Hayes said.

Reporter Bailey Loosemore can be reached at (502) 582-4646. Follow her on Twitter at @bloosemore.