



Tribune photo by David Kobucak

The former Stewart-Warner plant on Chicago's North Side is being torn down to make way for new homes.

# Time's up

## Housing will put new face on site of run-down city factory

By Charles Hayes

TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER

It once housed as many as 2,000 workers, who assembled each day to fashion precision industrial instruments in the buildings under the tall brick clock tower.

Today, change is the only instrument at work on the North Side site. The factory, whose tower became a timepiece of renown for drivers along the Kennedy Expressway, is making way for houses.

In what city officials describe as one of the largest planned developments to be approved in recent years, Enterprise Development Co. Inc. has started construction of Landmark Village on the 8.9-acre Stewart-Warner Corp. site at 1800 W. Diversey Parkway.

Stewart-Warner abandoned its instruments manufacturing plant in late 1989. The facility had been vacant and deteriorating for several years.

Demolition of the 13-story, 1.15 million-square-foot main plant with its landmark clock tower and 11 other on-site buildings began last month on the same day as work started on the project's 56 single-family homes and 136 rowhouses.

The Stewart-Warner demolition is part of a continuing trend in the city of Chicago, which last year saw about 1 million square feet of obsolete industrial space demolished and this year could lose more than 2 million feet to the

wrecking ball.

"As far as we're concerned in the industrial market, good riddance," said Kevin Kete, executive vice president with Paine/Wetzel Associates Inc. "A lot of these older industrial buildings just don't meet the demands of modern tenants."

Stewart-Warner was not originally meant for the scrap heap. When it entered into negotiations over the parcel in 1990, Enterprise Development intended to recycle the existing buildings for residential use.

The intent was logical for a company which since 1960 had completed more than \$200 million in projects that involved adaptive reuse of a former stable, soda pop factory, church, synagogue, YMCA, Masonic temple, furniture factory, food products plant, brewery and wooden wheel works.

But the Stewart-Warner "white elephant" proved too daunting.

"For nine months, we studied the main building for size and configuration but found it simply didn't lend itself to reuse," said John Shipka, director of construction and field operations.

"We conceded that it couldn't be done because the interior didn't lend itself esthetically to rehab. There was no way to make the project economically feasible," he said.

But equally daunting is the demolit-

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