

Tenants hit by flood discuss legal action

By **ANDY MCCORMICK**

Staff reporter

Tenants of flood-ravaged Elsmere Park Apartments met Saturday with lawyers to discuss legal points ranging from security deposits to compensation for "mental anguish" suffered by flood victims.

About 80 tenants from the 195-unit complex attended the meeting, which was called by a tenants' committee formed Friday to represent renters who may have lost all their possessions in Wednesday's floods.

The committee approached Eric M. Doroshow of the Elsmere firm Doroshow, Pasquale & Linarducci on Saturday afternoon with questions about the tenants' legal position. A tenant spokesman said the group is concentrating first on tenants in basement-floor apartments that have been condemned and boarded up.

The group also will seek compensation for second- and third-floor tenants without hot water or

hallway lights, said Julian Elliot, another committee member. He said rats have been spotted and mosquitoes and gnats have invaded many apartments.

Doroshow urged tenants not to sign a cleaning consent form prepared by the apartment's owners, Elsmere Associates. He said tenants might be waiving their rights to future compensation by signing.

Moore urged tenants to carefully preserve videotapes or photographs that show the wreckage. The lawyers asked for \$50 in fees from each tenant or tenant family, but said they would represent those who didn't have the money.

Doroshow said he would be looking at the owners' apparent violation of a town ordinance requiring notification of tenants of properties below the flood plain. He said he would also be looking at the owners' insurance coverage, which would likely provide the bulk of any compensation awarded tenants.

"The Best Lawyers In America"

Attorney Eric M. Doroshow, senior partner in the firm of The Legal Clinics of Doroshow and Pasquale, in Wilmington, has just been named as one of the "Best Lawyers in America," in a book written by Stephen Naifeh and Gregory W. Smith.

The book, which is billed as a consumer's guide to the finest legal services available in five different fields, named Doroshow as one of the leading Delaware attorneys in the area of debtors and creditor's rights, and bankruptcy.

The authors state that they were assisted by a team of researchers and have asked thousands of lawyers across the country whom they would turn to, to help them with problems they couldn't handle themselves.

Doroshow states, "I accept this accolade, not only in recognition of my work, but in recognition of the work of our legal assistants and paralegals who work hand in hand with our clients. Our firm has been able to provide quality legal services at a reasonable price, because many of the administrative chores in the bankruptcy field can be adequately handled by these legal assistants."

Doroshow was the first Delaware attorney to advertise. The firm makes heavy use of legal advertising to attract middle income clients. The firm started in 1978 with one lawyer and secretary. By 1987, The Legal Clinics of Doroshow and Pasquale had twelve lawyers, a staff of fifty, and six offices.