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Irate homeowners wage war on city

By RON GARBENSKI

For more than 450 homeowners, it all boils down to one question: Who is the local government run for?

Residents of the Canterbury Commons and Oakland subdivisions in Farmington Hills have mounted a campaign to let the city council know how they feel about the city moving ahead on plans to pave Bond Boulevard.

It's a complicated situation, says Oakland subdivision representative Bob Berry. "The residents of both subdivisions don't think it makes sense for the city to go ahead with the paving of Bond Boulevard even though the vast majority of us don't want it paved."

"We have talked with everyone in the community and 97 per cent from Canterbury and 85 per cent from Oakland oppose the city's decision. We don't want to see the city pave the street because it will increase traffic in the subdivision and create a real hazard for our children," he continues.

The subdivisions' homeowners associations are planning to attend the Hills council meeting tonight at 8 p.m. in force to voice their concern over the matter at a public hearing in city hall.

AFTER THAT PUBLIC hearing the council will decide whether to continue plans for paving or honor the residents' request and drop the matter.

What the city plans to do is pave Bond Boulevard, located north of Thurston Mile from where it meets Orchard Lake by Bond School through an open field to the subdivision. According to subdivision repre-

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sentatives that is approximately a two block stretch.

When the subdivisions were built, contractors apparently planned to have the road connect Orchard Lake. But it was never built and only a 10-foot wide sidewalk now serves as an access point through the adjoining field to the subdivisions.

City administrators are trying to jam this paving issue right down our throats," says Ron Acho, a representative from the Canterbury Subdivision. "There are 240 homes in this subdivision and 43 in Oakland. It just seems as if these city officials of ours think they can do anything they please without letting the residents know."

What we're worried about is the city paves the street, is that the road has the potential to become a drag strip. Just thinking about the straightaway that would be created by paving the street through—it would be about six or seven blocks long—frightens us. The biggest reason why we don't want the street to go through is because of the safety hazard it poses for our children.

RESIDENTS FROM BOTH subdivisions feel that the 10-foot sidewalk now running where the road would go serves the community adequately. It provides walking access to area stores and other homes and buildings.

They claim that building the road would destroy the natural beauty of the area since most of that land is heavily wooded and abundant with wildlife.

Besides destroying the beauty, it would also crush the integrity of the subdivisions. Canterbury is a planned, single-family district, while Oakland is more rural, offering its residents a quality of life they desire.

Another reason why they oppose the paving is because of all the foreign traffic that would move through the subdivisions. Subdivision representatives claim the council wants to put the road through because it opposes closed subdivisions and this area is rather self-contained.

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Swimming free

There are some days that only ducks can love. The harder it rained one day recently, the more this pair of wild ducks on the stream that runs through the lawn on the northeast corner of Grand River and Halstead, seemed to like it. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

City eyesore receives facelift

Official docket

FARMINGTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The council will decide the fate of recreational vehicles in the city at tonight's meeting when it considers the question of putting an advisory vote on November's ballot. The council will determine whether to ask the voters to maintain the city's current regulations or add further restrictions to the recreational vehicle ordinances. Also on the council's agenda is a request for a site plan and review of the city's Department of Public Services facility on Nine Mile. City Mgr. Robert Deadman will report on the results of the Maple Street paving survey taken earlier this year while several zoning ordinances and requests also will be considered. The council will discuss the state's recent decision calling for a review of the city's new building code amendment.

FARMINGTON SCHOOL BOARD

The appointment of a new secondary assistant superintendent will highlight the meeting along with Supervisor Schuman's administrative reorganization of the central office. Liability insurance, portable classrooms, salaries and the concept of pass-fail grading also will be considered by the board. Residents can voice their concern about school matters at this meeting by filling out an index card prior to the meeting.

The Farmington Hills Planning Commission will conduct two public hearings Thursday at 8 p.m. at City Hall.

A 96-year-old Farmington landmark soon will undergo a facelift.

The old LaSalle winery on Grand River will be restored and converted into a facility for wholesale outlets and a theme restaurant, a plan that ultimately will draw new business and revenues to the Farmington area.

With this restoration, another of Farmington's deteriorating eyesores will be eliminated. The winery joins the old Medalion Pool building on Grand River and the New Era Potato Chip warehouse on Nine Mile in becoming transformed for different business purposes.

John White, of Surling White in Farmington, has purchased the building and its more than three acres from the New York-based parent company of LaSalle Wines & Champagnes, Inc.

White plans to move his manufacturing representative firm into the old structure, and lease the rest of its 94,000 square feet to other wholesalers. He has been approached by three separate groups which want to convert part of the interior into a theme restaurant and cocktail lounge. One group even visualizes

using the 86 wine vats remaining in the structure as different areas for a dining room.

WHITE, ALSO SAYS he has discussed lease agreements with several companies and presently has enough commitments to fill about 35,000 square feet in any of the structures' three levels.

The LaSalle resident hopes to retain the historic appearance of the building while giving the entire structure a complete facelift. He plans to redesign the interior and redress the exterior, a move that could cost him more than \$700,000.

The restaurant group who will lease a section of the building would provide more than \$500,000 to remodel the facility. To detail the historical background of the old structure, White hopes a historic marker may someday be placed on the grounds to explain its significance in the development of the Farmington community.

The winery has stood vacant for more than six years. Back in the late 60s LaSalle slowly pulled out of the Farmington area because it became too difficult to pro-

duce wine in this region. LaSalle had to transport its grapes from western Michigan and the process became too expensive for the major wine producer.

The new owner has considered purchasing the winery for several years, but finances posed a problem.

"I first looked at the old place five years ago, but we just didn't have the money then," White explains. "Our company outgrew its present office long ago and we have been searching for a new facility for some time."

"I WAS LOOKING in other communities for an office when I just happened to make

the right call at the right time," he continues. "I just finished closing the deal on the winery Friday afternoon."

The winery has been for sale since it closed in 1970 and was considered by several buyers, but none made any formal commitment to purchase the old landmark.

White's future facility pleases city officials, it will do much to provide new dimensions to the community. With the wholesalers and restaurant, it will bring increased revenues to the city.

City Manager Robert Deadman said Friday afternoon that a restaurant group is scheduled to come before the city council tonight to request a liquor license for the new dining and cocktail lounge.



The old abandoned LaSalle winery on Grand River will soon become the home for several wholesale firms and a theme restaurant as its new owner finalized the real estate transaction last week and made plans for remodeling the 96-year-old structure. (Staff photo)

Media center

(Below) Media center architect Des Hamill of Hamill, Becker and Carne, lends a hand to the building crew as he cuts a piece of insulation for the ceiling. (Left) Nearing completion is a new media center for Beechview Elementary School. It is the same design as the others in the district's grade schools. (Far left) The media center at Kenbrook School was cleaned and polished by Denis Schwab minutes before she sat down to have her picture taken. The center had fire damage three years ago, so refurbished with new accessories, it is one of the newest in the district. (Staff photos by Harry Mauthe)



Police rule youth shooting accidental

Police ruled Friday afternoon that a 15-year-old Farmington youth, who was found dead in his bedroom Wednesday evening, shot himself accidentally in the head with his own rifle.

William Morset, 3054 Heatherton was shot at close range by a .22 caliber rifle in his right temple.

Morset's mother returned home after a golf outing and luncheon around 6:15 p.m. Wednesday and found her son lying in his bedroom with the rifle on the floor next to the body, police said.

Apparently the youth was alone in the

house at the time of the shooting. Police found no indication of foul play or any trace of an intruder possibly shooting the Farmington High School student.

Morset's mother reported that her son had a liking for guns and collected firearm literature, but was forbidden by his parents to own a weapon.

Friends of the youth said that his parents had taken away one gun he managed to obtain from a mail order catalog, but last year he bought himself a .22 caliber Remington semi-automatic rifle.

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Firearm Safety Course

The Farmington Hills Police Department is offering a free firearm safety course Aug. 21 at its pistol range. Read the details on page 4.

It's fix-up time...

By CORINNE ABATT

While this is the season for model changes in the auto industry, it also is the time for the final changes to update and keep the educational programs timely.

While the Farmington Schools District isn't in the business of making any drastic changes before the new school year, there are some improvements in both curriculum and facilities taking place.

The outward ones are the most obvious. Media centers for Forest and Beechview elementary schools are close to completion. This is part of a plan established several years ago by the school board to gradually install these

updated resource centers in all the elementary schools.

With the new units at Forest and Beechview, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education Larry Pfriemden says, "Now 14 of our 17 elementary schools will have media centers."

He says the new centers are of the same basic design of those added to other schools, thus lowering costs.

Media centers are the update of libraries—less formal and more complete in the kinds of resources and equipment they offer the students.

THE CENTERS ARE staffed with specialists ready to help youngsters who come in to use the (Continued on page 4A)