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Hills City Council listens

Public housing foes swarm meeting

The senior citizen-low income housing debate went another round Monday night in Farmington Hills as pro and con forces stated their cases before city council and a gallery of more than 300 residents.

In the largest crowd assembled this year for a council meeting, hundreds of residents jammed inside council chambers to hear 10 selected speakers address both sides of the controversial housing issue.

Many were lured to the meeting by an anti-federal housing pamphlet distributed to Farmington Hills residents last weekend by the Freedom, Beech-

wood, Gill Homeowners Association. That group presented council with petitions signed by nearly 2,000 residents demanding an immediate halt to the project.

No action was taken Monday on the proposed Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) sponsored project. A MSHDA spokeswoman in Lansing said Farmington Hills application is in the pre-review process.

Farmington Hills Villa would be a six-story mid-rise built on Drake and Freedom roads on an 11-acre site. MSHDA regulations would require about 60 of the 200 units to be occupied

by families who qualify for housing assistance.

Opposition centers around the site, height and low income aspects of the project, which would be built by Multi-Rise Corp.

JULIEANN HOVANESIAN, president of the Freedom, Beechwood, Gill Homeowners Association, was first to address the gathering.

"You have ignored us regarding locally supported senior citizen housing," she charged the council.

"We ask you to withdraw your application to MSHDA. If you don't, we ask

for a public hearing to consider alternatives. Two thousand families in 12 subdivisions support our point of view," she concluded.

Other speakers opposed to the project said they favored locally supported senior citizen housing and would be willing to pay higher tax instead of "listening to dictation from Washington, Lansing or anywhere else."

Some said the six-story building would be out of character with the single family homes predominant in the area. They charged council with ignoring a November advisory ballot question that will ask voters whether mid-

rise is acceptable in Farmington Hills.

"We will do anything, including going to court, to stop this project," vowed Hills resident Jack G. Burwell.

His words, like those of other opponents in the audience, were met with rousing applause.

Speakers in favor of the project included members of the Farmington-Farmington Hills Commission on Aging, League of Women Voters, various clergymen, Oakland County Commissioner Robert McConnell (the first mayor of Farmington Hills), and former Farmington School Superintendent Marius Van Ameyde.

"IT IS SAD to see yet another challenge to senior housing," said Aldo Vagnozzi, a member of the Commission on Aging.

"It is sad to see literature that uses scare words like HUD and federal interference. Senior citizens are the builders of this community. They deserve our gratitude.

"People can earn as much as \$19,000 and qualify for low income housing. That includes young families living on one salary or teachers and city workers in our own community.

"We have talked too long. It's time to (Continued on page 11C)

Battered wives fear spouses, outside world

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

Breaking away from an abusive mate is easier said than done.

Fear of reprisals join the feelings of insecurity, loneliness and doubts about a woman's ability to support herself financially.

For these reasons, abused wives who prosecute their husbands are rare, according to police and social workers. And the number of battered wives who leave their husband is only slightly higher.

"I've been in police work for 15 years and I've seen only one woman prosecute," said Farmington Public Safety Director Daniel Byrnes.

"And that woman was severely beaten."

Farmington Hills Police Officer Linda Harris estimates that five of every 100 women who complain of abusive spouses will prosecute.

Even leaving without prosecuting is an action attended by fear, according to Myra Kruger, director of the Women's Survival Center, a resource service in Pontiac which services the tri-county area.

About half of the 228 women who call or visit the Survival Center are subject to abuse from spouses, according to Ms. Kruger.

MANY WOMEN are afraid of retaliation even after divorce, according to Ms. Kruger. One woman moved in with her mother after the divorce, seeking safety from her ex-husband. When he discovered where she was staying, the ex-husband slashed her car tires one night.

Cooling off periods between filing a complaint and prosecution have been criticized by the women's movement as increasing the chances that a husband will retaliate against a battered wife.

Recent legislation allows police officers to make an arrest without a warrant if they believed a spouse has been assaulted.

An arrest without a warrant could be made if a person violated a court ordered injunction to stay away from a spouse.

Other bills require police to keep records of domestic assault cases and court injunctions forbidding a person contact with a spouse.

Judges can send a spouse to counseling instead of jail in abuse cases under the new law.

But police and Ms. Kruger find fault with the new legislation.

"IT JUST MEANS more records to keep," said Byrnes.

"The only good part about the law is that now we can arrest a spouse for violating a court injunction. Before we could only tell the woman to call her lawyer and go back to circuit court. And the woman's lawyer would tell her that if her husband came back to call the police," he said.

Ms. Kruger terms the help offered by the legislation "minimal." She points to legislation in Pennsylvania which takes the man out of the home until the court case is resolved.

Living with the person they're prosecuting makes it tough for wives to decide upon that step, according to Ms. Harris.

"What will happen is that a neighbor will call or a woman will call and she'll fear for her life. The next day, she's still angry. She still will prosecute. Within a week she won't prosecute."

When she's facing a battered wife considering court action Ms. Harris

"It's worse in the (more affluent) north than in the south end of town. No one hears what's going on. And when the woman calls, the first thing she asks is 'you're not coming in a marked car, are you?'"

—Linda Harris

says she tries to paint a realistic picture of what to expect.

"The husband will get a life cash bond or personal bond if there is no previous record. What's going to happen is that prosecution will just aggravate the man and he'll go back into the same house," she said.

MANY TIMES the woman doesn't want to divorce her husband, according to Ms. Harris.

Others fault the police departments for making it difficult for women to prosecute.

Prosecutors are reluctant to take spouse abuse cases, according to Ms. Kruger. They say the woman won't appear in court.

"It's very true, she doesn't," said Ms. Kruger. "But she doesn't get much support through the legal system to prosecute. We tell women to collect their own evidence. To go to the hospital, to have a witness, to call the police if they're going to prosecute."

But, she admits, many women don't think ahead when they're caught in an abusive situation.

"Police make it hard. They're not responsive. They don't want to treat this as a crime. They treat crime in the home different than crime in the streets," Ms. Kruger said.

On the other hand, police officers call spouse abuse the most frustrating kind of case they can have.

"If I see a child being abused, I can take that kid out of the home so fast their heads will spin. But I can't do that for a woman," said Ms. Harris.

Shelters in the Farmington and Farmington Hills area are non-existent. Police and social workers agree there is a need for shelters and for employment counseling.

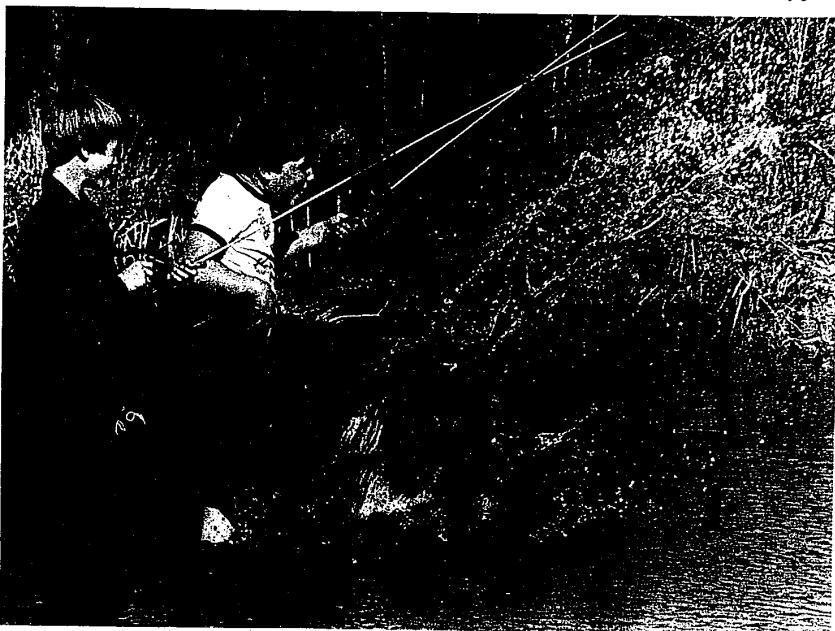
ONE OF the reasons women balk at leaving a bad situation is their lack of security in knowing they can take care of themselves. Many women who have been married a long time or who were married right out of school are unpracticed at everyday survival skills.

Making purchases, handling a checking account and balancing a budget are among the skills they lack. Their husbands take care of the family's financial matters. Savings accounts and checking accounts are in the husband's name.

Ideally, women should have a place to go to decide upon a career and a plan for living. Career counseling is needed, according to Ms. Harris and Ms. Kruger.

That type of counseling is difficult to find, now. Workshops are available but they charge a fee. Many women don't have the money for these workshops, Ms. Kruger said.

Once the woman has decided to (Continued on page 6A)



Yup, this is it: The good life

Tom Sawyer, move over. No sooner had the sun peeked through the clouds than these young lads quickly took advantage of the better side

of life. Enjoying their fishing dip are Bryan Bossacwen (left) and Tom Koss. (Photo by Allen Schlossberg)

Headlee pushes legislators, public for tax amendment implementation

By STEVE BARNABY
Farmington editor

Tax-cut crusader Richard Headlee has shifted into high gear to insure that state lawmakers interpret his amendment, passed last November by Michigan voters, as he believes it should be interpreted.

This week McMaster Associates, the public relations firm Headlee has hired to promote his view, circulated a "letter to the editor" to area newspapers authored by Headlee.

The letter asks that newspaper editors inform their readers to keep an eye on state legislators, to see what kind of laws they are voting on to interpret the Headlee amendment.

In recent weeks, Headlee has ex-

pressed consternation over a bill introduced by state Rep. George Montgomery, D-Detroit, which would allow city councils the right to raise the millage rate back to the authorized level without a vote of the people.

An attempt to amend the bill, introduced by Donald Van Singel, R-Grant, was aborted by a one-vote margin. That amendment would have called for a vote of the electorate before the millage could be boosted back to its authorized level.

Headlee said the Montgomery bill, if it becomes law, would "gut the priority tax portion of the tax limitation amendment."

"Your newspaper and your readers shouldn't let your elected representa-

tives in Lansing get away with trying to sneak around us with confusing bills intended to continue skyrocketing property tax increases on homeowners," the Headlee letter says.

The Montgomery bill, according to the letter, violates the Headlee provision stipulating that all future property tax increases be limited to the increase in the cost of living as defined by the consumer price index (7.7 percent in 1978).

Accompanying the letter was a copy of the state legislative vote on the Van Singel amendment. Headlee urged that those legislators voting against it, or not voting, be contacted. Headlee supported the Van Singel amendment.

"We believe the state representatives listed as voting against (or not voting at all) should be contacted by your newspaper and your readers and asked to explain why they are avoiding their duty to fairly implement the tax limitation amendment," he said.

Headlee said that Rep. Bobby Crim, D-Davison, cast the tie-breaking vote which defeated the Van Singel amendment.

State Rep. Sandy Brotherton, R-Farmington, voted in favor of that amendment.

He also urged that state senators be contacted.

(Continued on page 11C)

Harrison concert featured 2 nights

Harrison High School is presenting its annual spring concert this year by featuring two nights of music by the orchestra, symphony band, concert band, choir and vocal ensemble.

The two evenings of entertainment will be in the school auditorium at 8 p.m. on May 3 and 4.

The orchestra will play Handel's music for Royal Fireworks and the Prometheus Overture. Renditions by the choir will be Alleluiah by Randall Thompson and the Norman Luboff arrangement of All My Trials.

True Blue March and Carter's Overture for Winds. The vocal ensemble will sing Deep River and Love Can Make You Happy.

The symphony band's selections will include Nelson's Rocky Point Holiday and Elsa's Procession to the Cathedral from Lohengrin by Wagner.

As a finale, all groups will combine in a rendition of From Sea to Shining Sea.

Tickets may be purchased from students or at the door. Prices are \$1.25 for adults, 75 cents for students and 43¢ for a family.

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