

Students eye possibility of sister cities merging

By MARY GNIEWEK

The Farmington area suffers from the same malady that Gertrude Stein reminisced about Oakland, Calif.: "There is no there there." This may be viewed by some as exactly where they wish to be, that is, unnoticed equals untroubled; but this is not realistic in the growing Detroit-Lansing corridor.

With that shared belief, 35 graduating architects from Lawrence Institute of Technology in Southfield struggled to develop the concept of an economic federation uniting Farmington and Farmington Hills.

The combatants of suburban sprawl, armed with the master plan's of both cities, were assigned the task as a final term requirement by Professor Robert Changlin, who teaches a class in urban culture.

The sister cities chucked a real attempt at consolidation nearly a decade ago, but Farmington City Manager

Robert Deadman called the LIT plan "food for thought" and Farmington Hills Staff Planner Laurence Leeds said it was one of the better academic projects he's seen.

In Farmington City Hall, the final framed concept of the plan is waiting to be hung. Project coordinator Jean LaMarche believes it is more than a hypothetical model, he would like to see it implemented.

WORKING ON THE premise that Farmington Hills has no image and Farmington has little undeveloped acreage with which to boost its revenue base, the aspiring student architects designed a loop city they say would benefit both cities.

Four major loop roads would be Grand River, Orchard Lake, 12 Mile and Halsted. Both cities could share the land surrounding the loop for a historic village and architectural preserve.

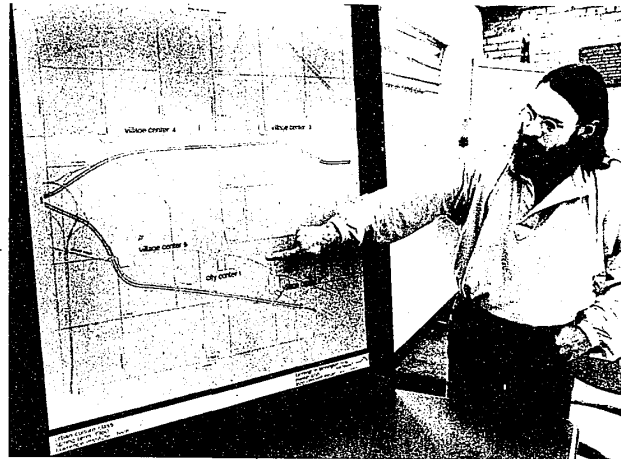
"The basic idea is that by controlling zoning of land use between major inter-

sections of the loop and the zoning at those intersections, we could focus all commercial activity to the major intersections by means of village centers which eliminate spotty commercial development which destroy residential quality," LaMarche said.

LaMarche views Orchard Lake Road negatively as a regional corridor citing its heavy traffic and division of neighborhoods. He envisions a village concept in the Farmington area entering to local residential needs, with village centers equitably distributed throughout the whole area.

"The City of Farmington in this environment becomes a city center, not a central business district. The city center responds to cultural needs.

The benefits of a loop/village center city would be little monies involved in conversion, better identity for both cities, a better tax base, safeguard residential quality and easy access around the city for residents.



Jean LaMarche explains his concept for the future of Farmington and Farmington Hills. (Staff photo by Randy Bors)

Now is the time to brush up on golf

Golfers in the Farmington area can brush up on their game or help interest a youngster in learning the game through Farmington Hills Parks and Recreation Department programs.

The San Marino Municipal Golf Course offers a nine-hole round of golf on 75 acres on Halsted south of 12 Mile. Pull and electric cars are available at the course which is open from dawn to dusk, daily weather permitting.

The rates are as follows: nine holes

of golf, weekdays, \$4.25; holidays and weekends, \$4.75. Seniors, 60-years-old and up can play for \$2 from noon-4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Juniors 17 and younger can play nine holes of golf for \$2 during senior discount hours. Junior players should attend junior golf clinics in order to receive their discount.

A game of 18 holes cost \$7.50 on weekdays and \$8.50 on holidays and weekends.

For those who want to improve on

their skills or pick up the fundamentals of the game, the parks and recreation department sponsors golf lessons for 50 minutes twice a week for four weeks. Participants will be asked to purchase a bucket of balls for each lesson. In case of bad weather, classes will be made up on Fridays.

Lessons are scheduled for June 17-July 10 and from July 15-Aug. 17 at Sliger Golf Range, 39725 Grand River west of Haggerty.

CHILDREN'S AND TEENS' lessons, for golfers from 10 to 17 are scheduled for 10-10:50 a.m. and 12-12:50 p.m.

Adult classes are scheduled for 9-9:50 a.m.; 11-11:50 a.m.; 6-6:50 p.m.; 7-7:50 p.m.; 8-8:50 p.m.

Lessons are \$15 per person or \$12 per family if more than one member of a family enrolls.

For further information call the Farmington Hills Parks and Recreation Department at 474-6115.

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