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\$1 million dispute

Farmington Place challenges tax assessment

By Mary Rodrigue
staff writer

Farmington is fighting an assessment challenge from a taxpayer who owes the city and school district \$55,727 this year.

At issue is the value of Farmington Place, the multi-million dollar senior citizen residence at 32900 Grand River. Attorneys for Forest City Dillon, the management company operating the government-sponsored senior housing, has petitioned the state tax tribunal claiming the building should be assessed at \$917,600. That's \$1 million

less than the value placed on it by the city.

The city assessed Farmington Place at \$1,998,000, which it claims is half the market value of the building.

"We believe that is a fair and equitable assessment," said John Sailer, city assessor.

Sailer used a cost and income approach in arriving at a figure for the 153-unit complex which was built last year.

"They're claiming the project is worth \$2 million but they're getting financing for \$5 million," said Sailer, referring to the Housing and Urban De-

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— John Sailer, city assessor

velopment Section 8 subsidy.

"Their appraisal is based on values of comparable apartments in the Farmington area. But that isn't fair because their expenses are less."

FARMINGTON PLACE cost \$4.5 million to build last year. Based on income figures supplied by the developer, it produces a revenue of \$3.9 million. Tenants pay 25 percent of their

monthly income on a sliding scale for rent.

After being denied a reduction in assessed valuation at a board of review hearing in Farmington last March, Forest City appealed to the tax tribunal.

Attorneys for the city and Forest City are expected to confer within the next month. If no compromise is reached, the case will go to the tax tribunal.

The tribunal acts as a tax court where both sides present their cases before a referee who will make a final determination.

Housing projects financed with federally aided mortgages are generally tax exempt in Michigan, but the city of Farmington passed an ordinance in November, 1979 not to allow a tax exempt status to such projects.

Such projects should be taxed because they draw residents from other communities, city officials ruled.

Forest City must pay \$22,477 to the city and \$33,250 to the school district in taxes while it awaits a decision from the tribunal.

James Prohaska, a spokesman for Forest City Dillon, wasn't available for comment.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Mike McKinnon pulls weeds from around the 47th District courthouse.

2 youths fined, made to work

By Mary Rodrigue
staff writer

The first two graduates tried for being disorderly at a Farmington Hills field party on June 10 were found guilty on Monday.

They were sentenced to pay \$55 in fines and spend three days working at the district court building in lieu of five-day jail terms.

The two, Peter Barbrick, 18, and Michael McKinnon, 18, both of Farmington, began serving their three-day work sentences on Tuesday morning.

Both had requested early trial dates at their arraignments last week because of out-of-state commitments.

No trial dates have been set yet for 40 other students charged with being disorderly at the same outdoor graduation bash held in a subdivision near Haggerly and Nine Mile roads.

Estimates of the number of youths attending the party range from 150 to 400.

Neither Barbrick nor McKinnon were represented by attorneys at their joint trial last Thursday before Judge Michael J. Hand. Both spoke in their own defense.

Testifying for the prosecution were Farmington Hills police officers Gerald Lynch and Dennis Brills, the first two policemen on the scene on June 10, and Sgt. Timothy Romps, who testified that he ordered the mass arrests after the crowd ignored orders to disperse.

POLICE WERE SUMMONED to the field after neighbors complained of a large mob lighting fireworks. Officers said the crowd pelted them with bottles and shouted obscenities at them.

No injuries were reported.

The last of the students arraigned on disorderly charges was Patrick Rapin, who pleaded not guilty on Monday and requested a court-appointed attorney. No trial date was scheduled.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Peter Barbrick trims grass on the first of his three-day sentence.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Chandralekha Kothari will become a U.S. citizen on July 4.

Teacher Joins July 4th throng for citizenship

By Mary Rodrigue
staff writer

Chandralekha Kothari will celebrate Independence Day along with 999 other U.S. immigrants who will become naturalized citizens on Saturday morning at Hart Plaza.

Mrs. Kothari, a native of Calcutta, India, who now lives in Farmington Hills, received an invitation to the mass swearing-in ceremony less than two weeks ago.

"I was surprised and happy they invited me to it," she said. "It was a good time to choose."

She came to the United States 10 years ago for a marriage arranged by her parents. Her husband, a native of Bombay, is a systems analyst employed by General Motors. She dated him for seven days before they married.

The holder of a master's degree from Marygrove College in Detroit, Mrs. Kothari teaches learning disabled and

"If you work hard for your dream, you can always materialize it in this country."

— Chandralekha Kothari

emotionally impaired children at Middlebelt Elementary School. The Kotharis have no children.

Mrs. Kothari has adjusted well to the culture she once considered a world apart.

"You can be yourself here, and people won't say anything or give you a second look," she said.

"I AM STILL having a lovely time.

"One thing I have learned is that if you work for your dream, you can always materialize it in this country — if you are willing to work hard."

Because of her educational background, Mrs. Kothari is familiar with the U.S. Constitution, current events and other government issues new citizens are expected to know.

Judge John Feikens, chief justice of the U.S. District Court, will preside over the swearing-in ceremony.

Jackie Cooper, film and television star and a captain in the U.S. Navy Reserve, will give a special message. The Air Force Precision Squadron will stage a flyover for the 11 a.m. riverfront event.

"The international institute is proud to continue this special July 4 tradition in Detroit that reminds all of us that we are a nation of immigrants that treasure and work for our freedom," said Mary Ball, executive director of the International Institute.

The institute is co-sponsoring the ceremony with the U.S. Immigration & Naturalization Service and the Central Business District Association.

The event, a highlight of the International Freedom Festival, also will feature the Air Force Presidential Drill Team and the Naval Academy Show Band.

Gold bill moves

By Mary Connelly-Szczyglo
staff writer

Gov. William Milliken is expected to sign a bill this week that may help curb the theft of gold and silver from suburban homes.

The bill, which will license precious metal dealers and prohibit minors from selling gold and silver, was written by State Rep. Ruth B. McNamee, R-Birmingham.

"We've got teeth in this bill," Mrs. McNamee said Tuesday afternoon after a final vote on the legislation in the House of Representatives.

"The first thing this bill will do is discourage burglaries. I feel it will be a useful tool in Oakland County especially."

Supporters of the legislation, which include numerous police officials, claim that the new law will help combat residential gold and silver thefts by

making it more difficult to sell the stolen goods.

Under the new law, dealers in precious metals will be licensed and will be required to send a record of gold and silver transactions within 48 hours to local police departments. Dealers must also hold purchased goods for at least seven days before melting or reselling the items. Those selling precious metals must be at least 18 years old, present a valid driver's license and allow a thumbprint to be made.

"I'M PLEASED, not simply that the bill got through but that it is in good form," Mrs. McNamee said. "It will create a trail of evidence which will be very helpful to law enforcement persons and will make the opportunity for recovery of stolen goods much more possible."

The bill will become effective 60

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Senior Open preview

Today's edition of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers includes a special section on the 1981 U.S. Senior Open Championship July 6-12 at Bloomfield Township's Oakland Hills Country Club.

The section contains a look at the history of this two-year-old golf tournament, profiles of players, a course map and other interesting information about the course and senior circuit.

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"GREAT RESPONSE"

Mrs. Shawver was selling her van and after placing her Observer & Eccentric Newspaper classified ad she received "great response". 3 different people were waiting to take her van home with them and it was sold by 6 p.m. that same evening.

Remember, one call does it all!

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