

Farmington Observer

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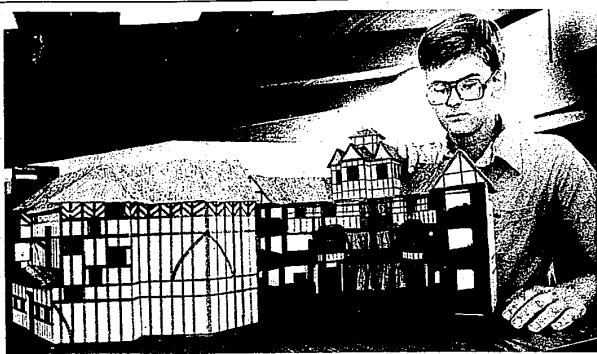
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Farmington, Michigan

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RANDY BORST/staff photographer

On display at the Farmington Community Library to the ground in 1613 when its thatched roof is Bob Sherman's recreation of Shakespeare's, caught fire. Globe Theatre, which was built in 1599 and burned

Bard buff rebuilds the Globe

By Craig Piechura staff writer

Writing poetry didn't appeal to Bob Sherman, a 17-year-old from Farmington Hills, so he built the Globe Theatre instead. In doing so, he learned a little about William Shakespeare and the time in which he lived.

Actually, Sherman built a scale model of the Globe Theatre, the house Shakespeare made famous. The model was made as a class project for Brother Daniel Casey, an English teacher at Brother Rice High School in Birmingham, where Sherman will be a senior this fall.

Using toothpicks, particle board, foam core, copper sheeting and modeling paste, Sherman spent 210 hours and \$47 in creating the scale-model replica that can be viewed together or in two parts.

Borrowing his father's tool and die calipers, Sherman used a book by Irwin Smith called "Shakespeare's Globe Playhouse" as his blueprint and calculated a scale model of the theater where one-quarter inch equals one foot of the original structure.

In the class Sherman read "Macbeth" and viewed a performance of "Taming of the Shrew" put on by the Marian-Rice Players. While admitting he enjoyed being exposed to the classics, Sherman added "it wasn't too fantastic," lest anyone think he's gone overboard on the bard.

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One Brother Rice High School student went all out for a class project.

Thanks for nothing, buddy

Robber is gentleman

A sales clerk at Pennywise Discount Beauty Supplies was robbed of approximately \$155 Monday evening by a gunman described as "polite" and a "gentleman."

The employee, Bette Menser, said a man, between 25 and 30 years of age, first entered the store and spent a few minutes examining vitamins before leaving the store.

Returning two or three minutes later, at 6:43 p.m., the young man announced in a "calm voice" that it was a holdup and told sales clerks Menser and Debbie Crane that he wanted all the money in the store cash register.

"I was told by the clerks that he was very, very polite," Jim Menzies, store owner, said. "He even said 'Excuse me.' Fortunately, nobody was hurt, and he wasn't nasty. He was about as nice as you could expect from something like that."

The suspect was described as a black man, between 25 and 30 years of age, with a broken front tooth, wearing a blue baseball cap, a brown and white plaid flannel shirt with the sleeves rolled up and blue jeans. The weapon he used is described as a blue steel, 25-caliber automatic.

It was the first robbery in more than 14 years at the business, located at 33306 Grand River, said the owner.

Police are investigating the incident to determine whether the same suspect may have committed an armed robbery at a 7-Eleven store in Novi last week and two other robberies in the area recently. Police said the description of the man's demeanor and appearance fits with descriptions of the robber in three other holdups in the west Detroit area.

Community map featured today

Finally — new residents will have a guide to show them around town. Out-of-town relatives won't be found wandering around the wrong subdivision.

The Farmington/Farmington Hills community map finally has hit the streets. After months of delay due to Landmark Map Co.'s going out of business, the Farmington Observer has recovered the needed materials to produce the map, and it's all yours — for free.

Just turn to the centerfold of Section

A and pull out the map and save it for when you're traveling around town. Besides being a detailed map, it also contains valuable facts, current and historical, about our sister cities.

Also included are a number of advertisements from local merchants, many who have supported the map effort financially for many years.

The Farmington Observer is pleased to present this map as a community service and hope both residents and business persons find it useful.

Most would pay \$98

Sidewalk plan revived

By M.B. Dillon Ward staff writer

The Farmington Hills City Council tabled until July 26 a city sidewalk assessment policy as well as several proposals which would finance a sidewalk for senior residents of Detroit Baptist Manor.

The action amounts to one more delay in the adoption of a sidewalk construction plan city officials began drafting approximately five years ago.

Council members requested two weeks to "mull over" the plan, described as "rather complicated at best" by Tom Biasell, director of public services.

According to the proposal, devised by Biasell, City Planner Richard Lampi, City Engineer Dave Call, City Assessor Bob Romer and Dan Rooney of the public services department, all properties within a square mile would be assessed for the construction of sidewalks along major mile roads.

"We tried to make it as equitable as possible so that primary users of the sidewalk would pay a proportionately higher amount than people who wouldn't use it as much," Biasell said.

"Other cities assess only on a frontage basis (charging only those whose

property abuts the sidewalk), regardless of whether the property owner is a single family or a business. We think there's a difference."

"We're trying to protect the single family from being unfairly burdened." As the policy now stands, single-family residences not abutting a mile road would be assessed \$98 over five years at an interest rate to be determined by the council. Residential lots abutting sidewalks would be charged \$198 — double that amount.

Commercial, office and multiple dwelling sites on major mile roads would pay 100 percent of the cost of sidewalk construction, or \$16.17 per foot provided the property extends 300 feet or less from the walk.

For each additional acre deeper than 300 feet, landowners would be assessed \$398.

Targeted for immediate sidewalk construction is the square mile bounded by 12 Mile, 13 Mile, Orchard Lake and Farmington roads. Of a potential 21,120 feet of sidewalk along these roads, 14,000 feet remain unpaired.

The tab, which encompasses construction costs, right-of-way and easement costs, drainage, cleanup, engineering and administrative expenses, totals \$224,000.

Nearly \$60,000 of that would be absorbed by businesses abutting proposed sidewalks, while \$164,000 would be financed by owners of the remaining parcels.

That works out to a \$2,910 bill for the National Bank of Detroit at 33200 12 Mile and a \$4,670 charge for Kendallwood Swim Club at 29000 Farmington Road.

Property with existing sidewalks would not be assessed with the exception of lots along Orchard Lake Road. Those parcels would be assessed according to a separate formula because a bike path was installed and paid for by the Oakland County Road Commission when the road was widened.

THE COUNCIL requested that a sidewalk maintenance provision be added to the policy and presented at the July 26 meeting.

It also delayed action on various proposals involving the sidewalk which would adjoin Detroit Baptist Manor's walk to that along Orchard Lake Road until a decision is reached on standard policy.

Residents will be notified of two public hearings on necessity and cost after resolutions are passed by the council.

City ponders flooding as residents fight odor

By Craig Piechura staff writer

Downpours such as the one June 28 that dropped 1.75 inches of rain in a 40-minute period cause a smelly problem for some Farmington homeowners.

Persons living on Alta Loma, Cass, Oak Ridge and Orchard streets in the old section of Farmington specifically bore the storm's brunt.

Many homes and basements on those streets experience periodic flooding by heavy rains due to a combination of factors. The homes are serviced by circa-1920 sewers that combine sewage with rainwater runoff, and the combined wastewater is funneled into outlets where the pipes are too small. Such a system couldn't be built today, according to modern regulations. That's little comfort for residents living with the situation.

Remedying the problem is difficult because city officials, under the terms of the Headlee Amendment, must have a public referendum before they can float a citywide bond issue to finance the renovations.

Projects pertaining to only a small amount of residents are often financed by assessing only those affected through a special assessment district. But rough cost estimates peg the bill

for separating sanitary sewers from storm sewers at about \$1 million, a high price tag which makes that approach prohibitive.

One resident suggests a cheaper alternative approved by the city's engineering consultant: installing sewer manhole covers with fewer and smaller holes to slow the rainwater's descent.

NEARLY TWO DOZEN residents whose basements and breezeways flooded with sewage June 28 appeared at the last Farmington City Council meeting demanding relief. City Council members and City Manager Robert Deadman emphasized with the plight of the residents but held out little hope for a permanent solution.

Councilmen directed Frank Papke, a paid consultant for the city and a partner in the engineering firm of Orchard, Papke, Hillz & McCiment, Inc. to come up with various short- and long-term options and their cost at a meeting on the flooding problem scheduled for Aug. 16.

In the most recent instance of flooding, City Manager Deadman said city crews ran equipment down the length of sewers to determine whether material was blocking the flow of wastewater

and found nothing obstructing the sewer.

Deadman admitted that "it's true, there are leads in the system we don't have a handle on."

When a citizen suggested city engineers pour a dye in the sewer lines to follow the flow, Deadman asked "When you reach a dead end what do you do — dig?"

Instead of wasting time talking about building a new sewer, Sam Hawkins, a plumber who lives on Orchard Street, suggested a cheaper alternative. Hawkins would replace wide-open grating on sewer manholes with covers with fewer and smaller holes.

"THE ONLY TIME there's a problem with flooding is flash rains," Hawkins said. "Let's back the water up in parking lots and pond it. Instead of having wide-open catch basins receiving 100 gallons a minute, put a solid grate on all catch basins in parking lots in the Downtown Farmington Center, the library parking lot, the city hall parking lot, the Farmer Jack parking lot and those doctor's offices."

No pun intended, Hawkins said city officials are talking about a "pipe dream" when they discuss digging up the old system and replacing it with a new one. Such a project, Hawkins est-

imated, would be closer to \$5 million than the \$1 million estimate mentioned at the council meeting.

"Instead of the streets clearing up in five minutes following a rain, it'd maybe be standing there for an hour," Hawkins said. "We should try that before we go into a multimillion-dollar project."

"It'd be like shooting a mouse with an elephant gun. Let's take it in stages. I'd say 99 percent of the problem, maybe even 100 percent, would be solved with restrictive catch-basin covers."

Another resident whose had to deal with the smelly floodwaters is Cec Roberts of Oak Ridge Street. Roberts said he wouldn't mind paying a reasonable assessment fee if it meant he could use his basement again.

HE'S AFRAID the only solution is to build a new system.

"It leaves you guessing," Roberts said of the sewers in his neighborhood. "If you're out, you run back to the house every time it rains."

The rain that caused so much flooding trouble at the Red Road Inn and Bob Sellers Pontiac last September caused about 3 inches of sewer water to accumulate in Roberts' basement.

While more water fell in the September storm, the quick downpour of June 28 caused a foot-and-a-half of sewer

water to gather in Roberts' basement.

It didn't cause much damage to be longings, Roberts said, because the furniture downstairs was thrown out after the first flood.

"Boy, you get all that sludge in there, and it's really a mess," Roberts said. "We used a squeegee and a broom and a hose. I tell you, the odor almost knocks you down."

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