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Campaign launched with shot at leadership

By Steve Barnaby
editor

Challengers beat away at incumbents over the issue of leadership in the first debate in the 1983 Farmington Hills city council campaign last week.

Four of the seven candidates met at the invitation of the area Democratic Club at Bolander Inn Thursday to outline their political philosophies.

Candidates participating in the debate were incumbents Jack Burwell and Fred Hughes and challengers Joan Dudley and Terry Sever.

Sever threw out the first barb.

"The key issue is leadership and what type of future we are going to have," said Sever, who touted his role as a national Jaycee vice president as an example of the kind of leadership he can provide.

"We must make the effort to solve the needs of residents. We must rely on the potential of involving more people," he said.

Dudley, a former councilmember and charter commissioner, was even more specific in her criticism of the present city council.

"In December of 1977, I thought my job was done. Since that time I have

been alarmed to see what has happened," she said.

DUDLEY FIRED off a list of issues which she believes demonstrates inadequate leadership from the city council — acquisition of the Spicer property for use as a park, frequent secret meetings conducted by city council, and a paucity of action on the capital improvement program.

She accused the present council of balking at the Spicer land acquisition when the property was originally offered to the city.

But Hughes defended initial city actions on the wooded acreage which

council originally hoped the county would acquire. The parcel is near the 10 Mile-Farmington Road intersection.

"There is a sensitivity to acquiring the land. Mrs. (Eleanor) Spicer didn't donate it. The offer was dropped on us suddenly," said Hughes.

Presently the city is attempting to purchase the property with the aid of a grant from the state.

Both Dudley and Sever chided the incumbents for lack of initiative and said that other alternatives must be examined in case the state grant fails.

Burwell agreed with the rest of the candidates present that the property

should be acquired.

Sidewalks, an issue which has been at the forefront of every campaign since the city's inception ten years ago, was debated once again.

Farmington Hills, a township until 1972, is virtually without sidewalks on the main thoroughfares of the city.

BURWELL STRESSED that even though he favored sidewalks, many residents felt otherwise.

"When citizens unanimously reject something, when they say they don't want something, I must respond to that," he said.

Dudley accused the incumbents of lacking the ability to explain the necessity of sidewalks to the taxpayers.

"People within each section of the city should help bear the brunt of the cost," she said.

Sever felt otherwise.

"Obviously taxpayers won't want to bear the brunt of the cost. We can shift the costs to some of the new developments which are going up," he said, referring to a number of local business establishments being built on the main roads.

Hughes labeled building of sidewalks as a "major safety issue."

Senior home is debated

By Diane Gale
staff writer

A proposed 120-bed nursing home for the Farmington-area may not be able to get necessary state certification.

The Sisters of Mercy in conjunction with St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Pontiac and Mount Carmel Mercy Hospital in Detroit plan to open the nursing home at 11 Mile and Middlebelt.

The \$8.3 million facility may be denied a certificate of need from the Michigan Department of Public Health.

A certificate of need is required when a health facility plans to build or expand by spending \$150,000 or more. The purpose of the federally sponsored program is to contain health care costs.

A 1981 study said 4,736 beds were needed for long-term nursing care in the northwest Detroit suburban area, which includes Farmington Hills. The existing number of beds is 5,703.

"I DON'T see how the application (certificate of need) could be approved," said Ed James, Michigan Department of Public Health, chief of the division of health facilities planning and construction.

"The interest of the federal government is such that they are expending a lot of funds for Medicare and Medicaid patients, and they want to make sure the costs are kept as reasonable as possible," said Larry Payne, a spokesman for the Department of Public Health.

"If there were unrestrained building and expanding health care were to go on, conceivably you would have beds that go idle, and there would still be staff there," he said.

"The certificate of need for the Farmington Hills nursing home was requested Aug. 9. The Michigan Department of Public Health has not made a decision on the proposal. They must have an answer within 90 days after they receive the application.

"We're aware that there's a problem in the regard that there are already too many beds," said Ronna Perlmutter, director of outreach at St. Joseph.

"They are waiting for the department's decision, and no alternative plans were made if the application is rejected," she said.

"We did a survey of the people around the area and found that there was a need for nursing homes," Perlmutter said.

The Sisters of Mercy are targeting a portion of the 102-acre site for retired Our Lady of Mercy nuns from Grand Rapids and Dubuque, Iowa. While Mercy Center also houses a health care corporation and a Montessori school, the remaining portion of the property is targeted for senior citizens services.

IN ADDITION to the nursing home, other programs include:

- A geriatric clinic focusing on medical problems of the aged.

- Physical assessment, fitness and nutrition services.

- Educational programs offering information and assistance to the aged and their families.

- Counseling services addressing pre-retirement and post-retirement.

- An adult day care program featuring therapeutic care for the aged.



Reading is one of the pleasures enjoyed by the residents of the new Baptist Manor which opened last week. Reading at the library is Diane Keene.

Seniors swell new Drake Road complex

By Tom Beer
staff writer

Afternoons seem slack at the recently opened Drake Apartments, home to more than 90 senior citizens on Drake Road in Farmington Hills.

The beauty shop and laundry rooms and an occasional elderly customer, but the common room, activity and craft areas, shuffleboard courts and library were empty.

"You're here at the wrong time of day if you should be around when the mail comes in," Jean Adams, the resident director of the 101-apartment complex, told a visitor who had questioned the apparent lack of activity.

Funded by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and operated by the local Detroit Baptist Manor, the \$3.5-million complex has filled to near capacity since it opened about four months ahead of schedule on Aug. 1.

It was dedicated in a special ceremony last Sunday.

"I do have residents for just about every apartment," Adams said. "If some of them are empty, it's just that the applications haven't been processed yet."

"And we have a waiting list of 600 or 700 people."

Detroit Baptist Manor, which operates another senior housing complex in Farmington Hills, quelled a local uproar about senior citizen and low-income housing when it decided to become involved with the Drake Road project about 2 1/2 years ago.

PRIOR TO THAT, arguments about the locations of federally funded housing — especially a proposed six-story structure — had enlivened many a Farmington Hills City Council meeting.

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Landlord negotiates

Residents angered over apartment cable delay

By Diane Gale
staff writer

Ken George, a tenant at Muirwood apartments, is fuming because the complex has yet to be wired for cable television.

"Muirwood is holding the tenants hostage in not allowing cable," George said.

MetroVision began installing cable television in Farmington and Farmington Hills in January of 1983. Homeowners around Muirwood, a 1,400-unit complex, were wired for cable in March.

MetroVision could have begun installation of outreach at St. Joseph.

stalling the pay television in Muirwood at the same time if the cable company had the complex owner's permission.

Metro Vision and Bezno Management Company, which manages Muirwood, met "several times" to negotiate, according to MetroVision General Manager Tom Bjorklund.

"There's a lot of nitty gritty types of details that are involved," Bjorklund said.

He refused to say if the delay was due partially to Muirwood requesting a fee to allow cable.

APARTMENT COMPLEX owners have the option of charging Metro an access fee, which is a charge above the cost of installing cable in their units. MetroVision has the option of passing that fee on to the subscribers, according to the city's cable ordinance.

The access fee is determined by the complex owner.

Other apartment complexes in Farmington and Farmington Hills have charged an access fee, but they were so small that MetroVision did not charge tenant subscribers the extra amount, Bjorklund said.

"It all depends on the (amount of the) access fee, on whether or not we will waive the fee to the subscriber," Bjorklund said.

Bjorklund met with Bezno representatives Friday, and said MetroVision may be allowed to begin wiring during the next couple of weeks.

"I presume there won't be an additional fee (to the tenant), because of an access fee charged by Muirwood," Bjorklund said.

Harold Stobinski, vice president of property management at Bezno, declined to respond to telephone calls from the Farmington Observer on Thursday and Friday.

The basic cable fee is \$7.25 a month. But the average subscriber's monthly bill is \$25 to \$50, because of various

options.

"These figures do not include an additional cost that could be charged as a result of an access fee."

"We've talked to the people from Muirwood on occasion and we're certainly anxious to get in there," Bjorklund said.

"We're missing out on a lot of programs," George said. "We think it's a damn shame."

The discussions between Muirwood and MetroVision have taken time, because the apartment complex is concerned about "protecting themselves," Bjorklund said. "There's a reasonable number of owners in Muirwood, and it's a matter of covering it with everyone."

He declined to be specific.

Appeals board appointee brings Brotherton's ire

By Diane Gale
staff writer

State Rep. Wilbur Brotherton, R-Farmington, is co-sponsoring a bill specifying that a "public" member be named chairman of the Workman's Compensation Appeals Board.

The bill is in response to Gov. James Blanchard's recommendation that Clifford Ailo, a former UAW consultant and union attorney, head the 15-member board, which deals with workmen's compensation claims. The board represents three groups: labor, business and the general public with five members representing each group.

"The position of board chairman is one that demands the trust and confidence of both employer and employee groups," said Brotherton.

"His ability to rule impartially is

suspect to anyone with knowledge of his strong advocacy of labor causes," he said.

Ailo was labor's strongest ally and an "intractable" negotiator during legislative battles on workers' compensation reform in 1981 and 1982, Brotherton said.

THE REFORM laws made stricter requirements on compensation cases.

Brotherton is co-sponsoring the bill that will be presented by State Rep. Gary Randall, R-Elwell. The bill, which has not been presented yet, will state that the chairman has to be a representative of the public section of the board.

"The unfortunate thing about all this is time is of essence, because the ap-

pointments will go into effect later next month, unless the senate turns it down," Brotherton said.

The senate has not acted on the appointment. If the senate fails to approve the appointment within 60 days it is automatically approved.

The purpose of the bill is to make changes for the type of appointments made in the future.

If a person, or employer appeals a ruling by a judge who works for the board, the appeals chairman assigns the case to the board for final judgment.

"The governor has given a clear signal to business and labor both that he wants labor to have the dominant voice on a board that was structured specifically to maintain a balance between the two interests," Brotherton said.

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