



Farmington Observer

Volume 96 Number 4 Monday, October 22, 1984 Farmington, Michigan 36 Pages Twenty-five cents

Stalwarts fight to stave off developers

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

For the second time in several months angry Woodcreek Farms subdivision residents have used the strength of their numbers and anger to prevent rezoning of property in their Farmington Hills neighborhood for office development.

Approximately 200 Woodcreek residents besieged Farmington Hills council chambers last Monday to stop the proposed rezoning of three lots on the east side of Wellington, south of Northwestern Highway, from single-family homes to office development.

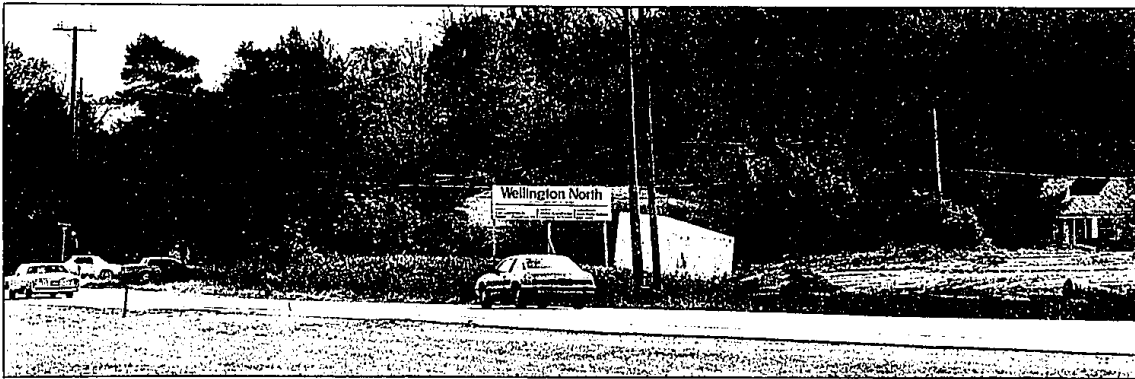
"I think its time we started thinking about the people that live here," said Woodcreek Farms resident Harry Warburton.

The Builders Association of Southeastern Michigan requested the rezoning of lots 51, 52, and 53, so the organization's office headquarters could be constructed on the three-lot site.

Residents also criticized the owners of the three lots who would have sold their single-family homes if council approved the rezoning request.

But after about 2 1/2 hours of residents' angry complaints, the Builders Association lost its bid to have all three lots rezoned.

Instead, in a 4-2 vote, council approved the rezoning of only lot 51



The construction along Northwestern Highway and Wellington is perplexing to Woodcreek residents who are fighting for what they feel is the integrity of their subdivision.

which faces Northwestern Highway. The lot is shown on the city's Master Land Use Plan as zoned for special office (OS-3) use.

Robert Anzlovar voted against the approval. Both said that rezoning the lot to bring it into conformance with the master plan should be done when that specific request is made.

Residents argued that further commercial development near and in their wealthy, rural neighborhood would cause property values of their houses to drop. But the homeowners on the

three lots up for rezoning had a different view. "It's no longer a desirable piece of land," said Alvin Albertson, who lives on lot 53.

Although his home has not officially been on the market, Albertson said realtors told him his property was unwanted.

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Invalid woman ponders why she can't get help

By Jean Adamczak
staff writer

After more than ten years of physical pain and countless battles with the federal bureaucracy, Alice Tunison just may taste a bit of victory by the end of the year.

The 58-year-old Farmington resident has a rare congenital spinal disease — spondylosis — complicated by degenerative arthritis, colitis, hypoglycemia and allergies.

Adding to her misery, the Social Security Administration is denying her compensation to which she feels she is entitled.

"It's been a nightmare," she said. "They (doctors) still don't know that much about the disease."

Tunison has been to court "so many times, I can't count them" trying to gain Social Security compensation.

"It seems so wrong," she said. "I don't want to hurt anyone, I just don't understand why some people can get money and I can't."

But, there is still hope Tunison may receive some compensation.

Administrative Judge Martin J. McManus recommended that Tunison is entitled to a period of disability beginning Aug. 24, 1973, and to disability insurance benefits under the amended Social Security Act.

This decision came after Tunison's civil suit was remanded by the U.S. District Court of Eastern Michigan to the U.S. Social Security Administration's office of Hearing and Appeals.

However, the decision is only a recommendation and the Social Security Administration's Appeals Council will issue a final determination either allowing or denying the claim.

Social Security officials were reluctant to comment on the Tunison case. But Carol Goldstein, who works in the office of hearing for Social Security, said the case could be decided within 60 to 90 days.

In 1973 Tunison was forced to quit her job because of the severe pain from the disease. She filed

for Social Security benefits in 1977 and was repeatedly turned down because, according to the Social Security Administration, her condition was not disabling within the law.

"I'm angry at the injustice that I can't get any sort of compensation," Tunison said.

MEANWHILE TUNISON has been to orthopedic specialists in several states including Michigan and underwent spinal surgery in 1977 in Long Beach, Calif.

During surgery, grafts of her hip bone were transplanted into her spine in hopes of alleviating some of her pain. But the operation did not take, and according to Tunison, she never would have undergone the operation if she had known the pain would still be there.

"The pain, she says, is "indescible." "I've had it for all of my life," she said, "but being the 11th of 12 children in my family I was taught not to be a complainer."

"I did not know what it was like not to have pain," she said.

She spends most of her time sitting in a recliner with a heating pad or lying in her specially purchased hospital bed.

Tunison and her husband Richard have been living on one income since she quit work in 1973. In addition to traveling to California for surgery, they have moved to Arizona, Florida and Georgia in search of medical help. Yet, they have always returned to Michigan because, she says, "this has always been home."

"We traveled on a wing and a prayer," Tunison said, "because during those years we were constantly borrowing money and using the last penny we had."

They came back to Michigan without any job prospects for her husband and without any money. "I took it from the paper," Marks said, "but her husband has found work with their son-in-law."

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Alice Tunison is determined to one day get the Social Security Administration to listen to her plea for aid.

Chamber moves to take over Festival days

By Steve Barnaby
editor

After more than a decade, the Farmington Chamber of Commerce will take back direct control of the Farmington Founders' Festival.

The decision was made at a special meeting of the chamber board on Thursday. The board voted to wrest control from the Founders Festival Committee, which has administered the yearly event since the early 1970s.

"I feel very confident that the festival is going to become a thing of the past if something isn't done to the board structure to insure its continuance," said Jon Grant, who announced he was resigning as festival chairman.

Grant became active in festival activities in 1983 when the Festival Committee was reorganized. He served as president from this year's festival.

"IN VIEW of the fact that the festival was established for the benefit of the business community by the chamber of commerce, it seems only natural that the chamber of commerce would be the sponsoring organization of the event," he said in a set of written recommendations he submitted to the board.

Most of the festival business is handled through the chamber office, anyway, Grant noted.

For the past six years, the festival has faced one financial or organizational crisis after another. One of the most threatening was two years ago when the upcoming 1983 Festival had

neither volunteers for the Festival Committee nor a chairman to organize the effort.

Subsequently, the chamber did take steps to find a chairman and volunteers for that year's events.

"I ASSURE you that if some action isn't taken with regard to this matter, it is bound to result in a repeat of 1983," Grant said.

In its infancy, the festival was under the direct control of the chamber. But as the event grew and became more time-consuming to plan and execute, the chamber board established the Festival Committee to take over.

The concept has gotten mixed reviews since. Some persons in the business community believe the festival no longer benefits them. Other persons believe the festival has become too large and doesn't reflect the wishes of community residents.

But despite all the problems experienced in recent years, Farmington City Manager Robert Deadman urged the board to take action to insure the festival's survival for another year.

"Our council believes it ought to continue. If somebody doesn't come forward, it won't happen," Deadman said.

AFTER HEARING Grant's presentation, the board also voted to appoint Chamber Executive Director Jody Soronen in charge of next year's event.

"It is my opinion that the festival has been a cost item to the chamber in an

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Candidates brood over literature

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

With less than three weeks until election day, the Farmington Hills city council race is heating up with candidates Terry Sever and Ben Marks attacking each other's campaign literature.

Last week Marks asked Sever to stop distributing a brochure put out by the Committee to Elect Terry Sever and portraits Marks as a "tax and spend" candidate.

"I don't know if I was asked. It was more like threatened," Sever said. Marks said Sever was told "very nicely" that the portrayal of Marks in the brochure was slanderous.

When asked if Sever and his election committee had stopped distribution of the brochures, the candidates said about

5,000-10,000 had already been distributed.

ALTHOUGH SEVER said he doesn't believe any more copies of that brochure are going out to the residents, he added that "my campaign manager is in charge of it, and I don't believe they intend to stop it."

Sever said he could substantiate all of the information listed in the brochure.

"I am going after the issues. My opponent is avoiding the issues," Sever said. "We're trying to create a situation where the issues will be discussed. It was simply a contrast on the issues."

Marks disagreed. "In my opinion, I don't think (Sever) is campaigning on the true concept of the issues," he said.

While responding to questions about

his brochure, Sever criticized campaign literature distributed by Marks.

Referring to information listed in a letter distributed by Marks, Sever said "Mr. Marks is putting out stuff that is unfounded."

He pointed specifically to Marks indicating that in the August primary "I had captured 49.9 percent of the total votes east . . . or almost doubled the combined vote cast for my opponents."

"I took it from the paper," Marks said, referring to the election returns reported in the Farmington Observer. Marks' letter describes his experience in city government. He also indicates which issues he has supported or opposed in the past.

"Everything I put in that thing (letter) can be substantiated," Marks said.

IN CONTRAST to Sever's brochure,

Marks said, "I didn't elude to him at all in that letter."

But Sever said that what really bothers him is that he believes Marks is breaking election laws by not putting who or which committee paid for the letter.

Sever said he is considering making a complaint to the Oakland County Election Committee.

"This is a personal letter," Marks said. "Because it is a personal letter to senior citizens, Marks said, the phrase 'paid for by . . .' is unnecessary."

"This is a definite violation of the election laws," Sever said.

Although both claim they are annoyed with each other's campaign literature the candidates also say they prefer to keep the campaign a clean one.

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