

Farthington Observer

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Twenty-five cents

Hills council OKs plans for new cop shop

By Julie Brown
staff writer

After more than two years of debate, Farthington Hills officials have approved preliminary plans for a new police building.

In a 7-0 vote Monday, council approved the building plans recommended earlier by the ad hoc police building architectural review committee.

Council's vote came on the heels of a Sunday afternoon session at which council members studied the plans and proposed financing scheme.

In addition to approving the plans Monday, members also authorized approval of a notice of intent to issue bonds.

"What it does is establish the amount of the bonds and the purpose of the bonds," said City Manager William Costick. The bond authorizing resolution was set at \$2.7 million.

Council members also authorized Costick and the city's architects, Luckenbach and Ziegler, to prepare a request for construction management proposals.

"We will meet with firms that specialize in construction management,"

Costick said. Bids are then taken for the various construction trades.

"We take bids on our own for all that," Costick said. "We have complete control of the project that way. It's a technique to speed up construction and hopefully save money."

After interviewing six or seven construction management firms the information will be submitted to the council in approximately one month, he said.

"THIS POLICE building has been long in the planning," Costick said. "It's been two to three years developing."

One Farthington Hills resident, Aldo Vagozzi, spoke to the council before the vote.

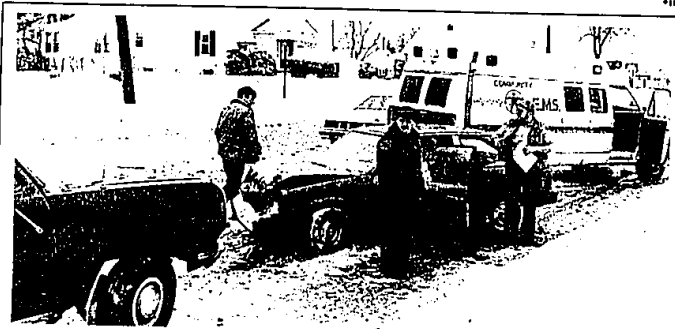
"I'm glad to see this item on the agenda," he said. "It's been a long time, but we're finally there."

"I'm glad we're here and I appreciate what you've been going through. So onward and upward," Vagozzi said.

In other action, the council:

- Set a public hearing date, Feb. 25, for review of 1985-86 Community Development Block Grant Programs. This year, the city is entitled to receive

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Slipping and sliding

Slippery roads caused a number of traffic accidents this week, including one Monday morning on Middlebelt, north of Eight Mile in Farthington Hills. Nine inches of snow fell in the area between Sunday evening and Wednesday morning, said Walt Zaleski, meteorological technician for the National Weather Service at Detroit Metropolitan Airport.



RANDY DORST/staff photographer

Lawyers battle to serve

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Farthington Hills officials are certain they want to discuss the merits of five law firms as possible legal representatives, but are unsure whether the discussion should be during a public or closed meeting.

After hearing presentations Tuesday from the firms, including city attorney Paul Bibeau's, council members agreed to put discussion of the firms on the Feb. 19 council agenda.

Whether the discussion will be during the public meeting or later in an executive session that night still remains to be determined.

City Manager William Costick, with the city attorney's help, is expected to advise the council Feb. 19 whether that section of the meeting should be closed to the public.

The presentations by the five legal firms is the result of an earlier council decision to review one of the city's consulting firms each year. The city attorney was tapped as the first for review.

Because council members have been unsure of how to evaluate current legal services, they decided to invite firms with municipal experience to provide information about their qualifications and to make an oral presentation.

"THE ISSUE is whether council wants to discuss any of these firms as possible legal representation," said Councilwoman Joan Dudley. "My personal feeling is I would."

Some of the firms which made presentations Tuesday "have caused me to be open, very open to consider them (as the city's legal counsel)," Dudley added.

Before the presentations, Council-

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Gunman flees store with narcotics cache

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

No doubt about it, Harry Watson was scared to death when an unidentified man demanded that the owner of Godmar Pharmacy put vials of narcotics into a plastic bag last Saturday.

"He opened up his coat so I could see a pistol," said Watson, who pushed the store's holdup alarm button as the suspect fled on foot through the back door of the pharmacy on Farthington Road, near Grand River.

The robber, who held up Watson at about 5:30 p.m., fled with about four or

five bottles (tablets and vials) of Dilaudid, as well as vials of injectible Demoral and morphine, Watson said.

Although Watson said the narcotics are worth about \$120 to him in prescriptions, on the street the drugs are worth a lot more. The thief didn't take anything else in the store, according to

Commander Tom Cox of the Farthington police.

WATSON said he did not see the robber walk into the store or walk up to the pharmacy counter although some employees later said they noticed him earlier because he was standing by the

Lotto machine.

"The store was full on the other side. I was back here doing some book work, sitting at the adding machine," Watson said. He said he then noticed someone walk through the door leading behind

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RANDY DORST/staff photographer

Jim Colson, manager of Digital Equipment Corp.'s Application Center for Technology in Farthington Hills, shows employee Mary Jane

Skalaki how to use one of the center's computers. The computer is part of the center's simulated office area.

How business learns business of computers

By Julie Brown
staff writer

A computer won't do you much good if you don't know how to use it.

A recently opened Farthington Hills facility is designed to overcome that problem. The purpose of Digital Equipment Corp.'s computer-aided design and manufacturing center is to bring computer technology closer to customers.

People who visit the facility include those considering buying or augmenting a computer system, as well as those learning how to use an already-purchased system.

"We do a lot of work here with the automotive companies in the greater Detroit area," said Jim Colson, manager of the center, at 37735 Interchange Drive.

The Farthington Hills site draws those who are responsible for choosing computer systems for their companies.

"You're typically going to have people involved in the decision-making process," Colson said.

THE MAJORITY of the customers are from larger companies.

In addition to auto companies, the center also works with tire manufacturers, utility companies, financial institutions and with universities.

Data processing employees of various companies aren't the only ones making their way to the center, Colson has found. Engineering, financial and legal departments are also represented, among others.

"We try to show that in an environment that will help aid the decision-making process," Colson said. The center has a demonstration area that includes desks for several hypothetical "employees" — including a secretary.

"They'd be one of the decision-makers, too," he said.

"That whole area for office systems tends to be one where there's a wide range of users. They all really need to be involved in the decision."

The center works with General Motors' Poletown and Lake Orion facilities, and with several area Ford Motor Co. sites.

The center, which opened Jan. 15, has 12 employees. In addition to clerical employees, the staff includes consultants in the areas of office systems, engineering and manufacturing, and instructors for the training center. Jerry Hanko is manager of the training center.

APPROXIMATELY 40 sales representatives at Digital's facility at 21333 Haggerty in Novi will use the facility.

The company also has a field application center in Farthington Hills, where approximately 90 software specialists develop specialized software for customers in Michigan and Ohio.

"We see ourselves as serving the greater metropolitan area, although we have had customers from all over the Midwest," Colson said.

Digital has similar facilities in Philadelphia, Houston, Irving and Santa Clara, Calif.

The Philadelphia center works in part with the steel industry, while the Houston facility works with oil companies.

"There was some rhyme and reason in where they put each one, because each area has a dominant industry," Colson said.

The Santa Clara facility serves Silicon Valley customers in such areas as computer design and electronics. The

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What do you think of Stroh's move?

The announcement late last week that Stroh's would be moving its manufacturing facilities out of Detroit shocked many. The company will continue to have its corporate headquarters in the city, but "Detroit's beer" will no longer be manufactured in Detroit.

Stroh's was just one of several companies that have recently decided to move out of the city. J.L. Hudson closed its downtown store, and Vernors, another Detroit institution, has

left.

What, if anything, do you think can or should be done to keep businesses in the city of Detroit — and to keep the jobs and tax money they provide? If you are a Stroh's drinker, do you plan to switch to another brand of beer?

To answer this question, call 477-5498 anytime before 1 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 15. To see how your neighbors feel about this issue, please look in Monday's Farthington Observer.

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