

Suits settled, zone encroachment fears remain

ly litigation tonight.
 But it's the Providence Hospital consent agreement that bothers the three Woodcreek residents the most. In the Northlily suit — over land on 13 Mile, west of Northwestern Highway — developers wanted office. The city council offered cluster housing. The land remains residentially zoned, said Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi.

LIKE THE Northlily suit, a facilitator helped reach agreement between the city and Southfield-based Providence Hospital.
 "That agreement calls for an office development on previously residentially zoned land at the southwest corner of Northwestern Highway and Inkster Road.

The agreement also calls for maintaining three acres of woodlands as a residential buffer and saves the city of Farmington Hills from exposure to nearly \$2 million in damages.

The approved settlement will allow Providence to develop an office building of up to 170,000 square feet on the 8.1 acre east of the existing tree line. Three acres of woodlands between the tree line and Pebble Creek must not be disturbed without the city council's approval. Remaining acreage can be developed only as single family homes, with no provision for cluster housing.

"We see the possibility of a precedent here for developers," Murawski said.
 While he is pleased with no office on the Northlily property, Hutchinson told the city council he's not as happy about the Providence agreement. "It's a dark, large cloud threatening Woodcreek."

Hutchinson polled the seven council members about their vote on the Providence agreement. The city council met early Nov. 8 and voted 5-0 against settlement. But Oakland County Circuit Judge Steven Andrews pushed for the agreement and told the council to appear in court that afternoon.

Imagine the disappointment, Holmes said, when residents realize that a "total 180 (degrees since the morning meeting) had been achieved that afternoon. Why?"

INFLUENTIAL IN the decision to settle was an attorney for the city's risk management group who told the council if the settlement was not accepted he would recommend insurance coverage to be stopped. "I'd like you to put yourself in our shoes," Vagnozzi said.
 Other council members said they had to decide what was best for the whole community. And it boiled down to almost \$2 million in damages.

"I really resented the process very much," said Councilman Terry Sever, who opposed the agreement. "I wasn't there (at the afternoon session). I don't know if I would have changed my mind under the pressures. It's unfair we came to a decision based on money."
 Holmes probably wouldn't have disagreed. "I suggest a fight could have been made and a stand could have been taken." He said the issue

wasn't the some 300 homes in Woodcreek versus the rest of the city. Holmes told the council that he believes most taxpayers in the city would pay a small increase to pay off damages — if the suit were taken to court — rather than continually be encroached upon by increased traffic and "see-through buildings."

In 1989, the Southfield-based Providence proposed a women's health center to be built on the site. The hospital wanted up to 15.8 acres rezoned for office use to allow a building of up to 235,000 square feet.

At the time, the city council denied rezoning because members wanted the property to remain residential. The hospital then sued, claiming the city had deprived it of its property rights.

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Derek joins Audobon board

Farmington Hills naturalist Joe Derek has been elected to the a three-year term on the Detroit Audobon Society board of directors.
 Derek, also a board member of the Friends of the Rouge River, will begin his term in January, 1992. He will serve as one of 37 board members.
 Derek is also a member of the Farmington Hills Beautification Commission, as well as the ad hoc Pella-MDOT committee.

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• THE ADDAMS FAMILY (PG-13)
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