

# Farmington Observer & Eccentric

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## Planner Mrs. Grace Richardson steps down

By DAN McCOSH  
**FARMINGTON HILLS**—Mrs. Grace Richardson, backbone of the Farmington Hills planning commission for 18 years, announced she is retiring for health reasons. "I was planning to retire in January anyway," she said following the announcement. Recently appointed interim

chairman, she has been with the planning commission "since before it was a formal group." She combined the work on the development of the township, later to become a city, with innumerable community activities, including beautification, recreation and parks. Mrs. Richardson began working

on planning before a formal zoning ordinance had been developed. "We have grown from an un-zoned farming community," she said.

**SHE WORKED** on the development of the first master plan, the writing of several new zoning categories such as "planned unit development" and "cluster housing," and the development of the first master plan. She says she is proudest of two accomplishments—the defeat of

the proposed regional shopping center by Taubman Associates, and the first plan for the township. "I worked very hard on that shopping center proposal, and I came to the conclusion it would throw everything out the window we had worked for," she said.

Her philosophy on planning has been, "Whatever happened, we would go, but the future would inherit it," she said. "I believe you have to mix all segments of society."

**"WE NEED** a balanced community. We need places for young people, old people as well as people who need large single-family homes."

Her work generated a larger concern about conservation. "The erosion of land all over the world, the streams," she said.

During her 18-year tenure she never served as chairman until the recent resignation of Douglas Mann.

"Frankly, I think it's wiser to have a man for a chairman, she said.

"It's not a question of intellect or ability—there's some horse trading—I feel men prefer to deal with men."

She said she might pick up on some of her community activities in the future.

Her seat will be filled by an appointment by Mayor Robert McConnell, with the approval of the city council.

## Farmington race has 8 entries

By NANCY STEIN  
**FARMINGTON**—Last minute was the fashion with only George W. Bowman, 28229 Ridgebrook, filing before the final date for the Farmington Board of Education.

Running for the two four-year terms in addition to Bowman are Bruce E. Duke, 24698 Madison, Farmington; William R. Gravius, 31805 Coronet, Farmington Hills; Michael A. Sheldon, 30845 Running Stream, Farmington Hills; and Anne P. Struble, 28035 Shawasee, Farmington.

Filing to run for the one year term are: Edmond O. Dodson, 21451 Bundy Drive, Farmington Hills; Maynard M. Gordon, 32063 Olde Franklin, Farmington Hills;

and Ann T. Rodewig, 28749 Oak Point, Farmington. Leaving the board will be Mrs. Lillian Allen, Reverend Hugh Stewart and Dr. Burton Knighton. None of them have filed for reelection.

Mrs. Allen is filling the vacancy left by the resignation of Elizabeth Brennan. She agreed to serve only until this election. There is one year left of that term.

The board serves without pay except for a \$300 expense allowance, "which hardly covers gas for the year just getting to study sessions and regular meetings," as was pointed out by Mrs. Allen in explaining. "Board members work for the love of it."

## Huge Pulte project hearing June 17

By DAN McCOSH  
**FARMINGTON HILLS**—Residents expecting a stormy confrontation with developers of a proposed 315-acre planned residential development at 12 Mile and Drake roads missed the satisfaction of conflict Monday at the Farmington Hills council.

A public hearing on the project, proposed by Pulte Homes, Inc., was scheduled for June 17. The council introduced the ordinance for the rezoning, which requires a public hearing before adoption.

**ABOUT** 25 residents, mainly from Kendallwood subdivision, left early after the proposed action was announced and the hearing was scheduled.

Proposed for the site, which runs north along Drake Rd. north of 12 Mile, is approximately 1,100 dwelling units.

Details of the proposal were not presented to the council, at that meeting.

Residents in the area voiced con-

cern the project would be mainly multiple dwelling units. The PRD zoning requires a mixture of single-family homes, apartments and condominiums.

A spokesman from the planning commission said the proposal left one-third of the acreage open space. He added it was similar to a six-year-old proposal for the land which once included a golf course on the site.

**THE NEW** proposal does not include the golf course proposal. "Quite a few expressed support at the hearing," he added.

Fred Spencer, a Kendallwood resident, disagreed.

Spencer said he collected about 200 petition signatures from approximately two-thirds of the residents on his area opposing the project.

Spencer became an informal organizer opposing the project, because there is no active subdivision association in the area.



### Getting help

Barbara Morrison, southeast Farmington chairman for the muscular dystrophy campaign June 4, lines up with Detroit Lions quarterback Greg Landry, general chairman of the 1974 drive, and Eric Chamberlain, poster child. Local support is essential to the success of the drive, according to the organizers.

## Man murdered, another shot in Farmington Hills house

**FARMINGTON HILLS**—Three days after the fatal shooting of one man and the wounding of another, in a Farmington Hills home, police were still seeking James Spencer Thornton.

A warrant on an open charge of murder was issued against Thornton by Farmington District Judge Michael Hand on May 12.

The following day, Farmington Hills police were contacted by a lawyer retained by Thornton. Police said they were hopeful that Thornton, 37, of Farmington Hills, might turn himself in.

But as of Tuesday afternoon, Thornton was still at large and the subject of an area-wide search.

The shooting occurred about 4 p.m. May 11. Police said Livonia police received a phone call from Edward Rasen Jr., 27, of San Francisco. Rasen told police that he was at a gas station at Eight Mile and Farmington Roads and that he had been shot.

According to the police, Rasen was shot once in the face. He is now at St. Mary's Hospital in Livonia and is expected to live. Tipped by Rasen, Livonia, Farm-

ington Hills and the City of Farmington police went to a house at 21285 Goldsmith, Farmington Hills.

Police said Rasen told them Thornton had done the shooting, was in the house and was armed.

More than 20 officers surrounded the house, lobbed tear gas canisters inside, and then rushed inside.

In the kitchen, they found the body of William L. Day, 26, of Mass. slumped on the floor. Officers said he was shot in the left side of the face.

Police said Thornton and his mother lived in the house, but were not there when police arrived Saturday.

Detectives believe both Day and Rasen were shot in the house. Rasen indicated that Thornton did the shooting and then fled from the house.

So far, police said, "we only have one side of the story."

As for the shooting itself, police have not yet established a motive or an explanation of why the three men were at the house.

## Hills police arrest murder suspect

**FARMINGTON HILLS**—James Thornton was arraigned 11:30 a.m. Wednesday in Farmington District Court on an open charge of murder. No bond was set.

Police said Thornton's attorney phoned police late Tuesday, May 14, and told them Thornton would give himself up the following day. At 9:30 a.m. Wednesday, Thornton walked in the Farmington Hills police station and was taken into custody. At his arraignment before Judge Michael Hand, Thorn-

ton's attorney entered a plea of innocent on his behalf. Examination was set for May 24. Thornton was then taken to Oakland County Jail.

Thornton has been sought by police since the May 11 shooting, death of one man and the wounding of another. The shooting took place at 21285 Goldsmith, Farmington Hills.

Police have not yet determined the reason for the shooting.

### Hills to take special census

**FARMINGTON HILLS**—The City of Farmington Hills began a special census of homeowners Wednesday.

The hours-to-house survey, which continues until June 1, is for the purpose of checking the city population. City officials believe the last census was a low estimate.

The census takers will be identified with special credentials from the state.

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AT THE SCENE  
 Farmington Hills police found one body in this house. (photo by Ralph Evert)