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Fifteen Cents

Farmington's Masonic Temple for sale; city concerned with future of landmark

By DAN McCOSH

FARMINGTON--The Masonic Temple at Grand River and Farmington Rd. is for sale.

The red brick building, the most prominent landmark in the city, has been owned by the Masonic Order 151 for 98 years.

"We are taking bids on the building," Wayne Thurston, president of the board of directors said. "We are very concerned with getting the right person."

The Masons are considering building a new building more suitable to their needs, Thurston added.

The historic building was recently remodeled inside, but the ornate woodwork on the eaves and dormers is in disrepair.

ESTIMATES OF the costs of repair have been reportedly high, with some sources indicating a figure approaching \$30,000.

The building is the home for the Masons, and a room is leased to the Farmington Chamber of Commerce. A large hall is upstairs and another downstairs.

It is the meeting place for several community groups, particularly senior citizens. The building is featured on the sesquicentennial coin and has been informally adopted as a symbol of the community.

Thurston said the Masons would attempt to find a buyer interested in keeping the building intact. "But if that is impossible, we would consider another use."

Concern over the possible future of the building has prompted a strong reaction from city officials in Farmington.

"We've very definitely got to save it one way or another," Dr. John Richardson, councilman said. He said he was looking into the possibility of federal funds for historical preservation, but had no solid information yet.

Mayor Ralph Yoder said, "I would hate to see anything happen to it; it's a landmark." He added he would support an effort for the city to buy it.

The problem echoed by city officials is a reasonable public use for the building. A suggestion it might be turned into a district courthouse conflicts with plans by Farmington Hills to add a modern addition to the city hall.

"I'm not sure which way we could go, with millage or a fund-raising effort," Richardson added.

LODGE 151, F. & A.M., was organized in Farmington in 1876.

A fire in the dry goods hall which served as the original meeting place in 1872 prompted a move to the Warner building on Grand River.

The Masons offered to share with the city of the township hall on the present site in 1875. The lodge paid \$1,150 towards the construction cost of the building and received a perpetual lease on the upper story.

The hall was dedicated in 1876. The township municipal offices vacated the ground floor in 1963 and moved to Orchard Lake and 11 Mile. The lodge then purchased the township's interest in the building.

"Throughout the prosperous and lean years, from the horse and buggy era into the atomic age, this building has witnessed the many joyous activities and at times the mournful occasions of Farmington Lodge," the Masonic history says.

"This historical landmark standing as a sentinel in the community, holds within its walls many fond memories for the men that have entered into the great Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons."



The temple as it looks today

Full-time recreation head for Hills, city is coming

By DAN McCOSH

FARMINGTON--The city-sponsored recreation programs in Farmington will get a big boost next year.

A \$50,000 budget, about double last year, has been approved, by both Farmington and Farmington Hills, the two biggest contributors to the Farmington Area Recreation Commission.

Biggest change will be the hiring

this fall of a full-time recreation director. The \$15,200-a-year director will be charged with coordinating a year-round program.

"One of his responsibilities would be to coordinate the programs with other groups in the area to be sure they are not duplicated," Farmington City Manager Robert Deadman said.

Outlined in the budget are 32 programs proposed.

The actual schedule would be up to the new director. About one-third of

the programs proposed would be additions to the current program.

Most of them are fee-supported. The revenue is split 80-20 between Farmington Hills and Farmington, based on the proportions of assessed valuation of the two.

Some of the new programs suggested in the budget are a golf clinic for women; girls and mens softball leagues; ice skating school; skating; father and son gym night; skiing les-

sons; children's bowling; a chorale and a camping program.

The most expensive program would be the summer playground program, at \$18,500 including the salaries of part-time personnel.

"I think the most significant thing about this program is the spirit of cooperation between the Hills and the city," John Richardson, chairman of the FARC said.

"I hope there are more like it in the future."

Rosenhaus is developer

Planned development hearing set

By DIANE HUBEL

FARMINGTON HILLS--The Hills city council set July 15 as the date for a public hearing on a 360-acre planned residential community which would lie between 13 and 14 Mile road on Halstead.

The community which is being developed by Uniland Corporation, a division of Mel Construction, will be an exclusive residential area which will combine single family residential homes with multiple family dwellings.

The site is being built next to the Woodbrook subdivisions, but developer Mel Rosenhaus said the two areas will be separated by a thick group of trees.

Rosenhaus said the community expects to attract mostly older couples without children or with children who are grown.

"MANY OF the people we expect to rent to will be older couples who have lived in large houses all their lives and who still want the roominess but do not want the maintenance that goes with it," Rosenhaus said.

He thinks the security arrangements will also appeal to a lot of the people who eventually settle in the community. There will be two ac-

cesses to the development.

One will be open only to residents. It will be controlled by an electronic arm which will open with special cards which will be given to the residents.

The other access will be attended by the security guard in a gatehouse. The guard will check with the residents to make sure any visitors or delivery men are welcome.

The gatehouse will also serve as a package pick up for people who are out when a delivery is made.

"I think the security is very important," Rosenhaus said. "Many of the people like to travel a lot and they like to know their homes are safe and protected. Also in many cases the men are executives who travel a lot and their wives can feel much safer here if they have to be home alone."

The rent will range from \$360 to \$1,200 a month. Rosenhaus said the apartments offer many customized features such as bars, dens and extra closets. He said customized changes will be made to suit the tenants.

THE DEVELOPMENT, which will be called Forest Hills, will be styled after another Rosenhaus development, Humler's Ridge.

The developers have made plans to retain a lot of the natural setting. Mirror pond, a stream, on the land will be left as it is, Rosenhaus said that many of the trees will also be left.

He also intends to offer such recrea-

tional and relaxation facilities as swimming pools, tennis courts, sauna baths, exercise rooms and community houses.

Construction, which may begin later this year will span a period of eight years.

Hearing scheduled for Pulte project

The Farmington City Council will hear a request Monday at 8 p.m. for a re-zoning on property at Drake Rd. and 12 Mile by Pulte Homes Inc. Residents in the area are circulating petitions in an attempt to prevent the change. The petition drive is being headed by Mrs. Michael Kurko and Mrs. B.G. Stevens.

The controversial rezoning request was denied once by the city in October of 1973. This second rezoning request began in April of this year.

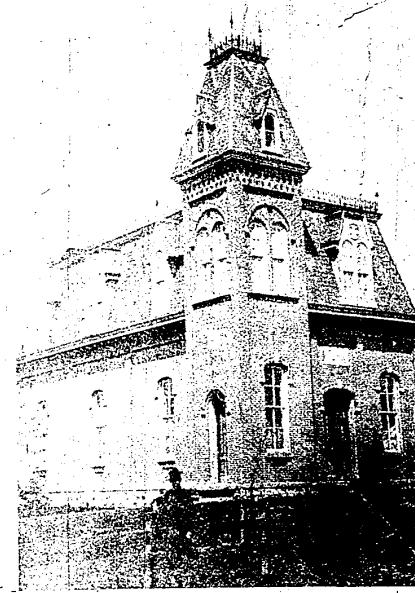
The 320-acre site will be a combination of single family residentials, townhouses and apartments. The plans as they stand now call for 30 per cent single family residents, 17

per cent townhouses, and nine per cent apartments.

The developers are asking for a P-1, planned residential zoning. Projected plans call for 4.2 dwellings with 9.7 bedrooms per acre. The projected population increase to the area would be approximately 3,768 people.

Traffic studies made for the Pulte company suggest that the additional traffic in the area would not be a burden to the area if certain recommendations that they suggest were implemented.

Those suggestions call for a paving of Drake by the city and a widening of that road at 12 Mile to permit the installation of left turn lanes.



As it looked in 1876

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Gun control is debated

A gun control debate will be held at Our Lady of Sorrows Church, Hall, 2165 Powers, on June 20 at 8 p.m. The two speakers, Dwayne Walker, chairman of the Citizens United to Save Lives, and Ronald Elwell of Farmington will discuss the proposed hand gun control amendment to the Michigan Constitution. A question and answer program will follow the debate.