

# Farmington Observer & Eccentric

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## Future worries Oakland residents

By DAN McCOSH

FARMINGTON — In a city nearly grown, changes are likely to take the form of slow neighborhood changes, as older homes yield to commercial expansion, and apartments fill in the vacant spaces on the map.

"What I see is a contest between the business interests and us," was the view of one resident at a public hearing Monday on a proposed master plan for Farmington. The charge was vehemently denied members of the planning commission.

Regardless, the major issue at the hearing was the future of a

strip of homes along the south side of Oakland.

The homes form one boundary of the "old village", with the municipal parking lot lapping at the back like some asphalt decan.

While the street is currently zoned residential, current plans call for it to be included in some kind of commercial expansion in the future.

"A master plan is a plan for future use," William Mitchell, chairman of the commission said.

As such, the confusion over the Oakland stretch was compounded by some misunderstandings over the current status of the street.

An agenda which incorrectly

called it single-family residential was corrected by Mitchell, who pointed out the current plans called for a parking lot designation.

The planning consultants, Driker Associates, pointed out the difficulty of developing a commercial area along the north side of Grand River without enlarging the parking behind the business frontage about 20 residents of Oakland, mainly young families restoring the street, asked the street be master-planned the same as the current zoning; single family.

WHILE OAKLAND looked at a future as a parking lot, at least

eight property owners along Grand River urged the old master plan, which called for the area to become office zoning, be retained.

Only one resident at the hearing favored changing the master plan to retain single-family zoning in the area. Several complained of increased traffic in the area.

The proposed change would master plan the north side of Grand River, from Cass to Gill Rd., and the south side of Grand River, from Oakland to Gill Rd., as single-family.

Mitchell explained a proposed change along Drake Rd., the east side of Drake Rd. to cluster hous-

ing as an alternative to apartments.

"We have enough apartments," he said. Mitchell said the planning commission felt the land would not be developable as single-family, mainly because of the cost of tearing down houses currently built in the area.

THERE WAS little comment on a proposed change of 15 acres on the southeast corner of Farmington and Nine Mile to ERO, a designation which would limit the type of industrial construction allowed on the site.

The proposal to indicate planning in conformity with the cur-

rent usage in the area west of Gill Rd. also drew little comment.

The commissioners propose to include a historic district on the master plan.

The proposal drew some criticism when it did not include all the area currently covered in the historic district ordinance.

The main areas excluded were along the north side of Shiawassee and the south side of Oakland.

The planning commission must now vote on whether to accept the proposed changes in the master plan.

Major changes would mean going through another hearing, according to the commission.

## School lunch cuts top budget discussion

By DIANE HUBEL

FARMINGTON — The open study session on the preliminary budget for the Farmington school board, Tuesday evening, drew over-capacity crowds at the Harrison High school.

There was standing room only at Harrison, the largest school auditorium in the district, for a major portion of the evening.

Parents of students in the district came to air their feelings about recent school board decisions and the cuts which have been made by the board following the July 30 defeat of the millage proposal.

THE MAIN topic of discussion during the study session was the recent school board decision changing the district's lunch time policy.

In the past the school district has had an open policy about school lunches, children had the option of eating at school or returning home for lunch.

However, in an effort to save money by reducing the number of noon aides hired by the district the school board voted to require all children who live with the square mile boundaries of main roads and who regularly walk to school to return home for lunch every day.

The board heard at least one representative from each of the elementary schools in the district.

For the most part, the parents who were objecting to the change in policy said they were concerned about time, safety factors, and the hardships for working mothers.

Several of the groups also requested the board to give the schools permission to form volunteer groups to serve as noon aides.

At their last regular meeting the board had said it would not allow the volunteer program.

However, Tuesday evening board president Gary Lichtman said the board was considering altering that stand, and was working with administrators and school principals to determine whether a volunteer program would be feasible.

REPRESENTATIVES of the Farmington Education Association and the Association of Principals for the district indicated that they supported the board's deci-

sion requiring walkers to return home for lunch.

A representative of the FEA, Jerry Kaplan said, "You have indicated that you are opposed to changes in the busing schedules, lunch programs and athletic schedules. You have also said you are opposed to millage."

"You cannot be opposed to all four. Twice you have told the board you do not want the same quality of education for your children that they have received in the past."

"The board has responded to

your wishes. When the board cut teachers, the teachers of your children, where were the petitions? Where were the public outcries, and outrage?"

"The Farmington Education Association supports the board in its decision to cut non-academic services in order to form a solid, basic, academic program for your children."

Many other parents agreed with Kaplan that the board should cut non-academic subjects wherever possible.

Mrs. Pat Schaefer, whose chil-

dren attend East Jr. High and Shiawassee said, "I would rather see a cut in a lunch program than in the academics. Education should be our most important concern. Although I can sympathize with the mothers, I am behind the school board in their decision to cut lunch programs rather than more academics."

Another parent, H. L. Pickett, whose children attend Fairview and Warner Jr. High said, "I will support anything the board can do."

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Steps leading to the ravine on the path some Middlebelt children take to school. (Evert Photo)



Parents are concerned that the steps leading to the ravine are not safe, and do not want their children using them four times a day.



Parents, protesting the Farmington school districts lunch policy, picket in front of Middlebelt school. (Evert Photo)

## Body is dumped on front lawn of Farmington Hills home

Hills population is now 50,822

FARMINGTON HILLS — A locally-conducted census indicates the population of Farmington Hills is 50,822, City Manager George Majors said.

The local census was conducted to pick up population increases since the 1970 federal census. It is expected to bring in an additional \$200,000 over a six-year period in road tax rebates, he added.

"The growth was not as much as we anticipated," he added. "Apparently this is due to over-estimating the number of children still at home."

FARMINGTON HILLS — The body of a man found Tuesday lying near Fourteen Mile Road has been identified by the Farmington Hills police as Dennis Leroy Wallace, 28, of 8636 Forest, Detroit.

Although the case is still under investigation, the police said it is possible it was a drug-related death.

A police spokesman said it appears that the man was shot through the right side of the head at least once.

The body was discovered at about 9:30 a.m. Tuesday by a Farmington Hills resident on his way to work.

Ed Fredericks, 28351 W. Fourteen Mile, said he was pulling out of his driveway when he saw what appeared to be two bodies lying on the ground in the front of his yard.

He said he immediately returned to the house and called the police.

Frederick's daughter, Lynette, said she noticed something on the ground on her way to school in the morning but thought it was some children fooling around on their way to school.

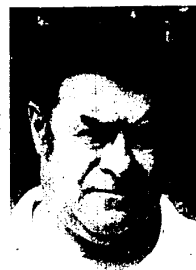
"I'll tell you it is a weird feeling," Fredericks said.

"If I were a drinking man, I

would be tempted to get drunk right now. When I first saw the bodies it looked like there were two bodies. As it turned out, one was a bundle with some clothes, blankets and a towel.

"I was afraid one of the bodies was my daughter. I thought she might be there lying next to the other one. If you look in the driveway you can see the skid marks, where I stopped when I realized what was lying there."

Fredericks said that since his house sits far back off the road, no one in the house heard anything during the night.



ED FREDERICKS

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