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Fifteen Cents



Happy trails

Enjoying a last ride before school days take up their time are Jennifer Dawson and passenger, Lesie Cernak. Both are students in East Junior High School, Farmington. The trusty steed is Brook. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

By school board

Citizen input concept defeated

By SUSAN AVERILL

The Farmington Board of Education Tuesday night defeated a recommendation by Trustee Michael Spiece to establish a citizen's input committee.

Spiece was the only board member to support the recommended committee. Trustees Emma Makinen, Gary Lichtman, William Corliss, William Graviss and Dr. Mervyn Ross voted no. Anne Struble was absent at the vote.

Lichtman was the most vocal opponent of the input committee, claiming that the board's policy committee already fulfilled the input committee's suggested functions.

The board later took action which abandoned the three annually renewable standing committees, including the policy committee, in favor of four standing committees used by the

board two years previously. The four committees are building, finance, curriculum and public relations, and do not include a specific policy committee.

Spiece said his committee was not a citizen's advisory council similar to the one which had come to the board and asked to be disbanded. "It's a board committee with citizens," he said.

"Names change, but the philosophy tends to remain the same," Lichtman said. "Citizens don't get alarmed, you haven't been disenfranchised yet. I may have a skewed view of the Democratic process, but this would be like me electing a Senator and then wanting to make the rules of the Senate. I think that it would be hard for someone not regularly involved with board policy."

Citizens don't necessarily have to be a part of the committee, Spiece said. "The motion doesn't require four citizens. Zero citizens is 'up to four citizens,'" he said, calling it a safeguard.

Following the lead, Lichtman switched his argument to semantics.

"There's a difference between enabling or mandatory legislation. This is mandatory, not enabling. What you've said to me... is not what I read on this paper. 'May' is a different word than 'shall,'" he said.

He then demanded to know the ultimate purpose of the citizen's input committee, Spiece said it was to review board policy. One of its "less than ultimate" aims would be the repeal of the citizen's advisory committee, he said.

"WE HAVE A POLICY committee."

The function of that committee, upon the direction of the board, is to examine and lock into the policies of this board."

"If that is the function of your committee, aren't we going to the same place? Why do we need two vehicles when we already have one?" Lichtman asked.

Mrs. Struble, before leaving the meeting, gave vocal support to Spiece's committee, saying, "The idea that citizens can't work on committees with board members... well, you don't have to worry about that as long as you have board members on the committee. I would like to see movement in this direction."

Mrs. Makinen and Graviss both believed Spiece's committee's purposes would be subsumed under the present policy committee.

Ross disagreed with the proposed citizen's input committee and said he hoped Spiece's months on the board would have "assessed" his viewpoint.

Board President William Corliss said many of the items were charged to existing policy committee. "I do feel that the board should move to have a definitive, cohesive, consistent policy," he said.

"The best committee is a committee of two, one of whom is absent. That's how things get done in the real world," Lichtman said.

The board later took action which abolished a trial two-year committee policy that made three standing committees renewable on a yearly basis.

On parks issue

Schools await contact

Although Farmington Hills council members have been discussing the possibility of using school sites for park development, no one has yet approached the school administration on the question.

Mayor Earl Oppertbauer recently said he preferred development of parks around school facilities.

Farmington schools Supt. Martus Van Ameyde verified that the schools had not been contacted on the question, likewise Board President William Corliss.

HOWEVER, Van Ameyde said the idea is not new. The city of Farmington installed magic squares, a type of hopscotch game with variations, on several school sites 10 to 15 years ago.

Van Ameyde said of the Hills Council, "It would depend on what they had in mind. It's the kind of thing that should be thought of reasonably in advance of site purchase so more land could be acquired and paid for in part by the city. But we would be willing to listen to what they have to say."

He added, "I think there's a lot of

room for cooperation." As an example he used the fact that Farmington Area Recreation Director Doug (Continued on Page 2A)



'Influences'

Being under the fashion influence is easy this season as warm colors and soft, easy styles for men and women make their fall debut. Find out exactly what's happening on the fall fashion scene in the Observer & Eccentric's special fashion section "Influences."

644-1070

'New growth' study set for central business area

By STEVE BARNABY

A major facility may be in store for the City of Farmington central business district if city council and local businessmen are satisfied with a study to be made by a team of planning consultants.

The council has agreed to pay Howard Green and Associates \$8,200 from a federal community development grant to make the study. The firm has agreed to report back to city officials in 75 days.

City Planning Commissioner William Mitchell expressed enthusiasm about the study at this week's council meeting.

"What needs to be done is to capture people's imagination. We must be able to sell the downtown business district," said Marshall.

"Our problem right now is that we don't have a package to sell. We don't have the expertise and don't know where to sell."

The study primarily will be aimed at the northeast corner block of stores at Grand River and Farmington, but planners will take the entire business district into consideration, according to City Manager Robert Deadman.

City officials have been considering refurbishing the area for nearly six months. The possibility of a study was considered after the planning commis-

sion determined that current uses and vacant facilities in the northeast corner endangered the "desired retail character of the community's downtown."

CITY FATHERS also feared the city's identity as a residential community with a "unique" image might be jeopardized by the shopping district's condition.

While in favor of making the study, Councilman Richard Tupper expressed reservations over whether local businessmen would be receptive.

"What are the attitudes of today's businessmen? If they are the same as five years ago, then we may be wasting our time," said Tupper. "We must be able to come up with some concrete evidence that such a development will put money in the pockets of the merchants."

Mrs. Struble said that response from merchants has generally been positive.

In one meeting, he said, after hearing of the possible study some local businessmen made a 180 degree turn and supported such a proposition, said Mitchell.

Councilman John Allen supported the study.

"The only way to survive is to regenerate. We can't wait until we die to plant a new seed," he said. "I see a tendency to slow down. But we've got to move on."

Only one other study focusing on the central business district has been made, said Deadman, and that was in 1963. It was partially implemented through expansion of downtown parking and removal of some buildings.

An advantage in utilizing the firm, said Deadman, is its ability to make the study and sell it to local businessmen and landowners by showing them how improvements will generate revenue.

Green and Associates has developed downtown development for a number of cities throughout the state, including Birmingham, Bay City and the Greek Town and New Center areas in the City of Detroit. It also has made studies for various private retail firms.

"They will be able to look at restaurants, markets, potential of buildings, traffic and pedestrian movements. In other

words, Green and Associates will be able to bring everything together," said Deadman.

Cost of utilizing such a plan is up in the air, he said. "The consultants make a final report."

"We'll have to wait to see who pays for what. Consultants may recommend plans which aren't especially costly. Although it is unlikely, they could even come back and say nothing is needed," he said.

Although Farmington was one of the first cities in Michigan to have a planned shopping center developed downtown, newer shopping centers surrounding the city continued to erode the central business function, according to a preliminary study prepared by the associates and presented to council.

"THE NORTHEAST QUADRANT is particularly begun to deteriorate because it lacked adequate off-street parking and pedestrian linkages to the planned shopping center across the street," said the report.

"Efforts by the city to upgrade the block have been frustrated since the city has no effective leverage to encourage the block's various owners and tenants to act in concert with the city."

The city has dismissed the idea of acquiring the properties through the right of eminent domain.

Working with Green and Associates will be Christopher Wozny and Associates, an architectural and urban design firm.

Although areas to be studied will be an evaluation of retail opportunities in downtown Farmington. The study would include defining the retail trade area, determining the trade area's

(Continued on Page 2A)

"The only way to survive is to regenerate. We can't wait until we die to plant a new seed."

—John Allen

Lichtman clashes with FEA letter

By SUSAN AVERILL

Farmington school board Trustee Emma Makinen made a suggestion Tuesday night to release projected figures on class size and unwittingly began a go-around between Trustee Gary Lichtman and the executive director of the Farmington Education Association (FEA).

Mrs. Makinen said she had only wanted to let the public know that class sizes in the district were admissible.

"My purpose was to inform the community that we have pretty fair class sizes in this district. I don't see any need to go further in this kind of talk," she said, after the two men had argued.

Lichtman suggested that any published projection of class size might later be used as a bargaining point.

"I would not like to have a series of projections used in any form. I would like to wait until the fourth Friday count before we release anything on that. I can either gloss about the number or hide my head between my legs," he said.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS usually wait until the fourth Friday after school has started before making an official record of the student population. State aid is partially based on this tally.

Richard Ringstrom, FEA executive director, said the teacher's union did not intend to use the information as a bargaining point.

"It is our intention to provide information to the board and the public," he said.

Lichtman, however, didn't agree and read a statement from a recent FEA newsletter which called the Farmington administration a "high priced staff" and admonished them for not immediately rehiring scores of teachers who had been pink-slipped.

"I'm not going to let it slip," Lichtman said. "I'll stand here and do battle all night long... this doesn't strike me as much toothless—that's a bunch of malarky."

"I think the public can understand that this is a projection and that enrollment is a very hard number to come by," said board Vice-President Mrs. Anne Struble.

The board did not release the information.

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Trying to sell a used car? Take a tip from Mike Hillman of Phoenix. He advertised his 1969 Camaro in our classified section and sold it right away. See for yourself how easy it is to sell your old wheels in our handy ads. Call the Observer & Eccentric Classified department today.

644-1070



A new season

Getting in their licks in preparation for the coming football season, are gridders from Farmington High School who recently participated in a scrimmage. For more details turn to the sports section. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)