

Renaissance begins

South end residents launch clean-up

Residents of Farmington Hills' southern section 36 are up in arms about their area's bad image. To combat that poor impression the Homeowner's Association and businessmen in the area are sponsoring the Section 36 Renaissance Committee Clean-Up Contest.

Homes and businesses in the area bounded by Eight Mile, Inkster, Nine Mile and Middle Belt are eligible to be nominated in one of 10 categories.

Outward appearances count in this contest, according to Mary McEvoy, secretary of the Homeowners' Association. Houses and businesses will be judged in separate categories to choose the most attractive building, the most improved appearance, most extensive exterior repairs, best landscaped and the most improved grounds.

Neighbors are encouraged to submit before-and-after photographs of the nominated building or two letters testifying to the improvement by August 15 to Mrs. McEvoy.

Mrs. McEvoy said the contest reflects growing community pride in that section.

"We're ignored by the city. They'd like to section us off and give us to Livonia," she added.

SECTION 36 was built before the subdivisions on the north side of town made their first appearance, according to Mrs. McEvoy. The old homes should be subject to the same attention the city gives to its more prosperous areas.

"Just because someone can afford an \$80,000 home doesn't mean he cares more about it. My house means just as much to me," she said.

Within the last 18 months, the section has managed to spruce itself up, according to Mrs. McEvoy, a six-year resident of the area. Section 36's present condition is a far cry from the area that confronted her when she first moved there.

Six years ago, this was awful. Waldron Park is a big change. Six years ago, where Waldron Park is now, there was an old brick home. It was a nice house once, but the owner let it get overgrown. Where the tennis courts are on Independence, there was a dilapidated old shack," she said.

Part of the turn-around is due to the better care the city has given the area, she said.

"The city takes better care of the roads now. We didn't have three feet of mud out here this spring," she said.

Another factor contributing to home improvements in an area which has many residents on fixed incomes is the availability of federal grants and loans for repair projects, according to Mrs. McEvoy.

"IN THIS SECTION there are many elderly people who have lived here for 20-30 years. You'd be surprised at how many elderly people live down here. And many of them are on fixed incomes because their elderly or be-

cause they're on welfare," she explained.

"That (improvement) money is scarfed right up," she said.

Section 36's Renaissance Committee is hoping that the contest inspires residents to improve their property. Judges for the contest are from outside the area to insure objectivity. They are: Farmington Hills Administrative Assistant Michael Dornan, Building Department head Hal Rowe,

real estate broker Bill Bowman, and photographer Ralph Evert.

John Anbut, owner of Botsford Inn and a Renaissance Committee member is donating a dinner for two at his establishment for winners in each of the ten divisions. Other prizes will be donated by area businessmen, according to Mrs. McEvoy.

Applications can be picked up at Botsford Inn, Smith Rexall Drug Store, Farmer Jack's bulletin board and Farmington Hills City Hall.



Mrs. Mary McEvoy looks through her notebook of plans for section 36's clean-up contest while sitting in the kitchen of her home near Waldron Park. (Staff photo by Harry Maubel)

Red tape snarls bike path plans

By LYNN ORR

There's a difference of opinion among members of the Farmington Hills Bike Path Committee as to the future of bike paths and bike routes in the city.

Two Oakland Community College students believe they've confirmed strong community support for the project and the rest of the committee is dragging its feet. Farmington Hills Recreation Director Doug Gaynor believes the students are misinterpreting the committee's desire for a complete plan.

"I think that I can go out on a limb and say there is no question that bike paths and/or routes are definitely being considered and are under

study," Gaynor says.

But the two students who joined the committee as a result of a project at the Orchard Ridge campus are convinced some public support of the project might encourage the committee to make a report to the city council.

"OUR AIM right now is to get something done," says Tim Connolly, a sophomore at OCC. "We're in a minority trying to get something done, and we need to get the community behind the project."

"Community government shouldn't dictate but reflect what the community wants," adds Glynis Vandorne, who says a survey taken in the Detroit metropolitan region returned an 85 per cent majority of respondents

who want bike paths and are willing to pay for them.

The students also conducted 55 interviews with residents of the Eleven Mile-Middlebelt area and Shawwassee-Eight Mile area.

"They were unanimously in favor of bike trails and consider biking a hazard in their neighborhoods," Ms. Vandorne says. "They won't let their kids ride bikes because they think it's too dangerous."

Although the students contend the committee, appointed in the fall of 1975, has failed to meet a December deadline for presenting a report to the city council, Gaynor claims no deadline was established.

"WE'VE GOT an awful lot of loose ends to tie up," he says. "What's the objective of a bike path or bike route? And we want to have funding possibilities in our final report."

Gaynor favors a combination of routes and paths, and also believes it's imperative to include an objective for the routes. "This was all kicked off by the energy crunch," he says. "Whatever is chosen should involve more than putting them in just for recreation and exercise."

Gaynor says the students have failed to meet him three times to discuss the situation and fail to under-

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Homosexual rights leave residents on the fence

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

With a few exceptions, Farmington area visitors and residents have decided to take to fence sitting on the issue of gay rights.

Most of the persons questioned in a random survey said they felt sympathy with both sides in the controversy that has been stirred up by Anita Bryant's campaign to rescind a Dade County, Fla. ordinance affirming civil rights for homosexuals.

Farmington Public Safety Director Dan Byrnes has mixed feelings about the issue.

"I've long felt that laws on homosexuality are ridiculous. What a person does in his own home is his own business," Byrnes said.

If two persons decide to have sex in the city park, Byrnes would arrest them regardless of their preference in partners.

"I am as offended by that as the next person would be," he said. "But I'm not going to waste my officers' time to press my moral standards on people involved in something that I would find unwholesome. I'm not going to send my men out looking for homosexuals," he said.

IF ONE OF HIS MEN declared himself to be homosexual, Byrnes would allow the officer to remain on the force if he had a good work record.

"I would guess that if I dismissed him, it would ultimately end up in court. If up to the point that he came out of the closet, it didn't affect his ability to do the job, then he'd probably continue to have the job. The court would rule in his favor, I think," he said.

After coming out of the closet, the officer would face tremendous pressure from his colleagues, Byrnes surmised. Since the man would be dealing with the community, his revelation could affect his job if citizens developed a wary or disrespectful attitude toward him.

"People would be a little uptight and the job's too sensitive for that. It depends on community acceptance and I don't think the community is ready for it," he said.

If a homosexual applied for a job in Byrnes' department, he would be rejected.

"It would be difficult for them to function in the community," he said. "The man would be under a lot of pressure."

Agreeing with Byrnes' attitude that what two adults consent to do in private is their business is Craig Carmill of Farmington Hills.

"I DON'T THINK that anyone should tell anyone else how they should act," said the North Farmington High School student.

"I don't think that they should be excluded from jobs," said Carmill, 16. "I think Anita Bryant should mind her own business."

Two shoppers in Farmington said that Ms. Bryant's campaign was unnecessary.

"I think she ought to leave them alone," said Pat Vowles, of Novi. "I don't see what the big fuss is over. She should let them do what they want as long as they're happy."

"They aren't any threat to kids," added Shirley Laedford, of Walled Lake.

Other shoppers failed to be so sure about which side is right. Some said that they could see both sides of the question.

"In her way, Anita Bryant's right and in their way, the homosexuals are right," said Clara Wilson, of West Bloomfield. "They're human and there's some reason that they aren't like a normal person. I feel sorry for them but I wouldn't want to live next to them. I think God played a dirty trick on them."

Part of the reason that a Farmington Hills woman had doubts about accepting homosexuality is her strict religious upbringing.

AT THE SAME time, the matron, who asked that her name not be used, believed that what a person did in the privacy of his home was far from public concern.

"It's a touchy issue. I have mixed feelings about it. I can see good and bad on both sides. I can see why Anita Bryant is so concerned. But I don't think that it's something that they should have laws about. Why should they have laws about it?"

"Most people in this country lean toward religion and homosexuality bothers them," she said.

Although her Catholic upbringing makes it difficult for her to accept homosexuality, she also can have sympathy for homosexuals and their families.

"I would hate to have to admit that my own child was that way. I can sympathize with others but it would be hard for me to accept it with my own children. I don't know how some parents can accept it when their children say their homosexual," she said.

Others firmly believed that homosexuality was wrong. Mrs. Alice Jurack, of Farmington, expressed her admiration for Anita Bryant.

"They ought to hang a hero's medal on her," she said.

Frank Bonmarito, a Detroit who works in Farmington believes that the Bible specifically prohibits homosexuality.

"It's abominable. I love Anita Bryant. I don't like faggots," he said.

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