

Farmington Observer

Volume 88 Number 76

Monday, July 11, 1977

Farmington, Michigan

28 Pages

Twenty Five Cents

Bureaucrats delay senior survey results

Farmington Hills' proposed senior zoning amendment, already beset by delays, has encountered another series of snags which will keep residents waiting a few extra weeks to learn the results of the elderly housing questionnaire sent out late in May.

A public hearing and the announcement of the survey results during a meeting of the Farmington Hills Planning Commission are being delayed while the Public Administrative Service of Chicago tabulate the answers to the senior questionnaire.

The cost of hiring a service to tabulate the survey answers and the Planning Commission's decision to review the results at a preliminary meeting have added to the delay. Consideration of newspaper deadlines to publish a public notice of the public hearing also contributed to the delay, according to Farmington Hills Administrative Assistant Michael Dorman.

These considerations have pushed the date of revealing the results from July 7 to August 25, which remains a tentative date. The Public Administrative Services should report their tabulation to the city by July 19.

THOSE RESULTS will be the subject of a preliminary meeting of the Housing and Planning Commissions on August 4.

Part of the reason for the delay stems from the city's efforts to find a reasonably priced service that would organize the survey results.

"The cost of the survey was a factor in the delay," said Dorman who contacted the Public Administrative Service when its representatives were in town to help prepare a managerial report for the city's administrators.

For a fee of \$1,700, the service will categorize the information included in the 828 returns the city received. That accounts for about 30 per cent of the 2,760 surveys which were sent to Farmington Hills seniors.

"It's a good response," Dorman said. "That's a good response to any mailing. We would have been lucky to get 10 answers."

Since the city took more time than anticipated to settle on a service, the public hearing date was affected. In addition, commissioners decided that a preliminary hearing to review the

survey results would help them in dealing with the information during the public hearing, according to Dorman.

PRELIMINARY MEETINGS to public hearings are not required by the city's charter, according to City Attorney John Donahue. The charter requires a public hearing before the commission recommends a zoning change.

Another provision of charter's requirements necessitates notifying residents of the public hearing within 15

days of the meeting. Although the commission considered a July 28 public hearing, those plans were discarded when the city's legal advisers said they were unable to write the notice and submit it to the newspapers in time for that early date.

In addition, the commissioners are planning to rent an auditorium to accommodate the anticipated heavy turnout for the public hearing. The July 28 date would not allow sufficient time to locate a suitable place, according to Donahue.

Scorcher

Heat wave arrives, action takes a break

As Farmington area residents tried to beat the heat last week, police, fire officials and a few select businessmen had to agree that they had it made in the shade.

Residents who ventured out into the heat found a safer, quieter city during the mid-day sun. Fire and police officials report that their departments slowed down during the heat wave.

"Everyone was too tired to cause any problems," quipped Farmington Hills Fire Chief John Van De Voort.

Patrolmen in the police traffic bureau, however, had a different story. They were busy watching out for traffic jams and fenderbenders that can irritate already edgy tempers.

There were a lot of breakdowns on the freeways, reported Sgt. Richard Krueger, of the traffic division. "But we were surprised that there weren't that many traffic accidents. Usually people are short tempered during a hot spell and they seek revenge."

KREUGER AND HIS DEPARTMENT were busy handling overheated cars off the roads and seeing that drivers were able to contact wreckers to take their steaming vehicles in for repair.

Officers with desk jobs faced a more personal problem with the heat when the department's air conditioning system broke down in the middle of the heat wave.

Drivers in the Farmington area were stacked into one line to accommodate road repair on the I-496 freeway, according to police.

If they managed to miss the traffic jam, a goodly number of drivers were given the chance to cope with another type of warm weather problem when car radiators over heated and air conditioning systems quit working.

During the heat wave Gordie's Garage, Farmington, repaired or replaced seven car radiators. Usually, the garage receives one or two such requests a week, according to mechanic Bob Roberts.

Air conditioning systems were

under a lot of stress that week, too, he pointed out, especially on Tuesday and Wednesday. Those were the days the garage handled repairs on 10-15 air conditioning systems.

Overheated engines can damage even a new car.

"THE HOSES GO bad in hot weather. Right now I'm working on a new Granada with 2,000 miles on it, and it needs major engine work. And that's from the heat," Roberts said.

For some of those who ventured out to the beaches and into the sun, there was another hazard—sunstroke.

Botsford Hospital spokesmen were unsure if the sun or vacation time was the main reason for the overcrowding of their emergency room during the week. But, said Director of Nursing John Wick, "There were more heat prostration cases," he reported.

In addition, unusual heat can aggravate existing conditions, such as heart and lung problems, he added. With the heat as a hidden factor, there could have been more persons affected by the heat than he initially perceived.

Heat prostration is characterized by dizziness, weakness, a clammy feeling and a fast pulse, he added.

For those who stayed in the great indoors, the battle against the heat was sometimes a losing venture. Air conditioning repairs soared with the temperature.

"I always tell people it's not hot enough for me," joked Vic Carless, manager of World Wide Heating and Cooling, Farmington.

CARLESS FOUND THAT those around him suspected it was not hot enough for them. His shop received twice as many repair and installations calls, last week.

One of the recurring problems air conditioning owners faced was the affect of heat on the exterior of a window unit, he said. Hotter temperatures were more apt to encourage overloads, he explained.



Construction in bloom

Orange Tiger Lilies aren't the only things blooming in the Farmington countryside. For a look at tomorrow's landscape, see our

page 3 feature of new housing in our area. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

City strives to bail out basements

By LYNN ORR

When it rains, it pours—into the basements of Liberty and State Street residents, who are none too pleased with City of Farmington sewer system.

"I'm assessed for my finished basement, and it sure is finished—carpeting and all," Liberty Street home-

owner Robert Jubeville told the Farmington City Council last week.

Several other residents were on hand to corroborate Jubeville's complaints, but all were pleased to learn that the city is working on the problem.

"You can't walk out of here tonight unless you want to buy a new system," City Mgr. Robert Deadman told

the residents, explaining that the city is currently working on three plans for dealing with the problem.

Application for a federal grant to separate the sanitary and storm sewer systems, an experiment with a new chemical to remove roots clogging sewer pipes, and the enforcing of an ordinance against cave downspouts connected to the sewer system constitute the city's plans, he said.

Black sludge and raw sewage backing up into the drains is a major problem for residents during heavy rainstorms, residents say. Deadman agrees that the dual sewer system may be causing some of the problem.

"WE'RE ALSO polluting the upper branch of the Rouge River, during a storm when the sewers run off into

the river," he told the residents.

"If we can prove we're creating a pollution problem, we may be able to get a new system through an Environmental Protection Agency grant."

The city presently has a study under way to develop a program to improve Rouge River water quality, including a plan to separate sanitary and storm sewer systems. If federal funding is secured, the next steps would be engineering and design and construction.

"Since the area affected here is within the sanitary-storm district, some improvement in the future may be derived from the implementation of the plan," he said.

But he warned the residents that the proposed grant cannot be submitted until all samplings of the river and other study is completed. And if the city's claim cannot be proved, the cost of separating the system would fall back on the homeowners.

"If the grant goes through, and we hope it will, we're talking about \$2 million. If we don't get it, we can put a storm system in, but who's going to pay for it?"

MEANWHILE the city is working on two other options that may solve some of the problems. In a recent inspection, it was discovered that some residents in the area have cave down-

spouts attached to the sewer system, which is against a city ordinance and which the city believes causes flooding.

Tickets will be issued to those who haven't complied," Deadman said.

Overgrown roots in the sewer may also be causing flooding problems, he added, and the city is experimenting with a temporary solution developed by a University of California professor.

Since tree roots have infiltrated this system over a number of years, we find that they have reduced the capacity of the system. Experiments in other cities indicate that these chemicals will remove 100 per cent of the root material, thereby returning the system to its designed capacity."

The chemical, applied as a foam, removes the matter covering of the roots and the roots die. The process causes no environmental damage, and seven years of experiments have reported little root regrowth, he added.

The city may also explore the idea of using the chemical in homeowners' lead lines to further alleviate the root problem, he added.

"We're going to make sure those drains are operating at peak capacity," Deadman told the residents. "Let's give it a chance and see how it works."

HAIR HELP

Thinning on top? There's some more light on the subject as featured in the Suburban Life section. The latest hair waving is the topic of our A la Mode column on Page 2B.

Cause is probed

Plane crash kills Spontellis

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

A Farmington Hills couple was buried Saturday, five days after their light plane crashed in a densely wooded area near Windham, Vt.

Frank Spontelli, 57, and his wife Rose, 53, of 29224 Oak Pointe Drive, Farmington Hills, were the only passengers in the blue and white Piper Comanche when it crashed July 4 into a hill outside Grafton State Park.

A witness working in a field about one and a half miles from the crash site told investigators from the National Transportation and Safety Board that the plane spun vertically to the ground.

Other witnesses said they first thought the pilot was performing a stunt until the plane failed to pull out of its spin as it neared the hill. When the plane slammed into the hill, it created a five-foot-deep crater, according to Transportation and Safety Board investigator Luther Gatling.

Although search planes were dispatched soon after the crash, it took Vermont State Police and Grafton State Park officials two hours to reach the wreck.

SEARCHERS' EFFORTS were complicated by new forest growth and were forced to hike the last quarter-mile to the site, according to Vermont State Police spokesman.

Transportation and Safety Board investigators have ruled out bad weather as the cause of the crash, according to Gatling. In case of instrument failure, the pilot should have been able to control the plane in the fair weather in the area that day, he said.

"We have not ruled out pilot incapacitation," he said, surmising that the pilot may have suffered a heart attack.

The Spontellis were flying from Wisconsin, Maine to their Farmington Hills home at the end of a holiday weekend. Spontelli, who was an aviation instructor during World War II, often flew off to different locations for the weekend, according to sources. The couple had lived in Farmington

Hills for four years. Spontelli was the production manager of American Standard's Dearborn plant.

Before moving to Michigan, the family lived in Parma Heights, Ohio. They were among the founders of the town which is southeast of Cleveland. Spontelli was an alumnus of Ohio State University and Old Case Tech. He built homes in the Parma area in the late 40's and early 50's. His wife, the former Rose Kolinsky, was active in Democratic Clubs in the area.

THEY ARE SURVIVED by their sons, Frank, Michael and Phillip, daughter Marsha and Spontelli's mother, Mary, of California.

Services were at Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, Parma.

Community Calendar SB
Editorial Opinion 8A
News Section A
Sports 4, 9A
Suburban Life Section B
Classifieds Section C