

Parks' rejuvenation approved for Hills

By STEVE BARNABY
Farmington editor

Farmington Hills residents will have parks in their community if future city councils follow guidelines outlined in a master plan adopted by the Hills Council this week.

With a nearly unanimous vote, the council approved a plan which calls for far-reaching parks and recreation development to meet the needs of a population which is estimated at 100,000 by 1985. Presently, the population is 58,000.

Councilman Earl Oppenheimer was absent for the vote. All other councilmembers approved the master plan which is needed to acquire federal funds for park development.

But although council approved the plan, some councilmembers expressed reservations with how the

document could be interpreted by future councils.

"It seems that once you adopt a document like this it becomes carved in stone and you end up having people who will give their life, honor and fortune to defend it," said Councilman Fred Lichtman.

"I WOULD have trouble adopting it if it were taken in that vein," he continued.

Lichtman objected to some parts of the study, saying it was too comprehensive for a beginning and not comprehensive enough for a conclusion.

He also expressed reservations over having to negotiate a contract to use school facilities, saying that past performance demonstrates that it is difficult to come to "quick" agreements with the board.

Under the plan, negotiations would have to be entered into with surrounding school districts for use of their facilities for recreational activities.

Lichtman pointed to changes in the American lifestyle, saying he doubted if a plan for a large park was put up for a vote it would pass. He also doubted whether many persons used parks for the traditional family picnic-type function.

Councilmember Joanne Smith argued against Lichtman's logic, saying that while she thought the study was deficient, approval was needed to establish guidelines for the future.

"If we don't adopt guidelines than nothing is liable to ever happen. We obviously have to do something about acquiring land. We have to make a start," she said.

Mrs. Smith warned that there was a tendency to look upon the parks issue

from the perspective of individual councilmembers' lifestyles. Those who couldn't afford private recreation facilities should be taken into consideration, she said.

"Private facilities are great, but the charge is just too high for many people. Not everybody has a magnificent patio to have picnics. We must think of the entire community," she said.

She endorsed the need for a large park, free ice skating rinks, tennis courts and toboggan runs.

One of the most controversial parts of the plan is a proposal for an 80-100 acre major park. Some residents appearing at this week's council session said they feared establishment of such a park would bring an increase in crime to Farmington Hills.

But Councilman Robert Amor said there were ways to avoid such problems.

"We've got to look at the areas around us and examine their problems in an attempt to avoid those same problems," he said.

He advocated issuing resident passes and guest passes to avoid problems with persons who might have crime in mind.

But he warned that action had to be taken now on the plan before it was too late to purchase land for development.

He supported Lichtman's contention that adoption of the document shouldn't bind future councils to exact details.

"But this plan does give us the opening we need to make plans for the betterment of this community," he said.

Mayor Joan Dudley shunted aside any objections from those who might have reservations about adopting the proposal.

"We must address the issue rather than worrying about certain pages or paragraphs. Is the philosophy of the plan agreeable? I say it is," she said.

She urged those who believe that Farmington Hills residents no longer use parks to check out surrounding parks which are frequented by Farmington Hills residents. A large park built by the city would be used just as much by local residents, she maintained.

"The only reason they use other parks outside the city is that they have nowhere else to go," she said.

She disputed Lichtman's contention that voters would turn down the large park concept.

"The electorate can't vote on something, anyway, unless we give them something to vote on. It's time we take roles as leaders. I think we've waited long enough."

...but residents split on plan's pros and cons

Although the master park plan for Farmington Hills had nearly unanimous support from the city council, residents appearing at this week's public hearing were split on their feelings over the 86-page document.

The possibility of increased crime, apprehension over building a 80-100 acre park, cooperation with the Farmington school district and basic fees for programs offered all were subjects debated by speakers appearing before the council.

Farmington area Democratic party spokesman Aldo Vagnozzi urged the council to adopt the plan, saying it was a good start in developing recreational facilities for the area.

"I hope as a matter of public policy that these facilities will be open to everyone," he said. "I'm referring to fees to participate in activities. I hope consideration is made for residents who can't afford to pay the fees so they may participate on a free basis."

REPRESENTING the League of Women Voters was Mary Lazarov, whose organization also lauded the plan.

"The top priority should be to acquire land in order to protect and preserve this environmentally rich area," she said in her statement.

She also urged that bikeway paths be developed and that a parks and recreation board be established to encourage resident participation. She also urged that some services be provided free so everyone could use the services offered.

But not everyone was as pleased

with the proposal as were Vagnozzi and Mrs. Lazarov.

A spokesman from the Indianbrooke Subdivision said he doubted whether the police could handle the problems created by an 80-100 acre park site. Indianbrooke is near one of the proposed sites being considered for a major park.

"There is a large wooded area near my place where I had trouble with motorcycles about three or four years ago. The situation is solved now, but it really was bad for awhile," he said.

"I don't want a park that isn't extremely well policed."

Parks and Recreation Director Doug Gaylor told audience members that, ensuring numerous activities would cut down on troublemakers in the parks. He cited Waldron Park development in the city's south end as an example.

"PRIOR to development of that park we had these kind of problems. But those have been alleviated. If you have activities where adults are present, the troublemakers are displaced," he said.

But another Indianbrooke resident labeled the development of a large park as "insane."

"There will be nothing but trouble wherever the park is built," she said.

"The police just won't be able to handle it."

Farmington Hills resident William Short was even more emphatic, saying he would fight to his last breath the development of a large park.

"We are asking for a bundle of trouble. Look at the trouble in Hines Parkway and then the only ten miles away," said Short. "Name me one park within 50 miles radius that hasn't had trouble from outsiders."

Parks Commissioner Herman Muhlin defended the large park concept saying a large park in Farmington Hills would be entirely different from Hines, which is a parkway.

Superintendent of Farmington Schools Lewis Schulman supported the parks concept in the master plan, saying that increased intramural and girl's sports is causing more pressure on school recreational facilities and that additional public facilities would be needed.

"I want to assure the community of our (the board's) support. Our board is here to serve all of the community. But you should be aware that there is a need to reduce the overlap. It is quite a serious problem," said Schulman.

Monday. The plane had been buzzing the golf course for about one-half hour before the crash, police said.

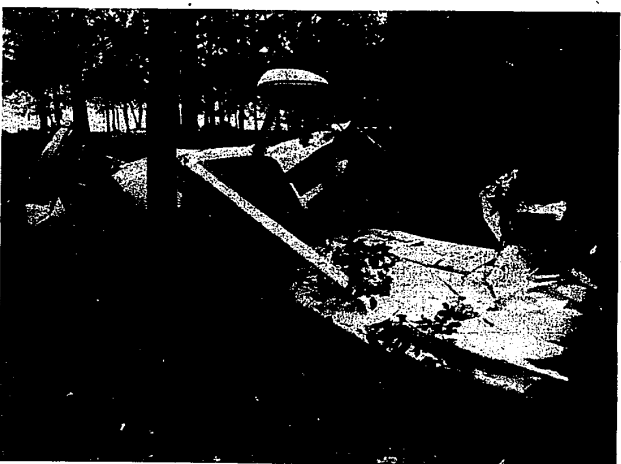
The men were reportedly ejected from the course earlier in the afternoon for being involved in a disturbance with another group of golfers.

RUSS MORRELL, JR., the dead man's son, said that he, his father and the others had started playing golf at the golf course and drinking at 11:30 a.m. Monday morning. When John Rew suggested going flying, the younger Morrell said, he tried to talk them out of it because they had had too much to drink.

"We drank about two cases of beer while we were playing," said the younger Morrell. "Then on about the third or fourth hole John started talking about taking a plane up. I told him we'd all had too much to drink and to forget it."

Morrell Jr. said he left the other four at about 3:30 p.m. because he had an appointment at a bank. He said the five had made plans to meet at the Side Street Pub in Plymouth later in the evening.

"I had lost the last hole, so I was going to buy drinks for everybody," he said.



Plane which carried one Plymouth man to his side down near 15th hole of the Salem Hills golf course. One other man was also injured. (Staff photo by Jim Galbraith)

Son to drinking dad: Don't go up

By PATRICK TOUHEY

A son's unheeded advice resulted in the death of a Plymouth man and serious injury to two Farmington men Monday when the plane in which they were riding crashed near the 15th hole of the Salem Hills Golf Course in Salem Township, a four-mile town in Florida, was also seriously hurt.

In an interview the day after the crash, the dead man's son said he was with the party shortly before the crash and had warned the men they were too intoxicated to go flying.

Killed was Russell A. Morrell, Sr., a long-time resident of Plymouth and builder of custom homes in the area. The pilot, John Rew, 33, of Farmington, is in fair condition at University Hospital. Bob Rew, 31, also of Farmington, John's brother, was in the intensive care unit of St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Ann Arbor at press time.

John Bowman, 31, of Lake City, Fla., and formerly of Plymouth, is listed in "fair" condition at University Hospital in Ann Arbor. He is the dead man's son-in-law.

According to a spokesman for the Michigan State Police, the Cessna 172 crashed in an open field at 5:20 p.m.

Morrell said he went to the bar after his appointment and waited until a little after 5 p.m. Then he got worried and started making phone calls.

"I didn't know they had rented the plane. I don't know what they were doing."

Ted Lepkowski, manager of Plymouth Aero at Mettetal Airport in Grosse Pointe, said John Rew rented the plane Monday afternoon. He said Rew had been flying out of Mettetal since the early 1970s.

"I knew John. But I didn't know the others," Lepkowski said. When questioned, he said that none of the four

men appeared intoxicated. The cause of the crash is under investigation by the Michigan State Police and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

THE REW brothers grew up in Plymouth and attended Plymouth schools. They recently moved to Farmington.

Morrell Sr., 54, was a Plymouth resident for 35 years. He built hundreds of custom homes in the Plymouth-Ann Arbor area.

Bowman and his wife, Ruth Ann, were visiting the Morrells.

Police investigate series of city crimes

Farmington police are investigating a series of incidents which shattered the city's decreasing crime rate at the beginning of the week.

Police officials soon expect to arrest the persons who robbed two homes in Chatham Hills subdivision, Friday evening. The culprits attempted to enter a third home but were scared away by the residents.

Thomas Margellar answered his doorbell Friday to discover a man trying to pry the door open. After the man fled, Margellar called Farmington police who discovered two burglaries in the area.

Daniel McMillan and Walter Gagnon were victims of the burglars. Television sets, a clock and a radio were taken from the McMillan residence. Coins and a lunch from the refrigerator were missing from the Gagnon residence. The thieves ate the lunch on the Gagnon's patio before departing, according to Police Chief Daniel Byrnes. The property is estimated to be worth between \$400-\$500. Police found the burglars' 1974 van parked a block away from the homes on Freedom. All of the missing property was found in the van, which was stolen from Detroit earlier this month.

POLICE ALSO RECOVERED all of the property which was stolen Saturday from Farmington High School.

Four young men were arrested in connection with the theft of seven tape recorders, a record player and two movie projectors from the high school.

They are: Ricky Smith, 17, of 32905 Cloverdale; Timothy D. Trowbridge, 18, of 23287 Gora; Mark D. Atkins, of 32727 State and James Kern, 17, of 23780 Ely. All stood mute before Judge Margaret Schaeffer Monday afternoon in 47th District Court. Bond was set at \$1,000 each.

Kern was stopped by Farmington Officer Charles Lee when he noticed the young man walking along Grand River and Power allegedly under the influence of alcohol. When Lee took Kern home, he noticed a record player in the shrubbery next to the house. The record player had a Farmington High School sticker and control number on it, according to Byrnes.

Officers questioned Smith after they found Kern's car parked in front of his house. The other two men turned themselves in after an officer called their homes, according to Byrnes.

POLICE ARE INVESTIGATING the armed robbery of Lawson's Party Store, 20750 Farmington Road, at 3:40 p.m. Monday.

The robbery is the fifth in a series

(Continued on page 4A)

Orchard Ridge radio expands

The Broadcasting Guild of Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge campus has been granted a construction permit by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for the operation of a 10 watt non-commercial educational FM radio station which will begin broadcasting on 93.3 mHz this coming September.

The station has been authorized to use the call letters WORB.

WORB has been broadcasting on the Orchard Ridge campus for nine years via a wired system. It will begin its public broadcasting next fall with a wide range of educational and cultural programs designed to complement programming now available in the Farmington area.

"We are presently soliciting program ideas from the entire community and hope to feature cultural and educational programs to fit everyone's taste," says Dr. Dan Greenberg, a member of the campus communication department, who serves as the Broadcasting Guild's faculty advisor.

GREENBERG will serve as the station's general manager. All other positions will be filled by students. In addition to the normal range of music, discussion and picture broadcasts, WORB will feature a community bulletin board of the air. To be broadcast live daily, the bulletin board of the air will feature announcements of all meetings and activities in the Farmington area.

Other ideas under consideration include special short courses in radio broadcasting techniques and preparation for FCC license examinations with a special emphasis on training students from local schools.

Woman on critical list after auto flips

A Long Beach Calif. woman is in unstable condition in Botsford Hospital's intensive care unit after the car in which she was driving overturned in the backyard of a Farmington home.

Susan Thomson, 22, was a passenger in the car driven by her sister, Marilyn Thomson, 19, of Farmington Hills. Susan suffered a broken neck, bruises and lacerations when the car overturned. Marilyn, who suffered lacerations and a possible dislocated vertebrae in her back, is listed in stable condition.

According to police, the women's blue, 1968 Pontiac was headed north in the left lane on Farmington Road from Eight Mile when it swerved to avoid the car in front of it, which was making a left-hand turn.

The Thompson car then leaped the curb and bounced across a green belt, knocked over a tree, mailbox, telephone pole and a cyclone fence which was located at 30195 Maplenut. The car turned over in the backyard of that home.

Both women were conscious when police arrived. The Novi Ambulance Company used its "Jaws of Life" extraction unit to free Susan from the wreck.

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