

# Downtown parking relief found in church property

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

Farmington city officials' continuing search for additional downtown parking space has taken a detour into the First Methodist Church of Farmington parking lot.

The city and the church have reached a tentative agreement allowing owners and employees of downtown businesses to use all of the church's 50 parking spaces. The lot is located on Warner and School streets, near Grand River.

An agreement will be reached if City Atty. Robert Kelly can ascertain whether the church's agreement with the Farmington School administration is no longer binding.

With the opening of the new stores within the Village Outlet, on the north side of Grand River, there is a shortage of off-street parking. In the three weeks since the store has opened, all available off-street parking contiguous to the store has been used," explained City Mgr. Robert Deadman.

A city survey determined that about 35 parking spaces on the lot were used by

owners and employees of businesses on the north side of Grand River.

**IF THE BUSINESSMEN PARKED** their cars on the church's lot, it would free about 25 spaces in the north Grand River parking lot, Deadman said.

"It would provide some relief to the overcrowded parking conditions," he said.

Under the tentative agreement, businesses would be allowed to use the lot six days of the week during normal business hours.

The church had an agreement with Farmington schools to allow persons to use its property to reach the now closed Farmington Junior High School, according to Deadman.

"That's the only agreement the church says it has with the school," Deadman said. "People would traverse over the church property to the rear lot of the school."

"There is a contract," said Kelly. "Check it out," Deadman answered. The church says it doesn't have a contract. If there is a signed contract, he

has to locate it before we reach an agreement."

An agreement will replace a formal contract with the church because its Book of Discipline doesn't allow the it to enter into a binding contract which would affect the use of church property, according to Deadman.

"We therefore propose the City of Farmington and the church enter into an understanding that may be terminated by either party by providing the other party with written notice 120 days prior to the termination," he said.

**IN RETURN** for the use of the lot, the city will help maintain the lot by filling holes, painting parking stripes, maintain guard rails, parking blocks and the storm drain.

Farmington would also be responsible for liability insurance to protect the church against claims arising from public use of the lot, according to Deadman.

The city will remove snow from the parking lots and the parking spaces north of the church building.

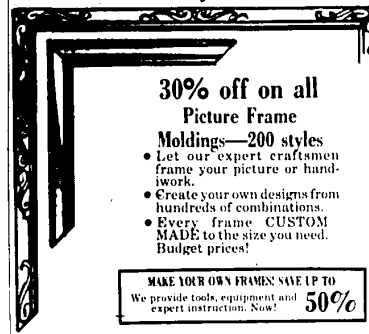
If major repairs or reconstruction of the lot becomes necessary in the future, the city agrees to negotiate with the church as to the cost sharing of these repairs," he said.

Farmington also will assign parking to the owners and employees so that 19 spaces in the southern end of the lot will be free for church visitors and senior citizens.

"It's a good deal," Deadman said. "It saves us the trouble of buying a lot. We only remove the snow. If we want a viable downtown area, we must have a parking lot."

"It's a good way to get parking and save a little money," said City Councilman Alton Bennett.

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## Focus: Hope plans a walkalong

Focus HOPE, a metropolitan Detroit civil and human rights organization will hold its second annual walkalong Oct. 17 beginning at 1 p.m.

Marchers will start from four points in the metropolitan area and converge at the Michigan State Fairgrounds at approximately 5 p.m. for a short program featuring many top entertainers.

The four starting points are: Woodward

and Maple in Birmingham, Telegraph and Eight Mile, Schoenherr and Eight Mile, and Grand Circus Park and Woodward.

Each group of marchers will cover approximately eight miles. Each walker is has been asked to obtain sponsorship from friends, relatives and merchants who pledge to donate a certain amount of money for each mile walked.

The funds will be used for Focus HOPE programs to fight hunger, ignorance and racism.

While this is the second walkalong, it is the seventh annual Focus HOPE brotherhood celebration. These brotherhood events started first with the Hope Happenings on Detroit's Kern Block and later on the riverfront.

The walkalongs have included a strong effort to bring people from all corners of the metropolitan area into the Focus HOPE camp in a spirit of brotherhood.

Part of the statement about the walk reads: "It is city and suburb coming together. It is black and white coming together. The four starting points represent the four points of the compass. Together, at the State Fairgrounds we will conclude the program by all joining hands and voices to sing 'We Shall Overcome.'"

Father William T. Cunningham is director of the organization and Eleanor M. Josias, Robert F. Braxton and Dr. Gilbert A. Maddox are assistant directors. Daro Bonacchi is chairman of the board of directors.

Those interested in obtaining sponsor forms may call Focus HOPE, 883-7440.

## City is lucky

(Continued from Page 1A) bottle a major blaze.

"We've never used the window stickers that people put in children's bedrooms," he said.

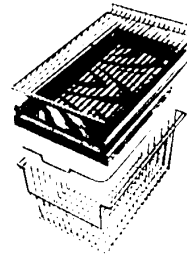
"We've never had the occasion to use them. I would encourage people to use the stickers. At least we'd know where the kids are."

"IF IT'S AT NIGHT, then at least we'd know where the bedrooms are, if there wasn't anyone outside to let us in," he said.

"The first thing that we'd ask at a fire is if everyone is out of the building. We ask that twice. We want to be sure."

"Usually, if there's someone who did get out, they let you know where the other persons are at," he said.

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(Continued from Page 1A) bottle a major blaze. We've never used the window stickers that people put in children's bedrooms," he said. "We've never had the occasion to use them. I would encourage people to use the stickers. At least we'd know where the kids are."

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