

Money goes for drain

Council puts nix on new courthouse

By STEVE BARNABY
Farmington editor

City drain development is more important than a new courthouse.

That was the consensus of a majority of Farmington Hills City Council this week when it voted down the possibility of building a courthouse as a subject for an upcoming public hearing on a federal governmental grant.

Voting for including the courthouse subject was Joanne Smith, Jan Dulan and Earl Oppenheimer. Voting against were Mayor Keith Beason and councilmembers Joan Duffies, Fred Lachtman and Robert McConnell.

The 4-3 split occurred after councilmembers discussed alternative ways in which they could use grants from the Economic Development Administration. To qualify for grants any selected projects must be ready to go with on-site labor active within 90 days of the grant award.

Although the council split on the courthouse issue, all members voted in favor of financing the public hearing on development of the Waldron drain system.

If APPROVED the grant will give the city an additional \$60,000 to help defray the cost of the drain which will serve a major portion of the Hills.

Councilman Fred Lachtman spearheaded the chief opposition to the courthouse proposal.

"If we accept money from the federal government it should be for projects which help the people and wouldn't otherwise be built without the money," he said.

Lachtman based his opposition on "ideological" beliefs which he says means that a city shouldn't take money just because it is available.

"We're not in the business of accepting money for edifices. There are enough public buildings that have been constructed and now are not used," said Lachtman referring to the recent flock of school districts which have had to vacate some of their structures.

Smith led the supporters wishing to include the courthouse issue.

"We're not taking money which isn't ours. It is our money, not a gift from Washington," said Smith who pointed out that Michigan pays more tax money to the federal government than it gets back in grants and other federal revenue sharing programs.

She disagreed with Lachtman's statement that a courthouse would benefit only two persons—the judges of the 6th District Court.

"The edifices are just for the convenience of the judges who want to have separate entrances to a building," said Lachtman.

"But the courts are for all the people in the community," Smith countered.

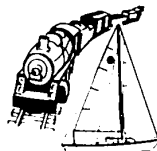
PRESENTLY, the court officers are split between the city halls in Farmington and Farmington Hills. The council chambers in each city are used for court sessions. Both 6th District Judges, Margaret Schaeffer and Michael Hand have stressed a need for a separate court facility to alleviate what they see as overcrowded conditions.

Smith defended her position, saying she wasn't against the Waldron drain, but thought persons attending a public hearing should have the option to express their views on more than one plan for the federal moneys.

"I'm not a bit afraid of garbaling up the public hearing. This isn't a detourism," she said. "Residents should have the chance to express their opinions on the different choices," she answered to an objection by Lachtman, who said including more than one issue at a public hearing would garble the proceedings.

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Strumming

Gayle Goode of Farmington does some strumming on her guitar at one of the Farmington Area Recreation Commission's after school classes. (Staff photo)

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Farmington artists
host Charles McGee

The Farmington Artists Club will be conducting a workshop on Oct. 18, at the Farmington Community Library on Twelve Mile from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Instructor for the month's meeting will be Charles McGee, director of Gallery 7 in Detroit. He has been represented in the Michigan Collects Michigan Art show which recently was conducted in Pontiac.

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