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State lawmaker charges bias in Botsford hiring practices

By LYNN ORR

A state senator has requested that the Michigan Department of Public Health withhold licensing from Botsford General Hospital in Farmington Hills.

Hospital board members were notified by mail of the request by Sen. William Huffman (D-Madison Heights) last week. In his letter, Sen. Huffman said he was basing his request on the discriminatory attitude of board members in refusing staff privileges to Dr. Ronald E. Burk.

Sen. Huffman also requested the Michigan Department of Civil Rights and Blue Cross-Blue Shield investigate the matter.

When contacted Tuesday, Huffman said that Dr. Burk's application for staff privileges was refused on the basis that the hospital had too many doctors, as he understood it.

"We'd better think about shutting down the medical schools if there's a surplus of doctors," he said. Dr. Burk is licensed by the State of Michigan, Huffman added.

He notified the board members

because he wanted them to be aware of his actions, he said.

"It's an arbitrary decision that doesn't allow me to get on the staff," said Burk, who has an office in West Bloomfield. He is a licensed osteopathic general surgeon and has been practicing since 1964, he said.

He currently has staff privileges at Martin Place East Hospital and was a staff member at Martin Place West, which closed recently.

Without staff appointment, a doctor cannot treat his patients at a hospital, he said. There is no financial arrangement between the hospital and staff members.

Burk said he and some other doctors discussed the matter with Huffman but had no idea of the senator's intentions.

Gerson Cooper, vice-president of administration at Botsford, said the letter was the first communication received from Huffman. The senator stated that a lengthy investigation of the case had been conducted.

"The central issue is the right of a private hospital to exercise its prerogative to make a professional judgment," Cooper explained.

In a tax-supported public hospital, a doctor has a legal right to membership if he has a valid license, Cooper added. A private hospital, such as Botsford, comes under different jurisdiction, he said.

"It is the obligation of the board of trustees to appoint and be responsible for the appointment of members of the staff. They must utilize their judgment and must be held accountable."

BOTH Huffman and Burk's attorney, Charles Hardlicka, believe the line between private and public hospitals is being eroded.

"There's no such thing as a private hospital," Huffman said. "It's a non-profit institution and is subsidized by the government through Blue Cross, Medicare and Medicaid."

"It's our position that hospitals are operated not for private ends but for

the benefit of the public," Hardlicka said.

When a hospital functions in an isolated area and surrounding physicians are dependent on the hospital, a denial of staff privileges can be interpreted as a denial of the right to earn a living, Cooper explained.

That is not the situation in this case, he said.

BURK HAS applied for admission six times to the hospital staff as a general surgeon, he said. Botsford currently has eight general surgeons on staff.

He blames the denial on hospital politics.

His attorney also believes politics are behind the denial.

"They admitted that he is qualified, but they said there's too many surgeons practicing out of Botsford," Hardlicka explained. "The hospital has arbitrarily fixed a number of persons on the staff. I cannot conceive of a more capricious form of discrimination."

Hardlicka also blames a "closed door" situation for Burk's denial.

"The only general surgeons who have obtained staff privileges recently have been associated with another doctor on staff."

Cooper admitted that all recent appointments have been associated with staff members. He denied that the hospital had too many general surgeons.

"We have a sufficient number," he said.

He added that the hospital has tried to contact Huffman.

"I'm looking forward to discussing this with him. If he knows something we don't know, I'd be glad to hear about it."

Dr. Herman Ziel, chief of the Bureau of Health Care Administration, said last week that he hadn't received the letter yet.

Procedure calls for an investigation of a complaint, he said.

"If there's action deemed appropriate under the licensing act, that should be taken."



A cutting greeting

For doubters and skeptics, here's final proof. Winter is over. Spring is here. With spring arrives those delights of summer—crabgrass, dandelions and having to mow the lawn. Jeff Maxwell, 9, of Farmington, gives his neighbors a preview of things to come by cutting the grass for the first time this season. (Staff photo by Harry Maube)

Farmington OKs elderly housing zoning addition

By LYNN ORR

Farmington's city council has paved the way for a six-story, 153-unit senior citizen housing complex.

The council unanimously approved an amendment to central business district (CBD) zoning requirements, which sets guidelines for downtown senior housing at the old Farmington Junior High site on Thomas. Forest City Dillon, Inc., a private developer, is attempting to purchase the nearly three-acre site presently owned by the Farmington School District.

District officials are awaiting an offer by Forest City for the site, according to William Prisk, assistant superintendent of finance.

About 40 residents turned out for the public hearing, less than a handful of whom opposed the proposed 54 foot high structure.

Others, including a League of Women Voters spokesperson, congratulated city officials for their encouragement of the project.

The approved guidelines require 62 years of age and above age limitations; reduction of five percent in the common area; storage requirements and reduction in parking requirements.

The amendment also specifies that the site would have to meet the CBD zoning requirements if any facility built for seniors was converted for regular housing use.

"Traffic congestion, potential increases in public services, water and sewer adequacy; federal involvement in the project; and aesthetics were cited by residents opposed to the project."

John Randolph of Cass and Marge Williams of Schulte both objected to the project because the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) will be involved in it.

Forest City Dillon has obtained a HUD rent subsidy grant, under which tenants in the proposed building would

pay 10 per cent of their annual income and HUD would pick up the rest of the rental in subsidy, explained Frank Darcy, developmental manager of Forest City Dillon.

Income limits are \$10,200 for single and \$11,700 for couple senior citizens. An assets formula is used to determine eligibility.

"We're addressing ourselves to people who cannot provide market rates," Darcy said.

Mayor Richard Tupper emphasized that the HUD rent subsidy grant is unrelated to low-income housing.

"We don't want low-income family housing, because it takes up too much land that we don't have," he said.

The proposal lacks federal strings, unlike other forms of housing grants, added Councilman Alton Bennett.

VIOLET CARLSON, of Liberty, cited rejections of subsidized elderly housing projects in Birmingham, Southfield, and Redford. She said she was opposed to the project on aesthetic grounds and believed an alternate site could be found for a mid-rise building.

The HUD rent subsidy grant differs from grants from the Michigan State Housing Department Authority (MSHDA) which applied to projects in the city. Mrs. Carlson mentioned, said City Manager Robert Deadman.

"Livonia has the only other project like this in the state," he said.

While residents objected to the height, Deadman pointed out that the rent zoning in the CBD allows 55 ft. in height.

"The building (the old Farmington Junior High) there now is 40 ft. high," he added.

THE NEED for senior citizen housing in Farmington was emphasized by several members of the audience and the other four, providing stability for our community. We need to provide housing to keep them here."

In 31 of the projects owned and operated by Forest City Dillon, which has built 119 similar facilities across the country, about 85 per cent of the residents were from the city in which the projects were built, Darcy added.

The growing number of senior citizens, inflation, length of waiting lists, and enrichment provided by the elderly were reasons for supporting the project, said Joan McGillicy, League of Women Voters spokesperson.

"We are particularly pleased to see that the development under consideration for Farmington will offer rent subsidies for those who need financial assistance," she said.

"We also like the safeguards built into this ordinance to protect the community from any misuse of the special senior citizen specifications, if the

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Still part of learning

Homework haunts students, teachers

"If they do all their homework in school, the student's only doing half of the job."
—Jack Buller, Harrison High School

Brown recommended the movie "Blue Collar" be viewed by his students, and so they were able to take in a movie while they were doing their homework—as a matter of fact, the movie was their homework.

The style of take-home assignments has changed to meet the needs of a generation of students who grew up surrounded by the visual media.

Although the glowing screen has failed to live up to predictions that it would take over the classroom, television and movies have played a part in changing homework from rote assignments to exercises in creative writing and opinion-forming.

WITH THE advent of television, students and teachers began to look forward to visual instead of written homework. But those expectations have remained predictions, according to administrators.

"There's not as much work with television as we originally expected," admitted Jack Buller, assistant principal of Harrison High School.

Some teachers, like Brown, supplement their classes with movie or television assignments. Sponsors and producers keep such teachers in mind when they turn out a special. Study guides, like those that accompanied the public, like those that accompanied the television special, "Holocaust," are sent to schools as classroom aids.

But in general, the emphasis is still on books instead of fleeting images. Those images have left their mark on students and homework quality.

Students who grew up with the world at the tips of the dialing fingers are apt to have a broader scope of refer-

ence which shows up in their term papers.

"They're a lot better in creative writing. They're at the college level," said Buller of high school students.

"THE PAPERS today are a good deal beyond what we did in school," he said. "And when I say we, I mean people who are over 40."

As the quality of term papers has changed, so has the style of homework in general.

Role learning, in which students learned through repetition, has been almost vanished from the educational scene, according to educators.

Although a few teachers prescribe to rote assignments, their ranks are thinning, according to administrators.

The rote method has become irrelevant, according to Weldon Petz, principal of Flemington School.

"There's much more sophisticated report writing now," he said.

With an eye to quality homework assignments, Farmington School administrators have decreed that such work should be a logical extension of classroom activities, according to Sup. Lewis Schulman.

The age and grade of the child should be considered before assigning homework, according to Schulman.

While students seem united in their low opinion of after school assignments, their parents have yet to reach a consensus.

of hours a night on homework. Some spend more time. It depends," he said.

Part of his insistence on homework stems from Harrison's 45 minute class periods. Homework is needed to supplement short classes, argued Buller. While older students spend some of their homework time moaning about tackling the tasks, their younger siblings are spared that fate.

Third graders might bring home an assignment left unfinished from the regular class period but it isn't until fifth or sixth grade that after school tasks come into a student's life.

"We give out fifth and sixth graders homework to prepare them for junior high teaching techniques where there's more emphasis on subject than on child oriented classes," explained Petz.

"If they do all their homework in school, the students' only doing half of the job," said Buller.

"They should be spending a couple of hours a night on homework. Some spend more time. It depends," he said.

"HOMEWORKS PLAYED down a lot more," he said. "There's a de-emphasis on homework in our own (elementary) grades."

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DIAL DIRECT
644-1070

Man assaulted in restaurant

Farmington Hills police are looking for four youths in connection with the robbery and beating of a man early Monday morning in Samba's Restaurant, 28130 West Eight Mile Road.

Ruben Yates, Jr., 28, told police he was walking out of the restaurant when the four, all in their late teens to early 20s, were entering. He offered one of the four youths \$4 for a ride to the Six Mile-Wayne area when a second grabbed him and hit him.

According to the police report, one of the youths said to Yates, who is black, "If you're going to that area, you're going to see a white woman."

About \$27 was missing from Yates' pocket after the incident.

The young man who struck Yates wore blue jeans and a blue jean jacket with a red and black checked shirt.

Police said his three companions tried to stop him. Yates was taken to Botsford Hospital for treatment and released.

The men were denied entrance to the restaurant. They told the staff that Yates had tried to rob them.