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Rezoning paves way for senior housing

By MARY GNIEWEK

After months of debate, the Farmington Hills City Council Monday approved two zoning ordinances which will pave the way for an elderly housing project in the southwest section of the city.

The two ordinances are required to proceed with plans for a two-story, 120-unit senior citizen housing project at Freedom and Drake roads. The project is expected to be financed by

the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA).

Councilman Joe Alkateeb cast the sole dissenting vote in approving the two separate ordinances to rezone the 11 acre site from RA-1 (which allows single family residential homes) to RCE and RC-2 in two separate ordinances.

RCE zoning allows small efficiency apartments to be constructed solely for senior citizen housing. RC-2 limits the height of the proposed building to two stories (30 feet).

Alkateeb said he voted against the zoning changes because of the MSHDA project is yet to be detailed.

"I'm for it (the project) 100 percent. But there are 150 units (of multiple family housing) that have to go somewhere else in the city," Alkateeb said, referring to MSHDA regulations that require half of the project to be used to house low- and moderate-income families.

"I want to know where those units will be put before we get locked into a

zoning change. Let's wait to see the total picture, let's not do this thing piecemeal," he said.

Mayor Earl Oppenheimer said rezoning will not cause the council to lose control over the project.

"WE CAN'T PROCEED any further with MSHDA until we accomplish this. This is just another step," he said.

Opponents and proponents of the Freedom-Drake roads project, long the subject of controversy in Farmington

Hills, addressed the council before action on the measures.

Darlene Petty, who spoke several times earlier at the meeting as a representative of the Section 36 Homeowners Association, threatened to launch a recall campaign against council members if they passed the zoning changes.

"You're taking away our voice completely on anything that has to do with this city," she said. "If recall is the only way to be heard, we'll do it again. We'll take our petitions to the streets."

Aldo Vagnozzi, a member of the joint

Farmington-Farmington Hills Commission on Aging, called the recall possibility "just another idle threat."

"I'm glad you stood up against it in the past," he said. "I don't think who gets elected (in the council race) is a reason to deny senior citizens something they've been denied for several years."

More than a dozen Commission on Aging members, long time supporters of senior citizen housing, attended the meeting.

Orchard Lake to be widened

Two stretches of Orchard Lake Road — from Grand River to the I-696 freeway and between Twelve Mile and Fourteen Mile roads — will be widened from two to five lanes in two separately proposed, federally funded projects.

Farmington Hills Public Service Director Ralph Magid said work on the stretch between Twelve Mile and Fourteen Mile should begin next spring or early summer.

"Negotiations are being finalized now," Magid said. "Bids will be taken in late fall or winter. We hope to begin storm sewer construction and paving in late spring of 1980."

A public hearing was held yesterday at Farmington Hills City Hall for residents living on Orchard Lake Road between Grand River and I-696.

Magid said their comments about the proposed road widening will be sent to

the Oakland County Road Commission, who along with the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills, will share a part of the cost.

Magid said pathways for bicycles and pedestrians and preservation of trees and shrubs along the road are details to be ironed out.

The five lane road would include two lanes in both directions to accommodate north and south bound traffic with the center lane for turning.

An Oakland County Road Commission spokesman said planning is still in the preliminary stages, and completion is three or four years away.

According to preliminary cost estimates, the federal government would pay 77 percent of the \$10 million cost. The road commission would pay \$1.1 million, Farmington \$375,000, and Farmington Hills \$767,000.

Automobile crash kills Hills resident

A 35-year-old Farmington Hills man was killed after the Ford Thunderbird he was driving went out of control and slammed into a tree in Westland last week.

Dead is Paul Ansell Suominen of 20829 Pearl, Farmington Hills.

According to a Westland police report, the accident occurred about 2:50 a.m. Aug. 10 on Harvey, which is south of Palmer and west of Wayne

Road. The report said Suominen was driving his 1975 Thunderbird northbound on Harvey. The car went out of control, left the road and hit a tree about 375 feet south of Booth.

The report also said there were no brake or skid marks on the road. The car was badly damaged.

A Westland fire department rescue unit took Suominen to Wayne County General Hospital, where he was pronounced dead at 3:20 a.m.



Orchard Lake Road's washboard surface just north of Eleven Mile is due to be smoothed out. (Staff photo by Randall Borst)

Ph.D. hawks houses in Farmington

Woman moves from scholarship to salesmanship

By MARY GNIEWEK

How does one go from newspaper reporter to Ph.D. scholar and end up selling homes in Farmington?

For Ann Shaw, it was a natural progression.

Each of her careers — teaching college English, writing human interest stories for a weekly newspaper, working as a publicist in downtown Detroit, and spending five years of intense study for a doctoral degree in English Literature — flowed into the next.

A hard-working woman who peppers her speech with words like challenge, committed and satisfaction, Miss Shaw, 36, was drawn into real estate by a combination of a tight job market in teaching and being labelled "overqualified" for other jobs.

For a person who "never sold anything but Girl Scout cookies," she topped the million dollar mark in home sales her first year as an agent for Durbin Realtors.

With more than \$800,000 in sales to date this year, she has no doubt she'll

surpass last year's sales mark. "In real estate, you have to be able to communicate . . . to listen carefully to what people want," she says.

"My first six months on the job, I made a lot of mistakes. But my first full year, I was third highest in sales in my Farmington Hills office."

SMALL IN stature, Miss Shaw makes up for that with seemingly boundless energy. Her desk is loaded with paperwork, phone messages and photographs of local historic houses.

"Isn't this one beautiful?" she says, flipping through a pack of snapshots.

When she's not doing business over the telephone, she's out showing prospective buyers "how beautiful this city is and the sense of community here. Most of my sales are in Farmington."

Can a woman who has taught Shakespeare at the University of Michigan be happy hawking houses?

"Yes, I'm happy," she says. "I genu-

inely like working with people. The work is a challenge. Buying and selling a home are stressful situations. The excitement of the business is what I like.

It's a joy to take someone through the process."

The one drawback of her job, she says, is getting away from it.

"I'm in the office almost every day. You can't be good unless you're totally committed. At home, the phone begins to ring at 8 a.m."

"In the evening, I get calls until 11. There are a tremendous amount of details after a house is sold."

"The tough part, the hard part, is to get away. I'm homesick for contemplative time."

Miss Shaw was married for a few years while a student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is now divorced and lives in Livonia.

FOR AT LEAST the last 10 years, (Continued on page 4A)



Ann Shaw spends a good part of everyday conducting business by phone. The former English Literature instructor at U-M is now employed selling real estate in Farmington. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)

inside

Sports
Suburban Life
The Inside Angle
Editorial Page
Club Circuit
Community Calendar

Section B
Section C
A3
A16
C2
C4

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