

Hills City Council to reconsider housing plan

By MARY GNIEWEK

For all practical purposes, the proposed housing development at Freedom and Drake roads was killed by the Farmington Hills City Council Monday night.

The council voted 4-3 to send a proposed zoning ordinance back to the planning commission for reconsideration. The ordinance would have allowed construction of low-income family housing on that property.

Mayor Earl Oppertbauer said the decision was a first step in rezoning the land from RC2, permitting multiple density use, to RCE, a designation which excludes anything other than senior citizen housing.

He said the city will seek other op-

tions for building a senior citizen housing development without federal strings attached.

"If we rezone the land, we can't act on the ordinance without it going back to the planning commission first," Oppertbauer explained.

Voting for the measure were Oppertbauer, Joe Alkateeb, Keith Deacon and Joanne Soronen. Long-time project supporters Jan Dolan, Cathy Jones and Joanne Smith voted against it.

Low to moderate income family housing was to account for 54 apartments, with the remaining 200 units for senior citizen housing. The plan has been a source of controversy since its inception nearly a year ago.

The Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) has threat-

ened to withdraw its support from the project if the low income housing portion is dropped. It added the low-income requirement as a condition for acting as the lending institution in the multi-million dollar development.

AFTER NEARLY a year of negotiations with MSHDA and RRCC, Inc. project developer Bud Cline, Oppertbauer said scrapping the development is a foregone conclusion because of public outcry at the low-income part.

"I don't think we're being cowardly," Oppertbauer said. "If the ordinance on transfer of property (from the city to Cline) or the tax abatement question passed, they would be subject to referendum."

"Three out of every four people who voted last Tuesday said they don't want low income housing," Oppertbauer said. "The council must follow the mandate of the electorate."

Oppertbauer met with MSHDA director Richard Helmreich last Thursday and was told the city's chances of attaining subsidy for just the senior housing portion of the project are remote.

Council proponents of RC2 zoning argued that the land is properly zoned.

"We're acting in bad faith," Mrs. Smith said. "If we were a business, I wouldn't deal with us. We have no credibility, no integrity, no honesty."

"Last spring, we said 'Okay, proceed.' Now we're pulling the rug out. This is a travesty."

COUNCIL MEMBERS debated the issue for nearly two hours. Some were heckled by spectators in the audience. Others were applauded.

About a dozen residents spoke on the issue before council voted.

Jefferson Riddell, a Southfield attorney hired by RRCC and Cline, said the council was exhibiting "a thinly disguised example of discrimination against low-income people, not unlike what happened in Birmingham."

Cline, who also addressed the council, admitted that while he has no written contract with the city to build the development, he has invested \$42,000 and acted in good faith.

He said he would rather see the development proceed to the stage where

ordinances for transfer of property and tax abatement come before city council for consideration before the project stops.

Mrs. Dolan requested those two questions be put on Monday's council agenda. She said Cline has a right to know the status of the project before it gets buried indefinitely with the planning commission.

Cline denied he would bring a lawsuit against any member of the council who voted for sending the zoning question back to the planning commission.

The planning commission will consider rezoning from RC2 to RCE just that portion of the property which is owned by the city. That excludes 2.5 acres zoned RC2 which Cline still has an option to buy.

Beware: Con artists active

By MARY GNIEWEK

Farmington police are warning residents to be on the alert for two women suspects who tried to bilk at least two downtown shoppers out of their savings recently.

Police said the "pigeon drop" scheme works like this: The suspects single out a victim, usually an elderly woman, and tell her they have just found a large sum of money. They show her a billfold bulging with cash.

One of the suspects then tells the victim the police department refused to give them a receipt for the money, so they decided not to turn in the billfold.

They ask the victim to join them in putting up a large sum of money in "good faith" in order to have an impartial third party validate if the cash find is real. Then, supposedly, the three will split the money.

THE FIRST VICTIM was cornered by the suspects in a parking lot on Grand River on Oct. 31. She was told by the suspects that they had found a large sum of money near Grand River and Farmington Rd.

The victim was asked to join the suspects in putting up cash in "good faith," but refused and called police. The second incident occurred Nov. 5 in the Farmer Jack parking lot on Farmington Rd. south of Grand River.

The victim gave the suspects \$100 at the scene, and an additional \$300 when they drove her home. She also drove her to the National Bank of Detroit branch at Farmington and Alta Loma, where she withdrew \$2,000 from her savings.

The victim told police while she was crossing the street to return to the suspect's car parked in the A&P parking lot, she decided not to give them her savings.

The woman reportedly told the suspects the bank would not release her savings in cash, and the suspects fled the scene.

One suspect is described as a tall (5 feet, 8 inch to 5 foot, 10 inch) white female, in her late 20s, with a slim build (105 to 110 pounds).

She was wearing a black checked coat, white blouse, and blue head scarf. She is described as attractive and pleasant. Both victims said she did most of the talking.

The second suspect is described as a black female, 120 to 125 pounds, 5 feet, 5 inches to 5 feet, 7 inches tall. Also in her late 20s, she wore a brown dress, a sweater and carried a brown purse.

The suspects drove a 1977 or 1978 two-door Oldsmobile, medium blue interior and exterior.

Police said the duo have been working the metropolitan Detroit area for the past three months.

Similar cases have been reported in Novi.

Citizens who are approached by the suspects are urged to call police immediately.

Tenant's aid package is proposed

By JACKIE KLEIN

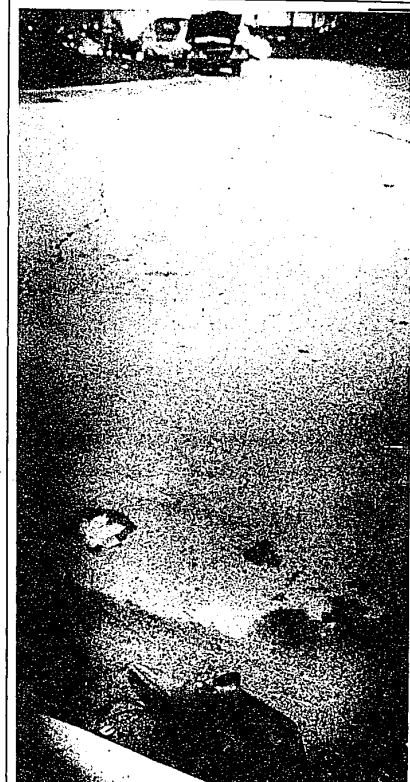
Tax exempt financing for builders of moderate-income apartments may be one way to stem the rising tide of condominium conversions.

The suggestion was made by former state Rep. Philip Mastin, a Hazel Park democrat, at the first meeting of the Legislative Task Force on Condominium Conversions.

The meeting Monday in Southfield Parks and Recreation Building launched a major legislative campaign to protect apartment tenants from the effects of condominium conversions.

"Construction costs are out of sight and you can't build a condominium unit

(Continued on page 2A)



The aftermath

A pedestrian was rammed by a hit-and-run driver as he stood next to the van in the background. The impact of the accident hurled the victim's shoe across the driveway to Chatham Hills apartments off of Grand River. FOR THE STORY, SEE PAGE 4-A. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)

Doctors take 2nd look at area drugs

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY and PHILIP A. SHERMAN

Editor's note: This is the second in a series on drugs and their use in the Farmington-Farmington Hills area.

A poll of nine pharmacies has indicated that Valium and Ampicillin are the two most widely prescribed drugs in this area.

Most pharmacists said they order both drugs by the thousands, usually from a variety of sources. Lederle, for example, is a major manufacturer of the antibiotic Ampicillin Trihydrate.

However, a spokesman for Lederle said he didn't know how much Ampicillin was sold in this area.

"I don't think we'd make it public even if we knew," he said. "Most of it's stockpiled in distributing."

Blue Cross, on the other hand, is acutely aware of how much Valium is changing hands in this country. According to the chief of staff of Farmington's Botsford Hospital, the medical insurance firm spent \$25 million on Valium prescriptions last year.

Following are two fact sheets addressing both drugs, their uses, therapeutic actions and side effects.

Ampicillin, a derivative of penicillin, is an antibiotic manufactured by at least six different pharmaceutical laboratories across the country.

According to Dr. Raymon Del Busto of the infectious diseases division of Detroit's Henry Ford Hospital, Ampicillin has been on the market since the early 1960s.

"It has many advantages over penicillin," Del Busto said. "The main advantage is that it kills more bacteria, a wider spectrum, than Penicillin."

Many of the pharmacists interviewed in the first part of this series attributed the high usage rate of Ampicillin to the type of weather characteristic of this time of the year. However, Del Busto said the antibiotic had two primary uses.

"It's used for different kinds of infections, most frequently in the urinary tracts in adults," he said. "In children it's used for respiratory tracts problems, like sinusitis."

Unlike other forms of medication that tend to stay in the bloodstream or collect in the liver after finishing a prescription, Del Busto said Ampicillin has a very short half-life.

"It disperses in just a few hours. The dosage depends on what type of infection the patient has, but the patient should start feeling better in 12-24 hours."

In older children, parents should be aware of reversals in reading and handwriting, inability to follow written and auditory directions in school, impulsive behavior and lack of attention span, Ms. Sharp pointed out.

"When parents find they have a child with learning problems, they shouldn't feel guilty, angry or blame others for the child's needs," Ms. Sharp advised. "Parents shouldn't escape it by moving away from the situation. It's

problem with Ampicillin is that the incidence of rashes that people develop is higher than with penicillin.

"The most frequent side effect is allergy, and obviously people allergic to Penicillin can't take it," Del Busto said.

"People tend to develop a rash from it if they're allergic to it. Rashes can occur in other cases, but it's not really known why they occur."

Physical effects aside, Del Busto said the only other disadvantage was the high cost of Ampicillin. Prices in the Farmington area range from about \$3.50 for 30 250-milligram capsules to a little over \$6 for 40 500-milligram capsules.

Certain antibiotics, such as Tetracycline, cannot be taken with dairy products because they nullify the effect of the medication. However, Del Busto said there are no such restraints with Ampicillin.

In the words of one doctor, Valium was once "handed out like candy."

It was hailed as the new miracle drug which could relax patients before surgery. It helped relieve patients of anxiety and tension.

But medical overconfidence in the drug made it one of the most widely prescribed and abused. Last year, prescriptions for Valium cost Blue Cross-Blue Shield about \$25 million.

Patients who used the drug developed a dependence upon its soothing affects.

"It doesn't become an addiction, it becomes habit-forming," said Dr. William Penn, chief of staff at Botsford General Hospital, Farmington Hills.

"If handled properly, there is no problem."

But handling the drug properly has become more of a concern to doctors in recent years.

"It's closely controlled, now," said Penn.

"There are no open prescriptions given out for it. You'll see a tightening down on the drug in the future."

"When correctly prescribed, Valium is administered under regular supervision. The time limit for taking the drug depends on the patient and the symptoms."

"IT CAN BE given for long periods of time if well-controlled," said Penn.

Control is the key word when dealing with Valium. The physician controls the dose and the time limit for the patient taking the drug. Toward the end of the drug's usefulness, the dosage is steadily and gradually decreased.

(Continued on page 22A)

How to cope with problem learner

By JACKIE KLEIN

A PARENT'S PRAYER

O heavenly father, make me a better parent.

Teach me to understand my children. To listen patiently to what they have to say and to answer all their questions kindly.

Keep me from interrupting them or contradicting them. Make me as courteous to them as I would have them be to me.

Forbid that I should ever laugh at their mistakes or resort to shame or ridicule when they display them. May I never punish them for my own selfish satisfaction or show my power.

Guide me hour by hour that I may demonstrate by all I say and do that honesty produces happiness.

Reduce, I pray, the meanness in me and when I am out of sorts, help me, oh Lord, to hold my tongue.

May I be ever mindful that my children are children and I should not expect of them the judgment of adults.

Bless me with the wisdom to grant them all their reasonable requests and the courage to deny them privileges that I know will harm them.

Make me fair, just and kind, and fit

me, oh Lord, to be loved and respected and imitated by my children.

ANONYMOUS

Dinghy Sharp completed her college education with taped textbooks and oral examinations.

Ms. Sharp suffers from dyslexia, a reading disability, since she was a small child. Today she is a learning disabilities consultant to the reading program for Farmington Public Schools.

The above prayer is among materials she distributes to help parents work with their children.

She told parents "What Makes Johnny Learn?" in last Thursday's workshop on child development sponsored by Southfield Parent-Youth Guidance Commission in cooperation with Southfield Public Schools. The session was the third in a four-part series conducted in Stevenson Elementary School.

Ms. Sharp works with classroom and reading teachers and has a volunteer corps of 237 senior citizens, high school students and parents who form her "Bucket Brigade."

"THE BUCKET Brigade," Ms. Sharp said, is a tutorial program in Farmington schools. Volunteers bring buckets of visual materials for learning disabled students and to aid teachers in a one-to-one setting.



DINGHY SHARP

Ms. Sharp, who has a 24-year-old learning disabled son in Purdue University, attended Wayne State University for two years. After two years at Albion College, she earned a bachelor's degree in speech and elementary education.

From Northwestern University, she earned a master's degree in language

and speech pathology and another master's degree in teaching of audiology and teaching of the deaf. She has also has a master's degree from Oakland University in teaching in reading and learning disabilities.

Ms. Sharp defined dyslexia as a neurological block that prohibits understanding of printed material.

"In simpler terms, dyslexia is an inability to integrate the things we read in an academic situation," she said. "It is this lack of organization that shows up in academic failure."

"Some of the behavior patterns parents can look for in pre-schoolers are bumping into things, inability to follow directions, eye-hand coordination, general clumsiness, inability to see parts to the whole and easily distracted."

In older children, parents should be aware of reversals in reading and handwriting, inability to follow written and auditory directions in school, impulsive behavior and lack of attention span, Ms. Sharp pointed out.

"When parents find they have a child with learning problems, they shouldn't feel guilty, angry or blame others for the child's needs," Ms. Sharp advised. "Parents shouldn't escape it by moving away from the situation. It's

(Continued on page 4A)

inside

Sports

Suburban Life

Obituaries

The Inside Angle

Community Calendar

Exhibitions

NEWSLINE

CLASSIFIED LINE

Section B

Section C

2A

3A

2C

19C

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591-0900

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