

Farmington Observer

Volume 90 Number 71

Thursday, June 21, 1979

Farmington, Michigan

Twenty-five cents

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Senior housing bogs down in feds' red tape

By MARY GNIEWEK

A snag between the builder and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has caused a delay in ground-breaking for a six-story senior citizen housing project originally scheduled to open this fall in downtown Farmington.

One city official claims the contractor, Forest City-Dillon of Parma, Ohio, and HUD, who will subsidize the rent, are \$4,000 apart per unit on construction cost estimates.

The difference centers around the amount of insured mortgage rate HUD

will guarantee for the project. Forest City is trying to negotiate a higher insured rate, but neither side would say how far apart their final offers have been.

According to HUD, the estimated rate of inflation is at the center of the controversy.

"We haven't hit a snag. We are presently negotiating with HUD and should work things out within a week or 10 days," said Frank D'Arcy, Forest City Enterprises development manager.

"It's normal administrative procedure. Negotiations with HUD have been

going on for a long time and we're very confident they will be solved soon."

D'Arcy would not say when the ground-breaking would occur.

The 153-unit apartments will be built on the old Farmington Junior High site at Thomas and School roads.

Most of the units will be one-bedroom. Each will include carpeting, drapes, refrigerator, range, garbage disposal, smoke detectors, intercoms, and safety handrails in bathrooms for elderly or handicapped tenants.

"I DON'T WANT to be held to an

exact date," D'Arcy said, pointing to the recent concrete haulers strike as an example of unforeseeable construction hold-ups.

"We hope to break ground this summer, anywhere between June 21 and October," he said. "Completion should be eight months after we begin initial construction."

He said the project would cost about \$4 million. Rents would follow the current market price, estimated at about \$350 per unit.

Forest City Enterprises is a subsidiary of Forest City-Dillon. The firm has

built senior citizen housing in Livonia, Southfield, New Baltimore and Oak Park.

"We have given our best estimate to the developer and are preparing a firm commitment," said Louis Berra, HUD deputy director of multi-family housing and development.

"There is still a difference of opinion, but I believe it is less than \$4,000 per unit."

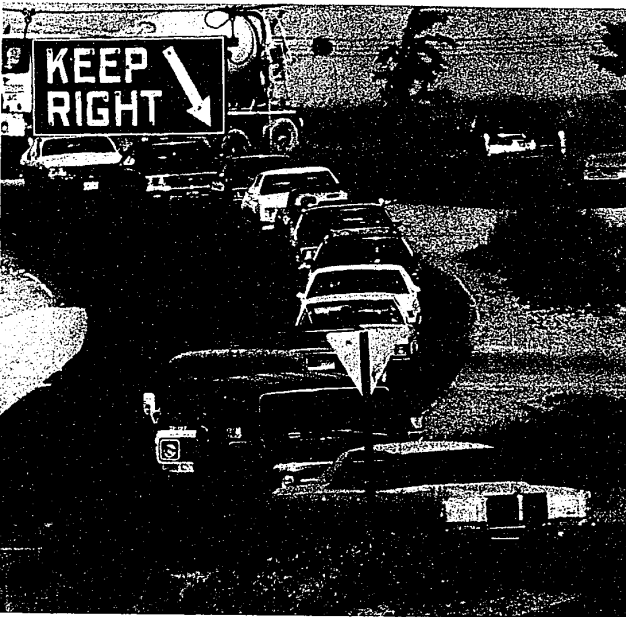
The insured mortgage rate would control the amount of construction loan to build the structure. If the cost exceeds the amount of the loan, it would

involve greater equity contributions by the developer," Berra explained.

"If the costs are higher than the insured mortgage, he'll have to draw his own funds."

"The basic difference centers around the estimated rate of inflation. The builder is quoting a higher rate than we are."

DESPITE THE DIFFERENCES in cost estimates, Berra is confident the project will be built as soon as these differences are ironed out.



Hordes of bumper-to-bumper traffic are common every day sights at rush hour at the intersection of Ten Mile and Grand River. Confusing twists in the road and no traffic signals add to the chaos. The cars here are waiting to turn onto Ten Mile from Grand River. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)

'Tricky' intersection fuels motorists' anxiety

By MARY GNIEWEK

Farmington Industrial Park employees have thrown up their hands in desperation over a continual lack of major road improvements at the Grand River-Ten Mile intersection.

Much to the chagrin of the Farmington Industrial Park Association, a group which represents 70 local businesses, a road improvement plan scheduled for completion this fall has been pushed back to 1980 by the Oakland County Road Commission.

Industrial Park employees and Farmington Hills city officials learned last month that long-sought improvements to be paid primarily with federal funds were by-passed by the Road Commission in favor of improvements at nearby Grand River and Novi roads.

The Road Commission, which is responsible for both stretches of highway, blames the delay on federal red tape. The Ten Mile-Grand River project will cost in excess of \$500,000. The county and city will split 10 percent of the expense. The remaining 90 percent will be paid with federal funds.

In the meantime, local commuters will have to wait another year for installation of a traffic signal on Ten Mile, widening of Ten Mile from two to five lanes, and re-engineering of Grand River to Ten Mile.

"We've been working on this project since 1973," said Association Director Ralph Shoberg, president of G.S.E. Inc., 23640 Research Park in the Industrial Park. "There's no way in hell the in-

tersection of Novi and Grand River is worse."

WHAT SHOBERG AND others object to most is no traffic light at Grand River and Research Drive, and a confusing bend at Grand River and Ten Mile.

A week ago Monday two motorists were killed at the intersection when their vehicle was hit by another car while turning left onto Ten Mile from Grand River. Dead were Jack Sharpy Jr., 24, of Northville, and his passenger, John Costello, 23, of San Antonio, Texas.

"There are 3,000 cars coming into the Industrial Park daily and continuous traffic along Ten Mile," Shoberg said.

Industrial Park Drive is immediately west of the Holiday Inn on Ten Mile. "There's a half dozen fast food restaurants on Ten Mile, and I-275 dumps into the traffic flow 100 yards east and west of Grand River and Ten Mile."

"Ten Mile has needed new construction for seven years now and virtually nothing has been done," Shoberg continues.

Within a quarter-square mile just west of Halsted and Grand River there is an exit ramp from I-275, an approach to the I-96 interchange, and an entrance ramp to Highway 16 — all to be maneuvered by motorists without the guide of a traffic signal.

"It's a tricky intersection," said State Rep. W. (Sandy) Brotherton, R-

Farmington. "I've been concerned with that area for four years."

IN A LETTER Brotherton received from Road Commission Chairman Fred Houghten, the highway official said there has never been an attempt to place a higher priority on one project over another, and that both improvements would be completed as soon as possible.

"I think the delay is a combination of things," Brotherton said. "First, there are problems with engineering. Second, a cloverleaf and interchange was just completed at Twelve Oaks Mall. The road widening ended a half mile before the Grand River-Novi intersection."

"I suspect the Road Commission felt it would make more sense to finish that job first. The Grand River-Ten Mile project is now scheduled for next spring. But we may get a traffic signal later this summer."

The delay has caused some Industrial Park workers to change their schedules.

"I've thrown up my hands in desperation," said Ron Poirier, treasurer at Bama Corp., a fastener distributor firm in the park.

"It's life or death every time I leave here. So I don't go home until after 6 p.m. — after the rush hour."

Poirier said there have been three accidents in the last six months involving Bama employees. According to the

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Since the Great War Lifelong campaign waged for peace

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

In 1913, Clara Marshall looked with awe upon photographs of children maimed by the Great War.

From those photos sent to her by her future husband Frank Vincent was born the desire to promote peace in the world.

Now, 84, Mrs. Vincent has attended world conferences and has written and spoken to everyone who would listen about the cause of insuring that more children aren't maimed in a future war.

Likening those who campaigned against slavery with those working for peace, she feels strongly that anyone who loves other persons and nature can't sit back and allow another war to happen.

For Mrs. Vincent, it's a matter of working to keep her liberty.

"Liberty is a fresh concept in every generation. There are those in power who would deprive us of our liberty if we let them," she says.

Her focus in recent months has been on nuclear energy and the arms race.

"It's insane," she says of nuclear power.

"If we value our children, we have to put a stop to it."

RECENTLY, SHE spoke out against nuclear power in a sermon she delivered at the Farmington Unitarian-Universalist Church.

The Livonia resident's activity against war and military might began in 1915 when she joined the fledgling Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Through the '30's, they worked toward peace only to have World War II interrupt their dreams.

"It seemed like we had learned nothing from the first one," she says of the war.

In 1950, she was among 110 delegates from 20 countries who attended a world conference on peace in Warsaw, Poland.

"It was a terrific experience," she says.

The Chinese minister of health gave her a pin she still cherishes. The Polish sponsors of the commission presented her with a hand carved wooden box and

a doll dressed in native costume. Inside the box is a scarf on which the word peace is printed in several languages.

On the return trip, she stopped over in Paris and met artist Pablo Picasso at one of his shows. She bought a portfolio of copies of his paintings.

ONCE BACK IN THE U.S. the "terrific experience" soured.

Many of the teachers who had participated in the conference lost their jobs.

"We were determined if war was to be averted that we must keep on working," remembers Mrs. Vincent.

After her return from Warsaw, the Vincents moved from Detroit to Chattanooga, Tenn. Her husband had been transferred there by Norgie.

She remembers that blacks weren't allowed in the libraries.

"And then they were damned for being ignorant," she says.

Companies came to the south because labor was cheap — pay averaged 87 cents an hour.

About 26 months before he would be eligible for his pension, Vincent was

laid off from Norgie. His wife is convinced her anti-war activity was the catalyst for the action.

"We didn't have any income but we made it for three years before Social Security came," she says with a brave smile.

After her husband lost his job in 1951, they moved to Livonia.

IT WAS A RETURN to her home state. She grew up in Owosso with five brothers and sisters. The family owned a fruit truck farm, with overhead irrigation installed by a brother who had graduated from Michigan State College.

Her love of the land is reflected in her home. Surrounded by trees, flowers and greenery, she remains committed to the cause of bringing more peace into the world.

Although she uses a cane to get around, her white hair frames a bright face and searching eyes.

"What we need is people power," she says, echoing Albert Schweitzer's formula that persons united can affect change.



Clara Vincent, lover of life, nature and peace, still fights against war at the age of 84. (Photo by Randy Borst)

Schools to pay insurance hike

By MARY GNIEWEK

The Farmington School District will renew its workers' compensation insurance coverage July 1, although the new policy represents a \$20,000 increase over the current coverage.

The Farmington Board of Education voted Tuesday to continue its self-insured status, which protects the district against claims made by school employees, by renewing a two-year contract with Corporate Savings.

The 40 percent increase is due primarily to a split in types of coverage — specific and aggregate — said school Finance Director Bill Prisk. Specific coverage limits the district's

liability on one incident, regardless of the number of employees involved, to \$100,000. The policy will cost \$22,000 for two years.

Aggregate coverage sets a \$605,000 ceiling on district liability for all claims over the two-year period. The district will pay \$47,760 for that coverage.

Prior to the new plan, the district paid one lump sum (about \$50,000) on a workers' compensation policy which carried a \$450,000 limit.

Prisk urged the Board to approve the total insurance package, although le-

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Tourney foots medical bills

Joli Johnson, 18, stayed up late one night to finish the banner which flies across the front of the Fun Factory on Grand River near Middle Belt in Farmington Hills.

The banner advertises a football tournament at 7 p.m., Thursday at the arcade. The benefit tournament is planned to help Jim Evans, 19, Ms. Johnson's fiancé. There is a \$1 cover charge that evening.

Evans suffered a broken neck on May 30 during an auto accident in a field on Thirteen Mile and Drake in Farmington Hills.

Evans spent several weeks in traction at Wayne County General Hospital. Evans is without hospital insurance.

Ms. Johnson is hoping the benefit will be successful enough to alleviate some of the pending financial problems.

She and Evans are childhood sweethearts who plan to marry on Sept. 2. They picked that date during the five years they've dated because Evans' birthday is on Sept. 1 and Ms. Johnson's falls on Sept. 3.

inside



Before packing up for your summer holiday, don't forget that your carrier will be stopping by next week to collect. And be sure to save your receipt; it's worth a discount on the next classified ad you place in your hometown newspaper.

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