

Farmington chips in to help prevent further flooding

Continued from Page 1A

owner of a \$60,000 home, assessed at \$30,000, would be required to pay \$16.51 annually to fund the debt service on the drain project, the city manager estimates.

Farmington's share of the project is reckoned to be 11.9 percent of the total bill. Farmington's share will be 67 percent while Novi and Oakland County would share the remaining 21 percent of the cost.

Farmington council members approved the drain project by a 3-0 vote with councilmen Richard Tupper and William Mitchell absent.

"I think we have an obligation..." Councilman Ralph Yoder said.

Councilman William Hartsock, finishing Yoder's sentence.

"It's either sink or swim," Yoder added.

Mayor Alton Bennett said persons who think the drainage problem only affect Farmington Hills are deluding themselves.

"It's not just one problem, but many," Bennett said.

Solving this problem through cooperation between the three cities may mean less problems for Farmington in the future, he said.

Farmington has an obligation to help Farmington Hills because Farmington is currently putting more water into the drainage system than it is supposed to contribute.

DEADMAN SAID two problems could delay the project.

He said the bonding attorneys for Farmington and Novi questions whether the cities can back the bonds with their full faith and credit. The attorneys — of the Miller, Canfield, Padock and Stone law firm — believe the Headlee Amendment requires a vote of the electorate before such a pledge can be made, Deadman said.

Bonds not backed by the full faith and credit of the cities would likely require a higher interest payment charged by the purchaser of the bonds. But the legal adviser for Farmington Hills and Oakland County disagreed with the opinion citing precedent in a federal court case for selling drain bonds backed by the cities without voter approval.

TO AVOID lengthy delays, Farmington Hills City Council has agreed to pay all engineering design costs and expenses related to acquisition of land or facilities in all three cities prior to the bond sale.

Residents speak out on HUD grant

Continued from Page 1A

of subsidy than the city has considered in the past," and that "it should be

Ordinance approved

Continued from Page 1A

the public access channels but not access to pay TV.

Persons who buy the Tier III package at \$7.25 per month get a full range of local, satellite and super-stations and can pay an extra charge for pay-TV options.

A person who wanted to watch HBO on the tri-city cable network would pay \$14.75 per month.

The 46-page ordinance covers a wide range of topics, even setting aside procedures that would allow the three cities to buy the system from MetroVision if so desired.

viewed from a fresh perspective."

The grant would enable Farmington Hills to:

- make \$254,000 worth of storm-drain improvements in the Richland Gardens and other subdivisions bounded by Middlebelt, Shiawassee, Colwell and Grand River;
- allocate \$94,000 towards the construction of a sidewalk along 13 Mile Road from the Detroit Baptist Manor senior citizens' housing project to Orchard Lake Road; and
- spend \$125,000 to improve existing substandard housing stock.

An additional \$38,000 would cover administrative costs.

Many of Detroit Baptist Manor's 500 residents turned out to express their support.

Eighty-four-year-old Wesley Walker, a founder of Detroit Baptist Manor and a senior citizen advocate for 30 years,

served as their spokesman.

"Forty percent of our residents don't own cars, and have to walk down to Great Scott at Orchard Lake and 13 Mile to grocery shop," Walker said.

"It's so hazardous I just hold my breath, hoping they don't get hit and killed by a car."

Walker drives, and is often asked for a ride home from the shopping center by Manor residents who recognize him, he added.

Farmington Hills' Frank Bair took an opposite stance.

"WE DON'T need to choose between turning our thumbs down on senior citizens and getting into bed with HUD," Bair said.

"This nation is in dire financial straits, and we'd be setting a bad example by accepting welfare and convincing ourselves we're really needy. If this program is desirable, we should shoulder the costs ourselves."

"Give us leadership — not in seeking welfare, but by acting in a manner that enables us to hold our heads high and preserve our own pride, fortitude and resources."

Local sponsorship of a program similar to the Community Block Grant Fund is an idea that came up three years ago, yet no such program has come forth from the council, said resident Al Vagroski.

"Other communities, including Farmington, have accepted community Block Grant funds and haven't collapsed," Vagroski said. "The only thing that's collapsed in this area is the roof on this building."

"I hope you confirm the program," added Vagroski.

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