

North of border

Developer loses bid to build new shopping center

By Mary Lou Callaway
special writer

There are more than enough places to shop in the West Bloomfield area.

That was the message planning commissioners received from residents and the township planning staff as they considered Ramco-Gershenson's proposal to build more discount shops along Orchard Lake Road.

Last week's public hearing ended in denial for rezoning of 16 acres from office to commercial, between West Bloomfield Lanes and Cauley Chevrolet. The vote was 7-1 with Edward Nagel dissenting. Jeffrey Leib was absent. The commission earlier had tabled the rezoning request to examine the developer's traffic study. The second hearing again attracted some 75 residents.

Felchecreek Subdivision Association Vice President Gordon Allardique submitted 80 petitions urging denial.

Reading an association letter asking that present office zoning remain, the statement said: "You maintain present zoning (office) to prevent the spread of shopping centers, tall buildings and other developments that disproportionately contribute to over-commercialization and traffic problems."

HOMEOWNERS ALSO URGED preventing construction of a multi-story regional shopping center being considered for 14 Mile and Orchard Lake Roads (the 55-acre Bauervic estate parcel) which would drastically change the character of this area.

Planning Director Thomas Bird

countered a traffic-impact study, prepared by Ramco-Gershenson's consultant Stanley Cook, which said office use would add more traffic to the township than retail stores.

"There is a greater amount of traffic of longer duration with commercial than with offices," Bird said in his report. "There is a significantly higher tax revenue from offices than from retail."

Cool stood by his conclusions. "Whether we like it or not, Orchard Lake Road in West Bloomfield and Farmington Hills is a major retail corridor. The traffic can be accommodated." Commissioner Francon Goldberg moved for denial.

"I strongly agree with the planning staff," Goldberg said. "Our community cannot support the stores we have. There have been seven or eight bankruptcies in Orchard Mall and two or three in West Bloomfield Plaza."

One million square feet of retail use already exists in the 1.5 miles along Orchard Lake Road, from the Orchard Mall at Maple to the K Mart center in Farmington Hills, Bird said. "This translates to a major retail center on the magnitude of a super regional center."

THE TOWNSHIP'S master plan discourages strip commercial development along Orchard Lake Road. Earlier court decisions, however, went against the township, enabling the Boardwalk shopping center and McDonald's fast food eatery to locate on the east side of the road, between 14 Mile and Maple.

Bruce Gershenson argued his proposed development has 60 percent of its leasing commitments.

"You are planning a 250,000-square-

foot project (Bauervic) just 1,000 feet away. I don't see how we can be denied and another go ahead. We would not burden township services, police and

fire." Bird pointed out the Bauervic proposal has not been proposed formally, but only discussed at work sessions.

"The planning commission has never indicated a regional shopping center was a project to be approved," Bird said. "It would have to be justified."

East of us

Residents riled over messy school

By Sharon Dargay
staff writer

Joseph Steingold, embroiled in continuing court battles over alleged illegal loan practices at bankrupt Salem Mortgage Co., Southfield, is at the center of another controversy in the city.

This time the issue concerns excessive grass — not interest rates. As a part-owner of former Southfield No. 10 Elementary School, the Bloomfield Hills man and a partner are under fire from residents for sloppy ground and building maintenance at the site, 25040 Berg School officials, however, say Steingold may turn over his interest in the vacant two-story building.

"He's out of the picture," said Ronald Rohman, associate superintendent of Southfield Public Schools. "The partner still paying the bills is involved in litigation to break the partnership. He's a capable developer."

Rohman said co-owner Stanley Berger of Practical Management, Oak Park, isn't likely to settle the maintenance issue until he resolves his legal battle with Steingold.

But Joseph Sutcshek, Southfield's director of building, maintenance and development, said Berger was cooperative in a meeting with city and school administrators this week.

"The grass was cut on Friday. A 10-day maintenance schedule has been set up," Sutcshek said. "The only provision the city can enforce is the noxious weed ordinance allowing us to cut weeds exceeding 12 inches and assessing the cost to the tax rolls. But we try not to do that."

ENFORCING THE ORDINANCE would require several public hearings over a one- to two-month period. Sutcshek said the city and Berger likely will "work things out" before considering legal remedies.

Berger was unavailable for comment. "The other leverage the city has is that the building must be secure from the outside. We've been reluctant to board the whole thing up because of the image of it," Sutcshek said.

"We've come to the conclusion that the building must be boarded. We'd prefer not to do that, but because of the broken glass and the kids getting inside, we must."

Sutcshek said about 15 percent of the building currently is boarded.

The district, as former owner of the property, is not responsible for upkeep at the site, but has received several complaints from homeowners.

Clintina Simms, a resident, complained to the school board last week about hip-deep grass at the former school.

"I came to Southfield five years ago and have grown fond of it. We must show that we won't tolerate misuse of property even though it has been sold."

She urged the board to consider attaching restrictive covenants to properties offered for sale, specifying minimum maintenance standards.

Honor students are named

Students from the Farmington and Farmington Hills area made the dean's list at universities across the state. Following are a list of those students:

ALBION

Kathryn Richardson, Elizabeth Wingard, Sheri Biller, John Leitch Jr. and Susan Murphy.

CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Daniel Whyman, Venugopal Ayyagari, Mark Blech, Donald Ed-

wards, Lisa Rau, Ronda Reitenour, Julia Roberts and Christopher Titus.

HOPE COLLEGE

Mitchell Chin, John McMillan and Karen Wuertz.

LIVONIA GROVE COLLEGE

Mark Honeyman.

NORTHWOOD INSTITUTE

James Anderson, Christine Cummins, Jerome Hack, Diane Trenggan, Karen Lee Trevas and Brenda Marie Burt.

YMCA highlights

The Farmington Area YMCA provides a variety of services for youth and adults in the community. Further information may be obtained by calling 552-4020 between 9 a.m. and 10:30 p.m. daily.

youth allowed. Sponsored by the Farmington Area YMCA and Bonanza Skating Center. A one night of roller skating at the Skate Center on Halsted, north of Grand River. Skate rental is \$1. 6:30-8:30 p.m., June 29.

FOUNDERS FESTIVAL FOX TROT — Our very own super fast 5K and 10K course, July 30. Pick up your entry blank today for the Founders Day Fox Trot.

SUMMER T-BALL — No trophies. No cuts. The Farmington Area YMCA will begin the summer T-Ball session for kids entering 1st grade through 3rd grade. We have sites throughout Farmington and West Bloomfield. Practices begin the week of June 27. Games are played on Thursday evenings beginning July 7.

PRE-SCHOOL CAMP — We still have a few openings for PAL (3½-4 year olds) and KIDDIE (ages 5-8) Camp. These special camps offer your child a chance to interact with the guidance of trained and experienced instructors in such daily activities as gym games, music, arts and crafts, outdoor fun and swimming instruction. Sessions available in both morning and afternoon.

T-BALL CLINIC — The Farmington YMCA has the clinic for the T-Ball superstar. Fundamentals of baseball, along with a lot of fun. 9:30-11:30 a.m. June 27-July 1. Fee \$12 members and \$15 non-members; \$7 YMCA T-Ball players.

FAMILY SKATING PARTY — This is for families only, no unattended

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53500 W. 7 Mile - 476-4433

FARMINGTON
35103 Grand River/Drake 476-7025
FARMINGTON HILLS
11 Mile/Middlebelt - 477-7500
Northwestern/14 Mile - 851-2212

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CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF ENACTED BUDGET

All interested persons are hereby notified that a summary of the Fiscal Year 83/84 budget of the City of Farmington Hills including the intended use of federal revenue sharing funds is available for public inspection.

The budget summary and documentation necessary to support the summary are available at Farmington Hills City Hall, 51855 West Eleven Mile Road, Office of the City Clerk, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. They also are on file at the Farmington Community Library, 33500 Liberty, Farmington, Michigan and the Farmington Hills Branch Library, 32977 West Phoenix Mile Road, Farmington Hills, Michigan during their normal business hours.

FLYNN CALVIN, City Clerk

June 23, 1983

It's not too late to plant a garden

used as community centers, Angling Road Elementary School was converted to cable television studios, and Lashrup Elementary School is leased to Akiva Hebrew Day School. Rohman said the district has not received complaints about the other properties.

being paid and the owner is meeting his obligation," he said, referring to Southfield No. 10.

"But our land contract is not without some teeth. We have the right to review the property if we think the value is not being maintained."

Home vegetable and flower gardeners still have plenty of time to ply their skills in spite of what has been an uncooperative spring.

"The old axiom that everything has to be planted by Memorial Day really isn't true," said Lowell Ewart, Michigan State University professor of horticulture.

"In most parts of the state, planting can continue to the Fourth of July and still provide good results for the gardener."

Planting of all crops in Michigan is running upwards of two weeks behind normal years, having been delayed by temperatures averaging from five to seven degrees below normal and rainfall about four inches above normal.

For gardeners with excessively wet conditions, Ewart recommends allowing the soil to dry for a day after till-

ing. Then it should be fertilized (one to two pounds of a balanced mixture per 100 square feet) and reworked. It might also be a good idea to mulch after planting.

"MULCHING WILL HELP the soil dry and settle more evenly, while conserving moisture that will probably be needed during July and August," Ewart said.

"Gardeners should remember that historically, we average about the same amount of rain a year, which suggests we have some dry months ahead of us."

"Due to the uncooperative spring, there are ample gardening supplies throughout the state."

"The variety and range of vegetables and flowers is good, and I can see little reason why gardeners in Michigan can't still have a good season."

Professional volunteer help needed

The help of professionals is needed by Farmington Youth Assistance Center (FYA). The service organization is sponsored by the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills, Oakland County Juvenile Court and Farmington State District.

Its aim is to reduce juvenile delinquency and enhance family life.

Interested lawyers, teachers, CPAs and those with leadership qualities are asked to contact the FYA office, 476-3840.

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