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Fox video eyes move to Livonia

By Gary M. Cates
and Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

CBS/Fox Video Co. plans to move its operations from Farmington Hills and may buy one of the last large industrial sites in Livonia.

The purchase of the vacant land, 83 acres on Seven Mile east of Haggerty, is contingent on Livonia City Council approval of property tax relief.

The company's current facility — 23705 Industrial Park Drive in Farmington Hills — consists of five buildings, each housing a different aspect of the operation.

Favorable action on CBS' request for a 12-year 50-percent property tax break will increase Livonia's chances of attracting CBS/Fox Video from Farmington Hills, said Dan Gilmartin, Livonia's industrial development coordinator.

WHENEVER AN industrial plant leaves a city, it is common practice to get a release from the community, Farmington Hills City Clerk Floyd Cairns said.

"They couldn't get a big enough piece of acreage here," Cairns said.

Oakland County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) also has been trying to find the firm a large enough location so CBS/Fox Video would stay in the county, he added.

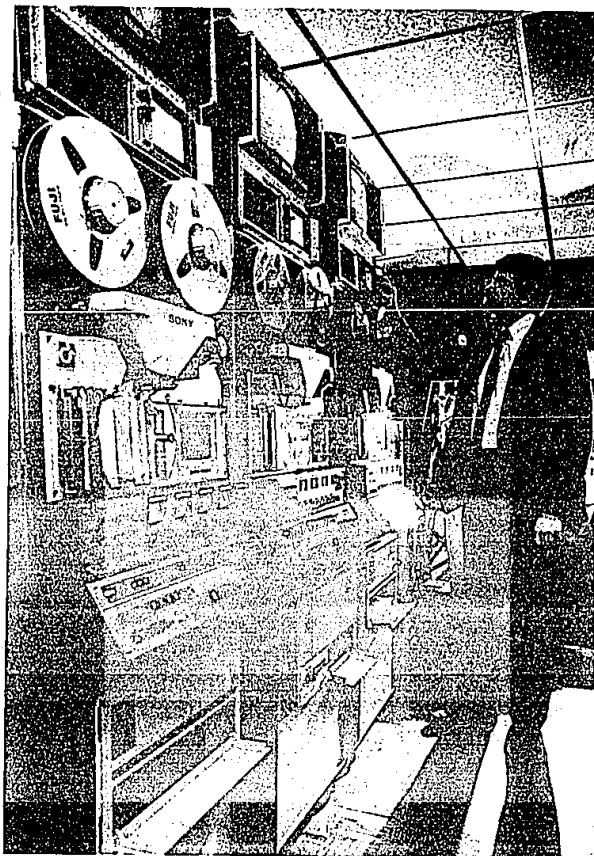
If the Livonia City Council grants the tax break and CBS decides to move to Livonia, Farmington Hills would have to concur in letting the company leave, he said.

When asked what Farmington Hills' tax loss would be if CBS/Fox moves, Cairns said he wouldn't know without some research. Frederick Fehlauer, CBS/Fox vice president and general manager, also was uncertain of the tax loss. CBS/Fox owns three buildings at the site and rents the others.

"THERE WON'T be any abrupt change," Fehlauer said. CBS/Fox intends to find tenants for the facilities before it moves out of town, he said.

The Livonia City Council has set a March 28 public hearing to consider establishment of an industrial development district under Public Act 198. The law was established to attract new business into Michigan and to encourage existing businesses to expand operations. Once a district is established, the council can consider the actual abatement.

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Steve Wild checks the video equipment used to tape commercials at CBS Fox Video in Farmington Hills.

RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Motel concept stumbles at first hearing

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

A proposal to build another motel in Farmington Hills was blocked in its first attempt at approval.

Farmington Hills planning commissioners have recommended denying a request to rezone property for a proposed 112-unit motel behind Bill Cook Buick.

"You can't rezone for a specific use," said Hal Rowe, city zoning supervisor. "You can't rezone on the condition of putting a motel on it."

Following a public hearing Feb. 16, planning commissioners voted 6-1 to deny the request to rezone the property at the terminus of Freedom Road and Haledale, from light industrial to B-3, the "most liberal of commercial zones," Rowe said. Ben Marks voted against during the request.

The proposed motel's backers, Bill Cook, John Turmala and Jerry Abel of Sheraton Oaks hotel in Novi, in mid-January requested the zone change specifically for the development of a motel.

Although the request is scheduled to be considered by the city council on March 19, Rowe said one of the motel's backers on Tuesday requested a month's postponement.

IN RECOMMENDING to deny the request, commissioners indicated that rezoning the land from light industrial to commercial would:

- conflict with the city's master plan for future land use;
- represent "spot zoning" (a light industrial zone would be on either side of the motel);
- add to the existing traffic congestion in the Grand River-10 Mile area;
- be "completely out of character with existing uses in the area."

Cook said he preferred to avoid discussing the proposed motel until "some unique problems" are solved. He would not specify what those problems are. Rowe, however, said that when Cook

'The traffic situation out there is such that putting a hotel out there would cause a lot of problems.'

—Dawn Phillips
Holiday Inn attorney

requested the zoning change, he told planning commissioners the proposed motel would be something "between a Holiday Inn and Red Roof Inn concept."

"He (Cook) has an option on it," Rowe said, referring to the property behind Cook's dealership and adjacent to the nearby industrial park.

During the public hearing, both Dawn Phillips, Holiday Inn attorney, and Craig Ingold, Red Roof Inn general manager, asked planning commissioners to deny the rezoning request.

"The traffic situation out there is such that putting a hotel out there would cause a lot of problems," Phillips said, adding such a facility would only further congest traffic.

"Candidly, competition doesn't worry them (the Holiday Inn managers)," she continued.

Phillips, however, also said that unlike the Holiday Inn, the proposed motel would not offer a restaurant or banquet facilities. Such facilities would only further add to traffic congestion, she said.

Although "they (planning commissioners) didn't doubt that a motel will be built," Rowe said, concern was expressed that once the property is rezoned, any type of commercial business could be built, such as a fast-food restaurant, if plans for the motel were to fall through.

But city planning consultant Claude Coates said that if the property is rezoned, whether a motel is built or not is irrelevant. More importantly, the proposed rezoning does not conform with the city's master land use plan.

Police officials urge child abuse report

By Diane Gale
staff writer

Neglecting to report suspicions of child abuse could result in the youngsters' death, according to police officials.

"National statistics say that if you go back for more than one call a year, and the child is under five, then there is a good chance that the child is dead," according to Sgt. Richard Murphy of the Farmington Hills police department.

"More than 50 percent of the people abused (nationally) are under 7 years old," he continued.

Although statistics in the area are low when compared to other communities, some police officials believe the problem is worse than the numbers show.

"I know there is one hell of a lot more than is being reported," said Charles Lee, Farmington public safety officer.

During 1983 the Farmington Hills police department received 14 child abuse reports. There were seven reported in Farmington.

AFTER FURTHER investigation all proved to be valid calls. Child abuse cases for this year have yet to be compiled.

But last year there were three criminal arrests of persons found guilty of child abuse in Farmington Hills. None were reported in Farmington.

"If you suspect a child is being neglected or abused, don't talk yourself out of calling the police," Lee said. "The kid is the only one ending up

being the loser if you don't."

Police officials report that many people neglect reporting an incident, because they fear identification. However, the identity of the person making the report won't be disclosed, according to Public Act 238 of 1975.

The police department doesn't even ask the name of the person making the report.

"People tend not to want to get involved, however, more people do report now than they had in the past," said Murphy.

The police departments work closely with the Oakland County Department of Social Services division of Protective Services when a report is made on suspected child abuse.

"It's an adult's responsibility to report child abuse," Lee said. "All you

are doing is trying to direct the right kind of help to the parent."

Police officers are required to make a verbal report with the DSS within 24 hours after they receive the information. The police departments also follow-up with a written report after 72 hours.

Often the officer goes with the social worker to the family's home to determine if there is obvious proof that a child has been abused or neglected.

IF THE officers believe the children are in immediate danger they have the authority to remove them from the home. The social workers must obtain a court signed warrant before they take such action.

However, taking the child out of the home is considered the last resort in

most cases.

"The principal concern is that the risk be removed from the child," according to Dave Goodrich, DSS community service representative.

"The social worker could petition to have the child removed from the home, but it's one of the last things that the worker tries to do," Goodrich said.

Social workers first opt to work with the abuser by offering psychiatric or other types of treatment and advisory type classes.

"Maybe the parent doesn't know how to care for the child, and it's a matter of education," Goodrich said.

Police officials report there isn't a typical description of an average child abuser. Abusers are found in all races, professions and income levels.

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oral quarrel

How do you stand on prayer dispute?

The United States Senate is dealing with an emotionally-charged issue these days — whether to approve a constitutional amendment that would allow public prayer in schools. A two-thirds approving vote of the Senate would be needed before that could happen.

Senators have said that their mail and phone calls have been running 90 percent in favor. Some religious groups, however, believe that it would be unwise to have an amendment to

allow school prayers.

Today's Oral Quarrel question is:

WHAT IS YOUR STAND ON AN AMENDMENT WHICH WOULD ALLOW PRAYER IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS?

To answer this question, call us at 477-5498 anytime before 1 p.m. Friday, March 9. To see how your neighbors feel about this issue, please look in Monday's Farmington Observer.

Locals follow prayer issue with wait-and-see feeling

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

As the U.S. Senate this week began debate on a proposed constitutional amendment allowing prayer in public schools, Farmington School officials are following a wait-and-see attitude.

"It may be an issue (for the district) down the road. It's not an issue right now," said Jack Inch, school board trustee. "I don't think it would be an issue unless it's law."

Senators are discussing "the question of allowing verbal prayer in the (public) schools," said Ken Nakamura, legislative assistant for Rep. William Broomfield, R-Birmingham. "All the provisions say it's voluntary."

The proposed constitutional amendment (a bill sponsored by Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-South Carolina) would reverse a 22-year-old Supreme Court decision banning officially sponsored prayer in the public schools.

THREE BILLS, reported out of the senate judiciary committee last week, would allow prayer in all public buildings. The Thurmond proposal (S. Res. 73) allowing "vocal" prayer is similar to President Ronald Reagan's prayer amendment, minus a stipulation enabling the government to write the verse.

"What you may end up with are 30 students in a classroom all saying their own prayers out loud," said Diane

Krawiec, administrative assistant to Sen. Donald Riegle Jr., D-Michigan.

"The Supreme Court said the government can't support a particular religious practice," she added. "But there is no law prohibiting school prayer. This is writing an amendment for something that isn't disallowed."

The Hatch amendment (S.J. Res. 212) permits a moment of silent prayer or meditation and gives religious groups access to public buildings.

The Baker proposal (S.J. Res. 218) goes a step further, allowing silent or vocal prayer in public buildings.

Lawmakers, however, aren't certain if the amendment would promote

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