

MetroVision squares-off with Muirwood

By Joanne Mallazowski
staff writer

MetroVision officials are appealing directly to the residents of Farmington Hills' Muirwood apartments to get the ball rolling on cable-TV installation.

After 18 months of off-again, on-again negotiations with the Beznos Co., Muirwood's owners, MetroVision is getting tough with the large apartment complex on Grand River and Drake.

"I've just dragged on," said Bob McCann, MetroVision general manager.

A Beznos spokeswoman, on the other hand, declined comment on what's holding up negotiations.

"I can't go into that," she said, citing a lack of time as the reason for refusing to discuss the details of negotiations.

Earlier this month, meanwhile,

MetroVision mailed about 800 letters to Muirwood residents asking them to fill out a form expressing interest in having cable TV installed.

"We hope that as a result of your requests, the owners will become willing to continue negotiations with us about providing you with cable TV," the letter stated. "After all, it's in their best interest to make sure that Muirwood residents are not deprived of the option to subscribe to cable."

As of this week, McCann said, about 154 residents have returned their forms requesting cable TV.

Although MetroVision began installing cable in Farmington and Farmington Hills neighborhoods in January 1983, apartment residents have had to wait for cable until MetroVision and the apartment-complex owners reach an agreement allowing cable installation.

A contract, for the most part, is a wiring agreement that allows the cable firm an easement to put the cable lines on private property.

The contract, as allowed by the city's franchise and cable ordinance, can also include provisions for the apartment owners to charge MetroVision an access fee — a charge above the cost of installing cable in their units.

That fee is determined by the apartment-complex owner.

MetroVision, in turn, has the option of passing that fee on to its subscribers in addition to the rates they will pay for whatever tier of cable service they choose.

But McCann says that about 99 percent of all the apartment complexes don't charge an access fee.

More than 7,000 of the roughly 12,000 "multi-unit dwellings" in Farmington, Farmington Hills and Novi have signed up for cable TV, according to MetroVision's letter to Muirwood residents.

Despite the longstanding negotiations with Muirwood, MetroVision is determined to provide residents with cable TV.

The cable firm's next step, McCann said, is to provide Beznos with a date when cable construction will begin. Until then, he said, MetroVision officials "will negotiate."

If MetroVision cannot work out an agreement with Beznos, condemnation proceedings can be started against the apartment complex, McCann said. That would allow the cable firm to receive its needed easements for cable installation and to provide residents with cable service.

Condemnation proceedings, however, have not been started, McCann said.

Meanwhile, Beznos officials are also looking into installing private cable such as SHARY (Satellite Master Antenna Television), according to the MetroVision letter.

"We're looking into several things," said a Beznos spokeswoman. "A decision will be made."

McCann says that it's "fine" if Beznos chooses to install a private system. But he is quick to add that the pri-

vate system must meet the same tricity requirements MetroVision met when they were awarded the franchise.

"Legally, if you request cable, you can have it," he said.

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Top graduates honored by board

Kimberly Garver, a Michigan State University senior from Farmington Hills, received the MSU Board of Trustees Award for achieving the second highest grade-point average among MSU's 4,061 spring-term graduates.

Garver, daughter of Arlene and Gerald Garver of Farmington Hills, earned a 3.99 grade-point average on a 4.0 scale. At a June 8 Board of Trustees meeting, MSU President Cecil Mackey presented awards to students with the top four grade-point averages.

A nutritional sciences major, Garver is a member of MSU's Honors College, Phi Kappa Phi honor society, and Omicron Nu, a home economics honorary.

She was recently awarded a Phi Kappa Phi fellowship of \$4,500 to study medicine at Wayne State University beginning in fall 1984. Garver is a 1980 graduate of North Farmington High School.

Another top graduate was Wendy Frankel of Farmington Hills with a 3.987 average.

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