

'Back off,' school board tells council

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Because of strong opposition from the Farmington school board, a city-planned financing scheme to make capital improvements along the 12 Mile corridor in Farmington Hills has been put on hold.

"Everybody in this room knows we're going ahead with it," said Farmington Hills Councilman Ben Marks, following a public hearing on the issue Monday.

In a 5-2 vote council agreed to defer setting up the special taxing authority for about 5-6 months. Council agreed to wait on a final decision until facts about how much money is needed for the improvements is available.

Councilwomen Joan Dudley and Jodi Soronen supported creating the Tax Increment Finance Authority (TIFA).

Why tax change upsets some

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

It was done politely but strongly. Farmington school officials want city officials to drop plans for a financing scheme that would pay for improvements in the 12 Mile corridor in Farmington Hills.

At a public hearing Monday, school board members made the most of their opportunity to tell Farmington Hills officials why they are strongly opposed to use of the Tax Increment Finance Authority (TIFA) to create a special taxing authority to provide money for improvements along the city's "growth corridor."

In a prepared statement, school board treasurer Dick Wallace told the Farmington Hills City Council Monday that school officials are opposed to TIFA because:

- It would have a negative impact on the future finances of the school district.

- It's an "inappropriate utilization" of the Act 450 (TIFA), "intended to prevent urban deterioration, encourage neighborhood revitalization, and to eliminate causes of decline in property value."

Monday, despite school board objections.

"I'm afraid that postponing it now is really a conciliatory gesture," Dudley said, remarking that it's "like sticking a pacifier in the mouths of those who object, hoping it will blow over."

From the start of the public hearing, school officials made it clear they want the city to keep its hands off their potential tax dollars.

City officials in turn made it equally clear that without improvements along the 12 Mile office corridor, development will not occur as its potential warrants. And the school district wouldn't be getting any new tax benefit anyway.

"I HAVE to believe that if we do nothing... that (12 Mile) will not develop as fast as it would normally," said Mayor Charles Williams. "The school district will not get that money anyway because it is not developed."

The city's contention is that without improvements — the widening of 12 Mile, storm drains and possibly another interchange off I-96 — a decline in property value will occur because development cannot be accommodated.

But school officials do not believe that and say the city has not provided facts to document the decline.

"I simply think it does not apply to us," said Zan Alley, executive director of the Farmington Education Association. "I don't see where our tax base is declining."

Despite the difference between school and city officials in the interpretation of property decline, it's the potential loss of future tax dollars because of the proposed TIFA plan that's at the top of the school board's list of objections.

"It angers me personally that this new growth money that we depend on for new programs will be taken away," said Trustee Janice Rolnick.

Under TIFA, city officials want to create a special taxing authority and district to provide money for road and drainage improvements along the city's 12 Mile "growth corridor."

"This is an area of the city that, for the most part, is largely undeveloped," said City Manager William Costick. "We do not believe with current city resources we'll be able to keep up with the demand for roads and improvements. In our case, we're talking about facilitating future growth."

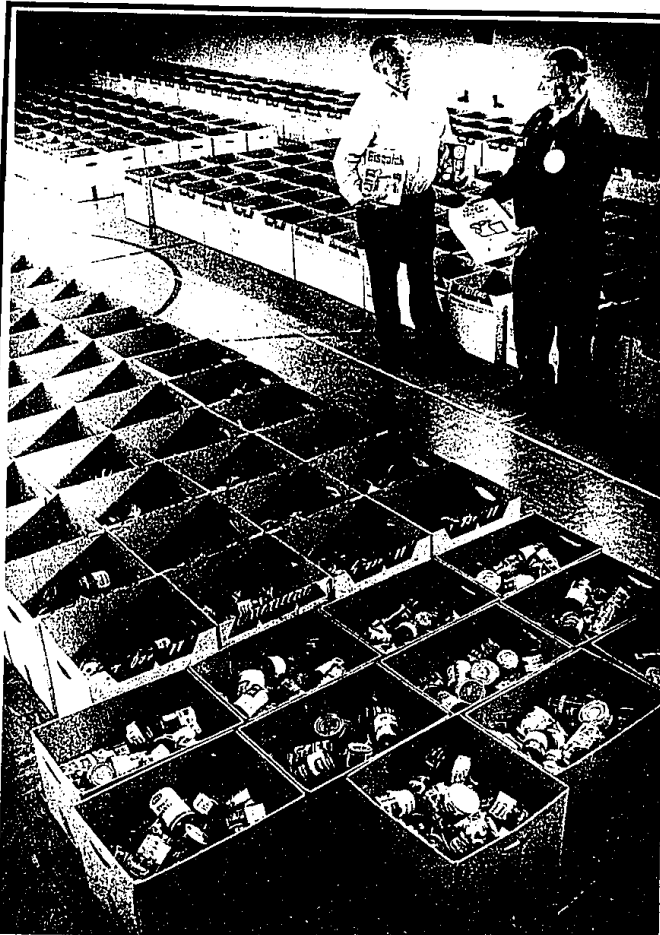
WHILE the public hearing was orderly, there was little doubt city and school officials are sitting on different sides of the fence.

School officials are annoyed because, except for an opportunity at public hearings to voice their opposition, they have little power to prevent the city's formation of the TIFA plan.

For the most part though, school officials stood alone in their opposition. Developers along 12 Mile, as well as a few residents spoke in favor of the city's financing scheme.

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Charles Schulkins (right) and Otto Regantik examine some of the donations to this year's Goodfellows drive. Schulkins has been involved in 54 of the annual charities.

Goodfellows

They're gearing up for another drive

By Tom Beer
staff writer

Libralter Plastics Inc. collected a load for the Goodfellows charity, and Charlie Schulkins — Farmington's Mr. Goodfellow himself — hopped in his green van and drove over to pick it up.

Libralter's contribution, 737 pounds of canned goods and other non-perishables, was the result of a contest held in the 90-employee firm on Indoplex Circle in Farmington Hills.

"Some of the people here in the plant got the idea that it would be a good idea to help some of the needy in this area," said Don Jenks, comptroller of the company which manufactures

plastic parts for the automotive industry. "We know we have a lot of hunger in this area. At Christmas time, you get a lot of people thinking about the needy who maybe wouldn't be thinking about them the rest of the year."

Foreman Ivy Keeler, who directed the first-ever food drive at Libralter, added, "We just wanted to help people around here who needed help. We just thought it'd be a good thing to do."

The company's gifts may have seemed like a lot, but the barrels and boxes hardly covered the free-throw circle on the floor of the gymnasium of the now-closed Middlebelt Elementary

School, sort of a marshalling yard for this year's Goodfellows haul.

HUNDREDS of companies and thousands of individuals, perhaps prodded by the spirit of the season, contribute to the Goodfellows, which long ago acquired the motto "... no child without a Christmas."

Farmington's Goodfellows program, locally staffed, assists the needy in Farmington and Farmington Hills. Similar charities exist in many Detroit-area communities, each serving its own area.

Goodfellows raise money through

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Cable hike OK'd

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

MetroVision cable TV officials are on their way to getting a long-awaited rate increase.

In separate actions Monday, the city councils of Farmington Hills, Farmington and Novi introduced an ordinance amendment giving preliminary approval to the cable firm's request for a rate increase, effective Feb. 1, 1985.

The three councils have yet to formally adopt approval to hike the rates. The adoption of this resolution is expected sometime in January. Only two of the three councils need to adopt the ordinance amendment for the rate increase to take effect.

Federal legislation which is about to become law Dec. 23 would allow MetroVision to seek an automatic annual 5 percent increase for two years. After two years, rate schedules are in the cable firm's hands.

Despite the legislation, Tom Bjorklund, MetroVision vice president, told Farmington Hills council that "we have pledged not to raise the rates again through 1985."

IF THE city councils enact the amended ordinance, the proposed cable rate increase would affect residents who subscribe for the Tier III level of services.

Subscribers currently pay \$7.25 a month for Tier III (channels 2-113) service. MetroVision wants to increase the monthly rate to \$9.95. The installation charge would remain the same.

The proposed rate increase would not affect residents who are subscribing to three or more pay services, such as HBO, Cinemax or Showtime. Monthly rates and installation charges for Tiers I and II would remain the same. The cable firm is also requesting an increase from \$3.50 a month to \$4.50 for each additional outlet (without remote control).

The Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission, which represents the cities of Novi, Farmington and Farmington Hills, recommended the rate hike last September after a lengthy public hearing.

Under the original tri-city franchise agreement with MetroVision, the cable firm could not be allowed to ask for a rate increase until 1988.

But as of last September, MetroVision had reported a \$3.7 million loss. Fewer residents have subscribed and costs for the firm have been higher than anticipated.

ONE of the increased expenses was due to the firm having to add more than 100 miles of cable to build the system. Other costs stemmed from rate increases to MetroVision from many of the cable services such as ESPN and C-Span.

But MetroVision, like many of the nation's cable firms, also promised more than they could deliver. While cable firms banked on selling services such as banking and security to subscribers, much of the necessary technology is still unavailable.

The reasons for the proposed increase and a host of complaints from residents were documented at the SWOCC public hearing in September. For those reasons, the city councils felt

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oral quarrel

What would you do with found booty?

A citizen who found two suitcases full of gold jewelry in the middle of a busy suburban road returned the valuables to their rightful owner, a large discount store. The bags, containing jewelry worth thousands of dollars, had fallen from a company delivery truck, according to newspaper accounts.

For his honesty, the Detroit resident received a reward of \$500 cash

and a \$550 gift certificate from the store.

Today's Oral Quarrel question is:

What would do if you were the finder of two suitcases stuffed with expensive jewelry?

To answer this question, call 477-5498 anytime before 1 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 21. To see how your neighbors feel about this issue, please look in Monday's Farmington Observer.

what's inside

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NEWLINE . . . 477-5450
CLASSIFIEDS . . . 591-0900
HOME DELIVERY . 591-0500

Because Christmas and New Year's fall on Tuesday this year, you'll find us at your home on the Saturday before each holiday (instead of Monday).
Deadlines for Saturday, December 22 and Saturday, December 29 editions:
CLASSIFIED Thursday, December 20 and December 27 — 5 p.m.
Thursday, December 20 and December 27 — 12 noon
Deadlines for Thursday, December 27 and January 3 editions:
CLASSIFIED Monday, December 24 and December 31 — 5 p.m.
Friday, December 21 and December 28 — 4 p.m.
Monday, December 24 and December 31 — 10 a.m.

CREATIVE LIVING RETAIL
Happy Holidays!

Holiday deadlines set

For the next two weeks, the Monday issue of the Eccentric will be distributed on Saturday. This allows us to take Christmas and New Year's Day off to be with our families. The deadlines for the next two weeks are listed below.

Saturday classified ads

Issue	deadline
Dec. 22	5 p.m. Thur. Dec. 20
Dec. 29	5 p.m. Thur. Dec. 27

Thursday classified house ads

Dec. 27	4 p.m. Fri. Dec. 21
Jan. 3	4 p.m. Fri. Dec. 28

other Thursday classified ads

Dec. 27	noon Mon. Dec. 24
Jan. 3	noon Mon. Dec. 31

Almost all news department deadlines for these two weeks will be moved up 24 hours. Have a happy holiday season.