

# Arboretum receives liquor license extension

**Editor's note:** This story ran Thursday, Feb. 27 under the wrong headline. The story is reprinted here.

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

One of two Class C liquor-by-the-glass licenses that Farmington Hills officials held in reserve for two major office developments has been ex-

tended for another two years.

At the request of the developers — Peter Burton, Ron Hughes and Robert Katzman of the Arboretum Office Park — the Farmington Hills City Council agreed to hold the liquor license in reserve until March 1988.

The license was first held in reserve for the developers in March 1984 in anticipation that a restaurant would be in operation in the office park within two years — by March 1986, said City Clerk

JoAn Reynolds. Council at that time agreed that if the license was not in use by a restaurant in the office park by March 13, 1986, the license would be reconsidered.

"We have been, as you can tell, forging ahead on our Arboretum," said developer Burton. "We have been unable to get a signature on the dotted line for a restaurant. We are still as much as ever in need of a restaurant at the facility."

Phased construction on the planned six three-story buildings on 50 acres along 12 Mile, between Drake and Farmington roads, began in fall 1984. The first building has been completed and is occupied. A permit has been issued and footings installed for phase two. The proposed restaurant, however, is supposed to be connected by walkways to phases one and three, Burton said.

"IT'S NOT essential for (phase) three to be built before the restaurant goes in," Burton said.

But developers have had difficulty in attracting a restaurant to the still incomplete park because currently the

only trade available is from the occupied offices. It's possible that a deal could be reached with a restaurateur before the completion of phase two, Burton said.

Despite council's decision to grant an extension on the license, council questioned Burton and the project's progress in light of the fact that the city also has a second license in reserve for the planned Brookfield office center on Northwestern Highway at 13 Mile.

Because construction has not yet been completed on Brookfield, city officials expect the proposed project's developers, Elkin Equities, to follow Burton's suit and request a license extension.

"As you well know, liquor licenses are probably more valuable than diamonds in this community," said Councilwoman Jody Soronen, after asking Burton how long an extension was needed to accommodate development of a restaurant.

FARMINGTON HILLS' quota (based on population) for Class C liquor licenses is 39. With the two in reserve for Brookfield and Arboretum, the city is

at its limit, Reynolds said.

"We cannot ignore the fact that this complex (Arboretum) and Brookfield, which is Elkin's, are very large developments in the city. Things are not as bad in getting liquor licenses as they used to be. Now everybody gets a resort license," said Mayor Joe Alkateb.

Responding to questions on how long the city should reserve the license, Burton told council that even if developers had a commitment from a restaurateur, it would be another 10-12 months before construction was complete. It would be "reasonable to expect" a commitment from a restaurateur within 18 months, he added.

"As you know, this Arboretum, in many ways, has been an uphill fight," Burton said, referring to the earlier economic slump in Michigan and a "glut of (office) property" in the area.

But Burton assured council that the

first Arboretum building "is filling up at a reasonable pace. I am not burning up any sales records there."

WHEN QUESTIONED whether the possibility that the planned 12 Mile Road widening might not occur would have an effect on the Arboretum's future, Burton brushed the concern aside. He added that there is a possibility that a portion — at least from the Arboretum property to Farmington Road — of the thoroughfare might be widened with private money (as opposed to tax revenues).

"I would say there is a good chance the road could be widened on private (money)," Burton said.

When council questioned Burton about his comments, he added that he couldn't fully discuss the issue and that he wasn't saying Arboretum developers would complete the widening.

## on the agenda

**Farmington City Council**  
Council Chambers  
23000 Liberty, Farmington  
8 p.m., Monday, March 3

Council will hear correspondence from residents of the Wynset Condominiums on Farmington Road downtown regarding opposition to a possible unit to be located in the downtown area, as proposed recently by city consultants. The council will also consider a sign variance request, resolutions regarding tax collections, and hear correspondence from the Farmington Area Jaycees on the annual Easter Egg Hunt, March 22.

The council is also slated to appoint a new member to the Appraiser's Board of Review, to replace Joan Sundt, who has resigned her post. The council will also consider a posi-

tion against proposed and current federal budget cuts and purchase of a television system for inspection of the city's sewer system.

The Farmington Department of Public Safety's annual report will also be submitted to council.

**Farmington Board of Education**  
Eagle Elementary School  
14 Mile at Middlebelt,  
W. Bloomfield Township  
8 p.m., Tuesday, March 4

The board's policy committee will meet at 7 p.m. at Eagle prior to the regular school board meeting.

Bids for the Shawwassee School roof and equipment will be opened at the meeting, an elementary curriculum study report will be presented, and several gifts to the district accepted.

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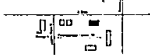
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