

Hills makes progress on flooding problems

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

It's been eight months since residents poured out their hearts about the water woes that plague their Farmington Hills homes. Since that time four of the 26 documented drainage problems have been corrected, four are being worked on and three might be corrected if residents decide to pay their streets.

An update of work on the drainage problems was presented to the Farmington Hills City Council Monday.

"I would like to emphasize that we have addressed 11 of them (drainage

problems) in the last eight months," city engineer Skip Ottwell told council.

Improvements made include: fixing an enclosed storm sewer between two houses on Stonegate Court; improving rear yard drainage near Freedom and Gill roads in Beechwood Estates; and improving road drainage across yards near Briarhill and Wistaria.

A fourth improvement, construction of an outlet was completed in the summer to relieve well-publicized flooding at the north end of Bartlett, south of 13 Mile, east of Orchard Lake Road.

Prior to improvements, at least one Bartlett resident's backyard would flood with up to 2 1/2-feet of water.

Four other improvements will be completed in the 1987 construction season.

Flooding in rear and sideyards of houses on Stonegate Court in Franklin Forest may be corrected by construction of a major office complex, Forest Park Offices, phase 3.

The planned widening next summer of 13 Mile, west of Orchard Lake, will provide an outlet for flooding along Ardmore, near the Bond Office Building. A third improvement will be made when the Woodcreek pond is dredged. Bluffs are expected to be taken on Dec. 11.

The fourth improvement includes construction of outlets near Longwood and Flanders. The project will alleviate flooding on the paved streets in the area.

If residents agree to proceed with paving projects, improvements will be made on Randall Street, Rhonwood and Fendit and Dumas Court.

The April council — when drainage woes were first documented — was called to discuss problems and offer plans to include some of the priority problems in the 1986-87 capital improvements budget.



This flooding on Bartlett, east of Orchard Lake Road, south of 13 Mile, has been corrected with the construction of a new outlet for storm water.

At that time, it was determined that some of the problems are the responsibility of homeowners, while others can be solved with proposed road improvements or included as major projects in the updated capital improvements plan.

In some areas of the city, flooding is causing problems with homeowners' septic tanks and wells, according to residents. Discussion in April drew criticism

from some council members. Council members demanded to know why drainage problems are occurring if developers' building plans, including grading requirements, are approved with assurances that potential drainage problems won't occur.

Taking council concerns into consideration, city staff this week reviewed the city's four-year-old master storm drainage plan.

Completed in 1982 by consultants Hubbell, Roth & Clark Inc. of Bloomfield Township, the plan is expected to be adopted by council later in December. The plan analyzes major drains as well as documents proposed improvements — about 70 projects estimated at \$47 million — to the city's storm drainage system.

Some of these major improvements will in turn alleviate or relieve specific residential problems. But work must still continue with those residential problems that can be solved with specific localized re-

pairs or through street paving programs, city administrators said.

Because council members had also expressed concern about city standards for storm water detention, city staff had an analysis prepared with the help of consultants Orchard, Hillitz & McCliment.

"It is ... concluded that our standards are adequate and for the most part are working sufficiently in accordance with our current codes," Director of Public Services Thomas Blaisell said in a report to council.

Though 15 of the documented residential flooding problems still call for solutions, it's unknown when they will be corrected, based on available dollars in the capital improvements budget.

Of the total \$296,665 available in the storm drain portion of the 1986-87 capital improvements budget, only \$121,665 remains uncommitted, City Manager William Costick said.

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