

# Enhance community, new mayor declares

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

Newly elected Farmington Hills Mayor Ben Marks is challenging residents to make the city a better place to live and work.

"I say may this be the year of enhancement. Enhancement in the kind of living and sharing we experience in our neighborhoods, in our shopping areas, in our schools, places of worship and at our work and while at play," Marks told a standing-room-only council chamber Monday night.

Marks was sworn in as mayor by City Clerk JoAn Reynolds at the special council meeting, during which outgoing Mayor Joe Alkatch passed the gavel to Marks, the council's former mayor pro tempore.

Farmington Hills City Council elected Marks and mayor pro tem Judy Sorensen Dec. 15 in a unanimous 6-0 vote.

"I believe we all have too much at stake here, not only in the physical house we live in — probably our largest investment in the financial sense — but even more importantly, in the emotional and spiritual sense, all that we have at stake here in the roots we have put down that mean home and values and family. It is time to get together and make this enhancement a happening," Marks said, beginning his third year on the council.

**'I call now to all the people to come and get involved, attend meetings . . . Stand up and voice your opinion or sit and listen.'**

— Ben Marks  
Hills mayor

THE MAYOR recalled challenging residents last summer to get involved with the city and only one has met his challenge — Springbrook resident Jack Joynt, who has spearheaded revival of the former Council of Homeowners Associations.

"I call now to all the people to come and get involved, attend meetings — be it city council, planning commission, board of appeals, parks and recreation or neighborhood watch. Stand up and voice your opinion or sit and listen," Marks continued. Offering well-repeated excuses for avoiding involvement and attendance at city meetings — "meetings too boring, repetitious, uninteresting" — Marks reminded residents, "It's your money. It's your neighbor-

hood. It's your life. Enhance it."

Calling 1987 "the year of enhancing the quality" of life in Farmington Hills, Marks called for continued efforts in getting long-awaited major road improvements: the 12 Mile Road and Haggerty Road corridors, widening of I-696, construction of an additional freeway interchange.

Referring to accomplishments of 1986 — Heritage Park development, construction of a new police facility, an approved bond issue for a road improvement program, creation of additional administrative positions — Marks said: "Nothing is accomplished in any city or town unless the people breathe that spark of life into it by their toll and taxes."

Marks also spoke of the city's parks and recreation plans. "We will put in more ski trails, skating ponds, soccer and ball fields, picnic areas for the whole family."

He called on the Farmington Hills Beautification Commission to continue its efforts in improving the city's appearance. The commission's accomplishments along Orchard Lake Road and Grand River Avenue should be repeated along Eight Mile from Inkster to Haggerty, he said.

"And then we can look ahead when each commercial, office and residential site in the Farmington Hills has cleaned up, painted, planted and pruned and presented the best picture possible to each one of its neighbors," Marks said.

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RANDY BORTIS/Staff photographer

City Clerk JoAn Reynolds (left) swears in Farmington Hills' new mayor, Ben Marks.

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