

Money tabbed for drainage, housing rehab

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Housing rehabilitation advocate George Roberts admitted today that he would like to see even more money allocated to the city's federally financed housing program.

"You have done a good job so far. Let's do better," Roberts told the Farmington Hills City Council Monday at a public hearing for proposed uses of Community Development Block Grant money.

"I request that the council add as much money to the rehabilitation allocation as it can to continue the funding of a program that displays so graphically how Farmington Hills cares about its people," Roberts said.

Despite his pleas, the council did

not change a previously proposed distribution between administration, the housing program and capital improvements of the expected \$272,000 — 15 percent less than last year — in federal money this year.

But council members promised to give an additional CDBG money — about \$18,000 — to the housing program if Congress succeeds in vetoing President Ronald Reagan's proposal to defer some of the grant money to other programs.

OF THE \$272,000 expected in CDBG money, the housing program — designed to help the city's low- and moderate-income homeowners improve their houses — will receive \$115,000. The program also has an additional \$38,000 that is expected to be repaid on low-interest loans made

in past years to homeowners. That would bring the program's total to \$151,000.

The council also allocated \$39,000 for administration and \$118,000 for capital improvements. Administration includes housing specialist Cheryl Carter's salary, supplies, legal notices and year-end audit. Capital improvements have generally included needed drainage projects.

The only change that has been made is in the priority of projects suggested under the CDBG program. The new priorities include:

- Drainage improvements for Meadowbrook Heights subdivision (Section 35), an estimated \$56,000.
- Drainage improvements for Regal Orchards subdivision (Sections 26 and 35), estimated \$118,000.
- Drainage improvements on

Rhodeswood and Fendt (Section 35), estimated \$118,000.

• Drainage improvements for Randall and Rivergreen (Section 35), estimated \$71,000.

• Storm sewer improvements for Radcliffe (Section 35), estimated \$23,000.

• Storm sewer improvements for Grayling Avenue (Section 36), estimated \$30,000.

THE AMOUNT of money allocated for improvements cannot finance a series of projects. Instead, city engineers provide the list of priorities. If the first project on the list does not proceed, then the money is used to finance the second in priority. Informational meetings are scheduled with residents in the proposed project areas to determine interest and support.

Council watcher Aldo Vagnoni reminded the council that the \$38,000 in expected loan repayments is not new money from the federal government. That means that the new money is split almost 50-50 between the housing program and capital improvements.

"The rehabilitation program does need more money," Vagnoni said.

Roberts, a Rehabilitation Loan Board member, told council that members approved an emergency grant, low-interest and deferred loans totaling more than \$17,000 in early March even though the new money has not yet arrived.

"... so you can see we are committing funds that we do not have for necessary work," Roberts said. He later told the council he intends to suggest to the other four members of the rehabilitation board that a percentage of housing program money be held in reserve to cover cost overruns and for loans issued that later must be covered with grants because of an applicant's change in financial circumstances.

BECAUSE MUCH of the work completed through the housing program is on older houses, it's difficult to estimate the cost of needed work until the work has begun. "... In many instances, it is almost impossible to arrive at an exact cost of repairs until you look under a 35-year-old facade," Roberts said.

Vagnoni also asked the council to consider using some of the city's general budget money to pay for some of the administrative costs so more is available for the housing program. "Any money we put into rehabilitation (program) will stay with us," he said, referring to the program's revolving fund.

The housing program has about \$450,000 in outstanding loans. Richard Lampi, community development coordinator said. That means the program — over the course of many years — can expect to receive that money back through repayments.

Vagnoni also asked the council to write to area congressmen and ask them to override Reagan's expected veto of federal funds that are used for social programs.

"The consensus is that the mandates are gone in two years," said Mayor Ben Marks, who recently attended a conference in Washington, D.C., at which the issue was addressed. "You're fighting a windmill."

CITY MANAGER William Costick agreed.

"The prognosis is we can rely on this program another two years. The message is we're in a new era. We're not going to be able to rely on the federal government."

Duff heading up Gill Elementary School

Continued from Page 3

them. They're very much aware. "I would like to see this kind of thing be on-going. Doing it once a year, isn't enough."

The seminar is open to all students in the sixth through 12th grades. It is sponsored by the Farmington Public Schools gifted services and career development departments, Clarenceville Public Schools and the American Association of University Women of Farmington.

Although the seminar is geared toward young women, young men are also welcome, organizers said. Registration is \$3 and will be accepted at the door Saturday.

STUDENTS AT Warner were already considering career options and exploring the reasons for stereotypes, during last week's discussion. Although more than half the class be-

lieved that "women do not prepare for jobs which are lower paying than for which men prepare," Kaplan told them it was true.

"Before, even if they prepared for them (jobs), they wouldn't get them," student Dan Stein said.

Another student, Margaret O'Sullivan said, "the men might have them (women) if they are first in a field."

Student Jenny Welch thought professionals, such as teachers, should be paid a higher wage.

"A lot of women like being teachers," she said. "I'd rather do something I like and get less money for it."

ANOTHER STATEMENT dealing with pay equity explained to the students that "the average income of working women who have earned a college degree is equal to that of the average income of working men who

have finished the eight grade."

"I know that's shocking," Kaplan said. "How do we explain this?"

Ben Spector said "women should try to get higher paying jobs." Others agreed, saying things would never change unless women pushed for such jobs.

"If they're both getting the same education, they're entitled to the same job, I think," Todd Stoneham said.

The students discussed language, literature and advertising stereotypes, how parents can unintentionally stereotype by giving dolls to girls and cars to boys, and how some teachers weigh the scales by calling more on boys more often than girls.

"Computers and technology have a lot to do with it," Jerry Wilkerson said. "Boys are getting them (computers)."

Most students today arrive "with a better direction of what they want to do with their lives," Doelker said.

"The mission of the school is the same. Our philosophy is not just to teach for tests — they need to know how to deal with the world."

Although students are mostly Christian, there are also some Jew-

ish students.

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