

# 9 vying for 4 council seats in Hills

## Candidates state views

ON THIS page is an edited transcript of what the nine Farmington Hills City Council candidates had to say on councilwoman Jan Dolan's "Viewpoint" program, which aired twice last week on cable Channel 12.

The special will air four more times: 2 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 8; 7:30 a.m. Monday, Oct. 26; 7 p.m. Friday, Oct. 30, and 7:30 p.m. Monday, Nov. 2, on Merivision of Oakland County's community access channel.

Comments are presented in the order that the candidates spoke. Each candidate spoke for three to five minutes.

### JEAN FOX challenger retired businesswoman



"Farmington Hills is a fine city

"Here, there is a bit more open space, hills, special valleys, century-old trees that whisper in the wind, three pioneer cemeteries carefully maintained — the things which speak to the spirit and nurture the very roots of human living.

"Newcomers feel exactly the same as those who have lived here 30 years. This area has been a unique community of charm and ambience, which appeals to long-term residents and newcomers alike."

"Who said Farmington Hills was to be the conduit for all the traffic running north from I-695 to West Bloomfield and Commerce and other points north?"

"Who said every one of our lovely residential mile roads is to become four lanes of concrete, bordered by lanes of concrete sidewalks, demanding the sacrifice of beautiful oaks and ash along the sides, replaced with mini trees, which will take decades to attain any growth at all?"

"Who said creeping commercialism is to threaten our special fine residential areas, within and without subdivisions?"

"Jean Fox says no. There is enough intelligence in the city and the city hall to chart a different direction, to outwit hostile judges, to alter the course, to get back on track to where we thought we were going 15 years ago."

"Unless Farmington Hills wants to end as the Southfield of 1999, we need to retarget our priorities, treasure the specialties of this unique area, which are irreplaceable, and keep our city as somewhere our children and, yes, our grandchildren will want to live."

### VERNON KIELPINSKI challenger janitor



"When was the last time you people had a raise? When was the last time the city raised our taxes? Probably more often than you received a raise."

"Next area of concern is our elderly. If our taxes keep going up, how can our elderly, given the amount of money they have, even expect to pay for the very little food they have to eat?"

"And our children. What about them? Have we forgotten our children?"

## election '87

Hopelists Jean Fox, Vernon Kielpinski, John Heenan, Raymond Cassar, Aldo Vagnozzi and Richard Lytwyniak are challenging incumbent Joan Dudley, Terry Sever and Joe Alkateeb for four seats. Dudley and Alkateeb have each served two four-year terms (non-consecutively).

In a non-partisan election Tuesday, Nov. 3, the top three vote-getters win four-year terms. The

next highest finisher will win a two-year term. Farmington Hills has more than 42,000 registered voters.

Winners will take their seats at the next regularly scheduled council meeting following the election and resulting certification.

Council members receive \$1,800 annually for their part-time service. The mayor, elected by fellow council members, receives \$2,700.

The city council meets at 7:30 p.m. the second, third and fourth Mondays of each month in the council chambers in the city hall, 11 Mile and Orchard Lake roads. All meetings are open to the public.

ties center for our youth in the north end of town. We have a very successful one now down at Shawwassee School."

"In the area of zoning and development, lately, a lot of our zoning decisions have been from the courts. I believe the reason for this is that the governing body is not being reasonable and consistent in its thinking."

"Sometimes, if we give just a little bit, we'll gain an awful lot because then the courts will feel they will not have to decide the issue and the zoning for us. Reasonable thinking and consistency is the answer in that area."

"The quality of life in our area is extremely important. It is the reason many people move here. We have a tremendous traffic problem, a lot of congestion. And one seemingly small way to assist this is through a very aggressive program of sidewalks and bike paths."

"Our kids right now rely on us, or on someone else driving a car. If we provide sidewalks, if we provide bike paths, our kids can go from place to place, and even we adults can get that healthy exercise."

"Our park program is coming along beautifully, thanks to the half mill we all voted in. That half mill brings us about a half-million dollars a year. I hope that it is used on recreational facilities and not on many other areas, such as historical preservation."

"Finally, leadership and integrity. Many people have said to me on the council from time to time, 'Joan, I would like to agree with you, you were right. But it would have been political suicide to do so.' I say that's hogwash."

"I say that the electorate of this city wants people who vote honestly and with more interest in the affairs of this city and its citizens than how their vote will look in the newspapers."

### JOHN HEENAN challenger private investigator



"Over the years, I have gone to many city functions and have generally enjoyed living in this city. But in recent years, I have become disappointed with the commercial buildup going on."

"One example is Orchard Lake Road, between 12 and 14. Because by profession, I am a private investigator, I was able to find out why. Imagine my surprise when I found out that these plans had been decided over 10 years ago."

"A consulting firm was hired and worked with our planning commission and came up with this document, called, 'Master Plan for Land Use.'"

"In it, all the reasons commercial development is necessary is spelled out. The problem is, I don't find any one who lives here in the city who agrees with it."

"I don't believe an important document such as this should be decided by consultants, appointed planning commissions or a private investigator. I believe it should be thoroughly investigated and decided by the elected officials — city council members."

"If we don't find a way to provide this, then we see the use of alcohol, vandalism, petty crime."

"It can be provided in a variety of ways and perhaps the most promising is an additional summer activi-

### RAYMOND CASSAR challenger attorney



"I'm running for city council because I have a great deal of energy and commitment and dedication to give to this city. I truly believe that it is a great place to live, work and teach. And I want to continue it that way."

"If I am elected to the city council, the most pressing issue, at least in my opinion, is to control growth. We really need to do it. It is very difficult to continue to expand the businesses in Farmington Hills when we do not have the roads that can handle the traffic."

"It's kind of like putting the cart in front of the horse. We have to have bigger roads, better roads, in order to allow for expansion. Until we have that, I think the best policy is controlled growth."

"Another area which I would like to focus on is spending. We have got to spend more money on road repairs. After all, the existing road repairs in several parts of the city are declining. And it's very important to the residents and the businesses of Farmington Hills to make these roads as safe and as clear as possible."

"Perhaps one of the most important areas, I feel, is to continue to keep Farmington Hills a safer city. We have a terrific police force and a terrific volunteer fire department. And I would like to see continued spending on increasing both of these forces."

"Farmington Hills is a great place and has a great future. I would like to be part of that team, the Farmington Hills City Council team, that guides this community into the next decade."

### TERRY SEVER incumbent businessman



"When I ran just a couple years ago, I made certain promises and I feel that I came through on those promises. That's a person that people can trust and that people can feel will work hard for the issues that are tough."

"I worked hard on some tax issues. I was the only person who stood up and opposed the TIFA issue, which would've taken funds, in my opinion, from the school system."

"And although I stood alone, I feel I stood to be the one who was right on that particular issue. The city eventually backed off."

"We currently enjoy a very favorable and low tax millage. That's not done by accident. It's done by design and hard work."

"When I first campaigned, I talked about the idea that our ratio between income from residential versus commercial and industrial was not as strong as it should be. The city has worked hard, Oakland County has helped. And just this past year, we have seen a major increase in the income base from the nonresidential use within the city."

"Right now, we are enjoying one of the strongest bases our city has ever had. As a matter of fact, we as a council were able to roll back the tax millage just this past year. That was a promise I was involved in making when I became a candidate."

"I think right now we are running a better city than we ever have since we have become a city in 1973. Our fire department, our police department, right now have a high morale. They are responding, they are coming to the city with needs. And what

is our job? Very simply, to back them up."

"We are offering stronger laws on drug abuse programs, we are offering stronger avenues toward cutting back on juvenile crime. We are looking for stronger ordinances within our city."

"We as a city council must continue to give the police chief and the fire chief the tools that they need to do a better job. As we look ahead, safety has to be the primary focus for us as council members."

"Right now, we are in the midst of a major road development program. But that road program is going to last for five, 10 years. Just recently, we did a census and will enjoy additional revenues."

"These funds have to be funneled into safety, fire, police and drainage and our much-needed sidewalk program for major roads."

### ALDO VAGNOZZI challenger editorial consultant



"I am proudest of the unofficial position of council watcher, which goes back to the time when we still had a township form of government."

"That position involves attending council meetings and studying the material and speaking out just as if I was a member. My role as council watcher has given homeowners and taxpayers a voice in city government that they otherwise would not have. It also has allowed me to keep a watch on spending by thorough reviews of the budget and expenditures."

"While I have been able to have some impact on council positions, concerns over recent developments led me to run for council so that I could have a vote on these matters. Among these concerns are the growing spread of commercial areas into residential areas, the traffic and road problems, the need for more youth recreation, crime, and adequate funding for the library."

"My first act as a council member would be to propose as a goal the preservation of our residential neighborhoods against further encroachment by commercial developments."

"To paraphrase our state motto, if you seek a pleasant city, look about Farmington Hills. Let's keep it that way."

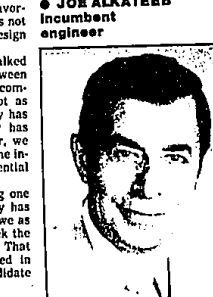
"I would insist that no new development be approved unless it includes a plan to handle the increased traffic."

"As a former school board member, I believe that I can bring about a joint city-school district effort to increase recreation facilities and activities for our young people."

"We must now plan to roll back the number of crimes that are occurring in Farmington Hills. That's why I have supported the hiring of more policemen than the council has approved at budget hearings."

"We have a tremendous library system. But it is being deprived each year of some of the funds that have been voted by the residents of this city. In recent years, that funding has dropped from just under 100 percent to less than 90 percent in the most recent budget. The library is a valuable asset in our community. It must be funded at adequate levels to keep the excellent service."

### JOE ALKATEEB incumbent engineer



"I decided to run again because I truly love the work on the city council and love our city and I have some

concerns that I want to make sure are attended to."

"I bring to the council a new dimension, slightly different from the other council members, although I respect them all."

"I'm an engineer by trade, I make a living by doing engineering. And I'm a businessman, I run my own business for 15 years. So I know what it's like to meet a payroll and pay the taxes."

"With that kind of experience, I tried to approach the problems of the city the same way I approach the problems in my engineering business. So basically I'm a planner. My motto is this: 'If you do not plan, you plan to fail.' So in my years on the city council, my emphasis has been on planning."

"When I was mayor last year in 1986, I spent a great deal of time with the help of the council, to achieve complete plans for the next five years for this city in all important departments."

"We have a five-year capital improvement plan. I have a year, we held public hearings and adopted our master storm and drainage plan. We adopted our master parks and recreation plan. We also had the police department make a five-year plan for anticipated growth. The fire department did the same thing. We kindly asked the library to do the same thing and they have their own plan."

"We also conducted a survey last year on roads and we had a tremendous response from the people and we used that survey to come up with our roads plan. Some of you that travel around town and see all the construction that's going on, that is partly due to the results of that plan, since the city council adopted last year."

"I believe planning is very important and that's why you can see our city is run very efficiently. I don't take all the credit myself. It took the team of the seven council members to get all these things moving forward. And I appreciate the ability that I have to work with them and I also appreciate them because they do work well together."

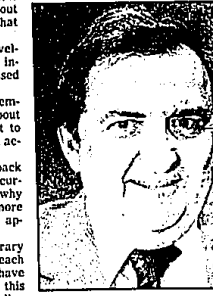
"I have one concern for the future. I think growth will continue to be our big problem. But the second major concern that I have is the solid waste disposal."

"We don't take major steps immediately, like in the next few months and the next year, for what we're going to do for our solid waste disposal, we're going to be faced with tremendous costs in the future. This year, we already experienced one big increase and we're looking at probably other increases down the road."

"There are ways to contain this problem and we're working on it. I have some of my own ideas."

"In general, I think I served the city very well."

### RICHARD LYTWYNIUK challenger businessman



"I want to be active and participate in Farmington Hills' future as your councilman."

"The police department needs our help. They can't do it alone. We need to let our police department do their job and permit them to keep up with the growth of our city. But they must be frugal when spending taxpayer money."

"We must let our fire department continue to do a good job and meet the needs of our city as economically as possible."

"As your councilman, I will study zoning variances so residential areas remain residential and business areas remain business as usual. Let's keep the master plan."

"We need to let our maintenance department continue to do the good job that they are doing and provide them with the proper tools to keep our roads safe, clean and up to date."

"Let's let our recreation department continue servicing our community, both young and old alike."

"Let's not forget our senior citizens so they may enjoy their golden years with a safe, clean city with many recreation activities."

"As your councilman, I will have an open ear to your concerns and suggestions."

"Let's keep Farmington Hills safe and clean — and don't forget our senior citizens."

