

Consent judgment OK'd on Orchard Lake

By Joanne Maliszowski
staff writer

The two lonely-looking cluster houses in Woodland Pines on Orchard Lake Road in Farmington Hills will soon have some company.

In a 4-3 vote Monday, the Farmington Hills City Council approved a consent judgment, allowing more cluster houses on the acreage, that resolves a more than yearling lawsuit against the city by developer Alan Gottlieb of Southwood Construction.

New council members Jean Fox and Aldo Vagnozzi and newly re-elected councilman Terry Seever opposed the consent judgment.

Gottlieb's two cluster houses, built at least 1 1/2 years ago, are on the east side of Orchard Lake Road, between 10 and 11 Mile.

Construction on the cluster housing project was stopped when Gottlieb was unable to have the property rezoned to build more units on the nearly five acres.

The consent judgment allows Gottlieb to build a maximum 20 units on the acreage, a few units less than allowed under the RA-3 zone.

THE CITY council also approved a landscaping plan, which includes berms, for Woodland Pines. And it approved Gottlieb's escrow account of more than \$97,000 for the planned improvements. Gottlieb is expected to construct 22-foot road and storm water retention improvements so water drains west in the Orchard Lake Road right-of-way.

In May 1986, the city council rejected the Farmington Hills Planning Commission's recommendation and denied Gottlieb's request for what was then the new RA-3 zone. (Gottlieb wanted the RA-3 zone because it would have allowed a build-

ing density of 4.8 units per acre compared to the property's previous RA-1 zone, allowing 3.1 units.

The city council denied Gottlieb's request even though its decision opposed the updated master land use plan that designates property along the east side of Orchard Lake Road, between 1-696 and 10 Mile.

Before the council discussion began, newly re-elected councilman Joe Alkateeb tried to abstain from voting on the consent judgment. During a candidates' debate in October, a resident criticized the veteran councilman for erecting his political sign on the Gottlieb property.

"I would feel much more comfortable not participating," Alkateeb said.

BOTH MAYOR Ben Marks and city attorney Paul Bibeau urged Alkateeb to participate. Though Alkateeb left council chambers for a few minutes, he returned in time to break what would have been a tie vote on the issue.

Before council members offered reasons for their vote, Bibeau said, "To say no to this now would be acting in rather bad faith."

Springbrook subdivision resident Jack Joyn asked the council whether alternatives other than the consent judgment are available. With a total 20 units, about 180 residents will be living on the almost five acres, Joyn said. Springbrook is near the Gottlieb property.

But Marks said the council could oppose the consent judgment, which would lead Gottlieb to take the city back to court. The other option, he said, is to rezone the property to RA-3, as it is master zoned, and lose some control over the development.

The consent judgment provides the city with a degree of control. "We're fighting our master plan,"

Marks added. In opposing the consent judgment, Seever maintained he was remaining consistent with his earlier decisions during closed executive sessions on the Gottlieb property.

"I personally don't believe the developer on this issue has acted in good faith," Seever said, adding that he believes the maximum 20 units is still too many for the acreage.

Fox and Vagnozzi, not privy to earlier discussions regarding the lawsuit Gottlieb filed against the city and subsequent attempts to reach an agreement, were adamantly opposed to the consent judgment.

"I won't be able to consent to this consent judgment," Fox said, adding a domino effect will follow along Orchard Lake Road.

VAGNOZZI FOLLOWED suit. "This is too small an area for 20 units. We're trying to squeeze an elephant into a bird cage."

He also criticized the lack of a traffic plan for the development, which will add traffic along Orchard Lake Road.

Vagnozzi reminded the council that Gottlieb had been given city approval for 14 units, under the former RA-1 zone, and that should have

been accepted. He also reminded the council that Gottlieb violated the open space plan because he knocked down trees.

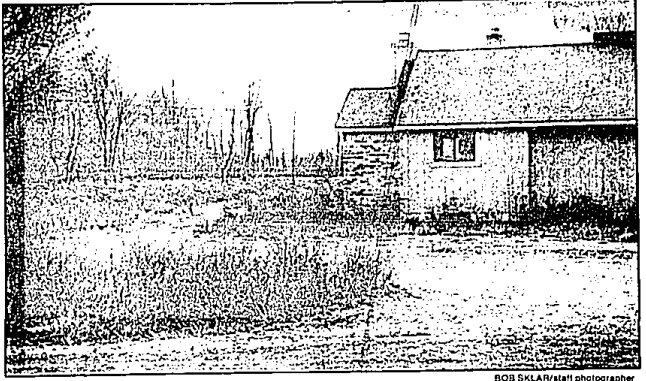
But four council members accepted the consent judgment. "I can't sit here and tell any of you I'm enthralled . . ." said Mayor Pro Tem

Jody Soronen. She said she doesn't necessarily believe a domino effect will occur. "I won't guarantee anything one way or another."

Soronon said the only way to guarantee that property will not be developed is for the city to buy the

land. "When someone buys the property, they have the right to use it according to the master plan."

Alkateeb told the council that to oppose the consent judgment would be the same as voting for the higher building density RA-3 zone, as shown in the master plan.



The path has been cleared for developer Alan Gottlieb to resume construction at his Woodland Pines cluster housing project on Orchard Lake Road, south of 11 Mile.

BOB SKLAR/staff photographer

Farmington Observer
(USPS 187-840)

Published every Monday and Thursday by Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 1225 Sowers, Birmingham, MI 48012. Second-class postage paid at Birmingham, MI 48012. Address all mail, subscription change of address, Form 3569 to P.O. Box 2428, Livonia, MI 48151. Telephone 591-6500.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES
(in Oakland County)

One year	\$24.00
(Elsewhere in Michigan)	
Newsstand	per copy, 25c
One year	\$40.00
(Elsewhere in U.S.A.)	
One year	\$60.00

All advertising published in the Farmington Observer is subject to the conditions stated in the applicable rate card, copies of which are available from the advertising department, Farmington 33203 Grand River, Farmington, MI 48131, 477-5450. The Farmington Observer reserves the right not to accept an advertiser's order. Observer & Eccentric ad-takers have no authority to bind this newspaper and only publication of an advertisement shall constitute final acceptance of the advertiser's order.

Patricia Hooper
Author of the new book of poetry for children
"A Bundle Of Beasts"
will autograph and read selections of her work
Saturday, November 14
2:00-3:00 pm at
Little Professor Book Center

37115 Grand River at Halsted
Farmington **478-2810**

Natural beauty road eyed

Farmington Hills City Council has gone on record supporting a citizen petition requesting that 14 Mile, between Inkster and Franklin, be designated a natural beauty road.

The gravel road is bordered by mature trees and ground vegetation. It lies in Southfield Township, the village of Franklin and Bloomfield Township.

The Board of Oakland County Road Commissioners held a public hearing on the request Tuesday. It will act on the designation request within 30 days.

Councilwoman Jean Fox suggested that the Farmington Hills Beautification Commission survey Farmington Hills roads, paved or otherwise, to determine which might qualify as natural beauty roads.

Classic Interiors 8th Annual

There is no Sale Bigger Than a TRUCKLOAD SALE

This is the only Howard Miller Factory Authorized Truckload Sale for the entire Metropolitan Area of Detroit. Grandfather Clocks will be offered at a savings of 40 to 50% and all wall and mantel clocks at 30% savings.

Over 100 different models to choose from, all in stock for immediate delivery. Consult one of our sales people for our "Holiday Delivery" plan. A Howard Miller clock is a reflection of excellence. This holiday season enjoy the ancient chimes of Westminster on a finely tuned chime rod clock. Many models are also a triple chime.

H 77 1/2"
W 21 7/8"
D 11 1/2"
Reg. \$1225
\$688

H 86 1/2"
W 26 1/4"
D 15 1/2"
Reg. \$3008
\$1699

FINAL DAYS TO SAVE!
OVER 100 MODELS TO CHOOSE FROM
SALE ENDS NOVEMBER 14th

Classic Interiors
Fine Furniture...Where Quality Costs You Less
20292 Middlebelt Rd. (S. of Eight Mile)
LIVONIA 474-6900

Mon., Thurs. & Fri. 9:30-9:00
Tues., Wed., Sat. 9:30-5:30

We guarantee quality, service, price...the BEST anywhere.

SEE UNIQUE ACCESSORIES BY ALEXIS KIRK

Come in to view this season's collection of designer belts and jewelry. Original designs for your selection... a special elegance in finishing touches for your wardrobe.

Presented by Ms. Pamela Shebroy
November 13
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Livonia

Jacobson's
Shop until 9 p.m. on Thursday and Friday
Until 6 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday