

# Move objects in right of way: city

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

Farmington residents must remove large, decorative rocks and other landscaping items from public right-of-way, according to a new regulation approved last week.

The move was made to relieve the city of potential liability in cases where cars hit the rocks and the passengers are badly injured or killed. City officials have cited cases against other governments where several-million-dollar judgments were awarded in similar instances.

"I think we have to look at it from the liability standpoint of the city," said councilman Arnold Campbell, speaking in support of the measure.

There are more than 50 residents, already identified, who would be affected by the new rule, according to Earl Billing, director of public services.

The city will do a survey this winter and notify affected residents, who will have until July 1 to remove any large landscaping objects from the right-of-way.

THESE LARGE rocks and items, sometimes weighing several tons, are placed near the roadway to keep cars from driving on and damaging private property.

"We're risking millions (of dollars) to protect thousands in the

case of a loss," city manager Robert Deadman said.

The Farmington City Council voted unanimously Dec. 7 to approve the measure, forbidding placement of objects in excess of six inches in diameter in the city right-of-way. It also requires a "clear zone" of 10 feet be provided.

The regulation will come under city ordinance 141, which allows city officials to set guidelines to obstructions in the right-of-way.

The city rule mirrors a policy followed by the Oakland County Road Commission, according to Deadman. Both the city and county are using guidelines from a manual of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. The policy is also used in new roadway design.

AN ENGINEER has cautioned the city that if it adopts such regulations, it should be prepared to enforce them.

The ordinance rule was suggested after a contractor refused to replace decorative landscaping rocks in the Chatham Hills subdivision because of potential liability problems for his company. The subdivision recently underwent an extensive street repair program.

The contractor said he would replace the rocks on residents' property, but not in the right-of-way, Deadman said.

# School forum will focus on self-esteem

Research has shown a close link between a student's self-esteem and school success.

And Raymond Maloney, director of the Self-Esteem Center in Birmingham, will prove this to parents and Farmington school staff members at a seminar scheduled for January. This special evening with Maloney is sponsored by the Middle School Committee and the Farmington Board of Education.

It is scheduled for 7:30-9 p.m. Jan. 14, at East Middle School, 25000 Middlebelt, just north of 10 Mile, in Farmington Hills.

During the past year, there have been many articles and discussions about students at risk in our schools, an organizer said. "Reference is made to students at risk of dropping out of school, at risk of substance abuse, and at risk of deep depression and suicide."

Maloney will focus on providing background data supporting the vital link between self-esteem, student academic and social success.

The seminar will focus on these areas of concern:

- child self-esteem and learning.
- fostering study habits at home.
- how to develop a child's independence and sense of responsibility.

As a 20-year teaching veteran,

Maloney holds a special interest in self-esteem issues in schools. In 1983, he founded the Self-Esteem Center which has provided workshops for more than 30,000 people nationally. In addition, he has published two books and more than 40

articles in regional and national publications including a 1986 article in Readers Digest magazine.

Parents of middle school students, fifth-grade parents, and Farmington staff members may attend the workshop.

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