



The Estate House in Heritage Park has become the focal point of a difference of opinion between the parks and recreation commission and the mayor.

House debate surprises panel chief

Continued from Page 1

"I think everyone is getting all out of shape," she said. "Our main objective is to save the house and find a reasonable use for it at a reasonable cost."

Fitzgerald and Bailey maintain that is their objective as well. But the house, its possible preservation and uses, should be considered as only a part of the entire 211 acres, they said.

"We're saying the house shouldn't necessarily be alone. There are many interests and we have to pay

attention to them all," Bailey said adding the house is only one of five buildings on the Spicer home site.

SORONEN offered another point of view. "Although it is within the park, it is still a historic house. We have to give special attention to it because it is unique."

The Spicer house is one of five buildings in Farmington Hills designed by Michigan architect Marcus Burrows. The other four are in the city's historic district.

After a meeting with Fitzgerald, Paul Blizman, historic district commission chairman, said the two com-

missions are not competitors.

"My plan is to work together with them (parks commissioners). I thought it appropriate that we make our recommendations to parks and recreation because the house is in the park, which is their responsibility," Blizman said.

WHETHER THE house will be addressed in the context of the entire park or without the park remains to be determined, as is the question whether park-millage money can be used for the house.

"We have asked them (historic district commission) for an opinion. I presume they will come back to the

council and we'll decide whether they (both commissions) should work together, Soronen said.

Blizman said that should the parks and historic district commissions disagree on their recommendations, "I guess ultimately it would be council's decision."

Soronen agrees with Fitzgerald and Bailey that using parks money for the house was never publicly discussed when voters were asked to support the five-year special tax.

"I suppose the council, parks and recreation and historic district commissions will have to wrestle with that," Soronen said.

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police/fire calls

Listed below are some of the Farmington-area police incidents, fire calls and court cases reported during the past week:

● **MARIJUANA SEIZED**
Farmington Department of Public Safety officers confiscated marijuana in two separate traffic stops Feb. 24.

About 2:30 p.m. Feb. 2, officers confiscated marijuana from a 17-year-old Farmington youth following a traffic stop at Grand River and Farmington Road.

Shortly past midnight Feb. 4, officers confiscated marijuana from a 23-year-old Taylor man following a traffic stop at Farmington Road and Kirby.

● **THEFTS REPORTED**
A hot tub valued at \$3,000 was reported stolen from a house under construction on Essex Jan. 29-30. Four plastic spoke wheel hubcaps valued at \$280 were reported stolen

from a car parked at J.W.'s Saloon, 31425 12 Mile, Jan. 30-31.

A 1983 GMC van valued at \$500 was reported stolen from along Crestview Court between Jan. 30 and Feb. 1. It was recovered in Farmington Hills.

An electric air compressor valued at \$400 was reported stolen from a house under construction on Eight Mile near Halsted Feb. 1-2.

A kerosene heater, a telephone and three office chairs valued at \$800 were reported stolen from a

construction trailer at Sierra Pointe Condos Feb. 1-2.

Lights valued at \$180 were reported stolen from equipment at Michigan Barricade, 32800 Eight Mile, Feb. 2-3.

A stereo system, a radar detector, sunglasses and money valued at \$2,321 were reported stolen from a house on Hamilton Feb. 3.

A color TV, a VCR and a cordless telephone valued at \$1,000 were reported stolen from a house on Nine Mile Feb. 3.

Arthritis Today
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WAITING IT OUT IN ARTHRITIS THERAPY

Though it is nearly as distressful for your physician as for yourself, when arthritis activity continues despite treatment, your doctor often is unwilling to change therapy. The forbearance needed to evaluate drugs is similar to the patience required while waiting for water to boil. A certain time must elapse while the water absorbs the heat during that time nothing seems to change. You may even check the stove to assure yourself that it is working. Then suddenly you hear water bubbling, and see steam rising.

So it is with arthritis therapy: first, the medication must reach and sustain a therapeutic level. Then it must act over time on the sites of involvement. While these events are in mid-passage, which may be weeks for drugs like aspirin, and months in the case of gold or plaquenil therapy, it appears that nothing is happening.

During this interim period, you need to cultivate patience, calmness, and reserve. Only when you and your doctor are satisfied that a practical trial has not resulted in reasonable improvement, is a decision to change therapy in order.





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Spicer House may become visitors' center

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Preliminary architectural plans for the Eleanor Spicer estate house in Farmington Hills Heritage Park will be unveiled Tuesday.

The plans, completed by Detroit restoration architect Mike Kirk, are expected to address stabilization of the 62-year-old house and plans to renovate it into a visitors' center.

Kirk of Kirk & Koskela architects, Detroit is known for his involvement in the historic Brooks Farmstead on Big Beaver in Troy, the Upton House in Sterling Heights and the Grosse Pointe Academy.

The Farmington Hills Parks and Recreation Commission is considering a visitors center after determining the costs to use the residence as offices for the city's special services department were prohibitive.

Exactly what the visitor's center should be, however, no one is quite sure. "We haven't told the architect what we want the visitor's center to be," said Dennis Fitzgerald, parks and recreation commission chairman.

"The facility could serve as a focal point for visitors to the park," special services director Dan Potter said.

"It (Kirk's plan) is preliminary in the sense it's the first time parks and recreation will have to digest it," Potter added.

KIRK'S PLANS will be shared with the Farmington Hills Historic District Commission, which is studying uses for the house and putting it in the city's historic district, said Paul Blizman, historic district chairman.

Commission members formed two committees to complete their assigned task. One committee will address recommended uses of the house. The second will address the costs involved with "putting the house in shape," Blizman said.

Ideally, the best avenue for the one-story residence in the 211-acre park on Farmington Road, between 10 and 11 Mile, would be "historic and useful," said John Bailey, parks and recreation vice chairman.

Ideally, Fitzgerald and Bailey would like to put a hold on any decision by the historic district commission and city council to put the house in the city's protected historic district.

'The facility could serve as a focal point for visitors to the park.'

— Dan Potter
special services director

"If we rush in and put it in a historic district, we could have some conflict," Fitzgerald said. "I think it would be unfair until we have a use for that house and a cost for that use."

BUT BLIZMAN said putting the house in the historic district is a goal. "We would hope that parks and recreation would join us in the recommendation," Blizman said.

Until a decision is made, however, the house must be stabilized to prevent further deterioration. How to do just that and how much it'll cost is part of a plan and a promise by parks and recreation members.

In a memo issued to the city council in January, parks commissioners spelled out their plans:

● Develop a plan, including budget, to use the existing house as a visitor center and small office, if necessary.

● Develop a plan, including budget, for the improvement of the grounds immediately surrounding the estate house.

PLANS are not expected to be completed until at least April. But Kirk's preliminary plans are expected to provide a starting point, Fitzgerald said.

Commissioners have two goals: "We're trying to find the best use for the house, and cost is the second issue," said John Bailey, commission vice chairman.

"We have always attempted to maintain the integrity of that house," he added. "The cost does not drive the use at this point."

The commission's months of study and debate on the house have focused on who it should serve and how it fits into the entire park scheme, Bailey and Fitzgerald said.

"There's no doubt in anyone's mind it should serve the park," Fitzgerald said.

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