

Hills cites ordinance in model home dispute

By Joanne Mallazewski
staff writer

Farmington Hills is seeking an injunction to prevent manufactured housing builder Howard Keating from using two completed houses on Nine Mile as sales models.

Farmington Hills officials said that the manufactured houses at Karen Place and Nine Mile, east of Middlebelt, have been used as models in violation of city ordinance, according to a complaint filed by city attorney Paul Bibeau Friday, May 6.

A show cause hearing before Oakland Circuit Judge Norman Lippitt is scheduled for 9 a.m. May 18.

"The judge signed an order requiring Keating to show cause why a preliminary injunction should not be issued for violating zoning ordinances and using the homes as models," Bibeau said.

Keating of Keating Community Homes Inc., Bloomfield Hills, was unavailable for comment. Company

spokeswoman Brooke Isberg said she preferred not to comment on the city's complaint. In the past, however, both Keating and Isberg have denied using the two completed houses as sales models.

THE CITY'S complaint also said that Keating used the houses as models despite the zoning board of appeals denial of his request for a variance to use them as such and to build a temporary parking lot.

"... A casual objective observation of the subject property on various dates clearly indicates that the subject property is being used as sales model sites ... according to the city's complaint."

Attached to the city's complaint are copies of two photographs, dated April 23, showing "Model Open" signs with arrows pointing to the two homes.

IN THE ZBA minutes of a December 1987 public hearing on Keating's request for a variance, the builder

reportedly told members that he didn't find that using the models was any different than real estate companies doing the same with open houses.

A ZBA member told Keating at the December meeting that real estate companies host open houses in developing subdivisions. The Nine Mile-Middlebelt area is not considered a developing subdivision.

City officials previously have said that open houses are used to sell or build other houses within a particular subdivision. Officials have said that Keating uses the houses as models to sell other units in that area as well as other areas in metropolitan Detroit.

The ZBA denied Keating's request. It said that using the houses as models would be inconsistent with the spirit of the ordinance that prohibits commercial uses in residential zones. The request also was denied because the houses as models don't promote or preserve the character of the residential district, according to the public hearing minutes.

THE LAWSUIT is the latest in a series of events between Keating and the city. City officials are withholding building permits against the builder until his other work sites in the Nine Mile-Middlebelt area are cleaned up and graded. The permits also are being withheld pending notification that Keating has received required licenses for the installation and sales of manufactured housing.

Other complaints that have been lodged against Keating by Nine Mile-Middlebelt area residents and city officials range from traffic concerns and drainage problems to incomplete site work.

In a memo to the city council this week, city manager William Costick reported that "substantial progress" in cleanup and site work has been made on each of the Keating homes under construction. The homes are being installed north of Nine Mile on streets such as Elm Grove and Canfield.

Sarafa joins 69th district race

Mike Sarafa, a 22-year-old former Michigan Republican Party finance division field coordinator, is the fourth announced candidate for the 69th state House district seat.

Seeking public office for the first time, Sarafa, during a tour through the district Monday, said: "There are three priorities before us: stopping crime and drugs, controlling taxes and improving our area's roads."

The district includes Farmington, Farmington Hills, Southfield, Livonia, and the villages of Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms and Franklin.

Sarafa joins Farmington Hills planning commissioner Paul Welday, Farmington Hills councilwoman Jan Dolan and Beverly Hills Village Council president Michael Bouchard as declared Republican candidates for the \$39,831-a-year post held by W.V. "Sandy" Brotherton, R-Farmington.

Brotherton announced earlier this year he would not seek re-election in 1988 after 16 years in the House. No Democratic candidates have been announced.

Born and raised in southeast Oakland County, Sarafa is the son of immigrant parents. He is graduate of Michigan State University and Birmingham Brother Rice High School.

His family has been involved in business and community activities for 40 years. His brother, Joseph, is an attorney and executive director of the Associated Food Dealers of Michigan.

"I learned early the values of hard



Mike Sarafa
accepts challenge

work, strong families and spending only what you have," Sarafa said.

THE FARMINGTON Hills resident, endorsed by 1986 gubernatorial hopeful Colleen Engler, said he is committed to "ensuring a quality education for our children and maintaining a quality standard of living for our senior citizens."

As part of his campaign announcement activities, Sarafa met privately with area law enforcement officials, had lunch at a senior citizen complex, held a briefing with local small business leaders, appeared at a coffee with local residents, conducted door-to-door campaigning and officially opened his campaign

headquarters in Farmington Hills.

"While other candidates talk about past accomplishments, I will focus on what must be done to make Michigan stronger," he said.

In response to skepticism about his age, Sarafa said: "I will not apologize for my age. Younger people all across this country are recognizing an obligation to serve."

"This campaign is not about the past," he said. "It's about the future. It's not about where we've been. It's about where we are going."

"I am prepared to serve the residents of this district with energy, vitality and the strong desire to make an impact in Lansing."

SARAFSAID he would owe his election to the voters. He pledged to stay close to the district by commuting home from Lansing every night.

"I will spend more time in the district with the people and less time in the back halls of the State Capitol with the politicians," he said.

"To make a real impact," he said, "to make our voices heard, you must be visible, accountable and, above all, willing to roll up your sleeves and work hard. I am ready to accept the challenge."

Sarafa earned a bachelor's of arts in public policy analysis and political science from MSU. In 1985, he studied international relations at Cambridge University in England. In high school, he was senior class president.

The filing deadline for the Aug. 2 primary is 4 p.m. May 31. The general election is Nov. 6.

Welday opens office for 69th district race

The Paul Welday for State Representative campaign announced the opening of its campaign headquarters at 26105 Orchard Lake, Suite 107 in Farmington Hills.

Welday, a Farmington Hills Planning Commission member, is a Republican candidate for the state House in the 69th District, which includes the cities of Farmington, Farmington Hills, the villages of Franklin, Bingham Farms and Beverly Hills and Southfield Township.

The Paul Welday for State Representative campaign headquarters telephone number is 474-9131.

In announcing the opening of his campaign headquarters, Welday said, "It is centrally located within the district and is well-equipped to mount a successful campaign. I

election '88

hope that it will serve as the main base of operations for numerous Republican victories right through the November general election. I'm looking forward to seeing all of our volunteers working out of this office and making victory possible in the Aug. 2 primary election."

Welday is a former staffer to state Rep. W.V. "Sandy" Brotherton, R-Farmington, the man he is seeking to succeed, and former executive director of the Oakland County Republican Party.

Though he has been involved in numerous political activities, this is his first campaign for elective office.

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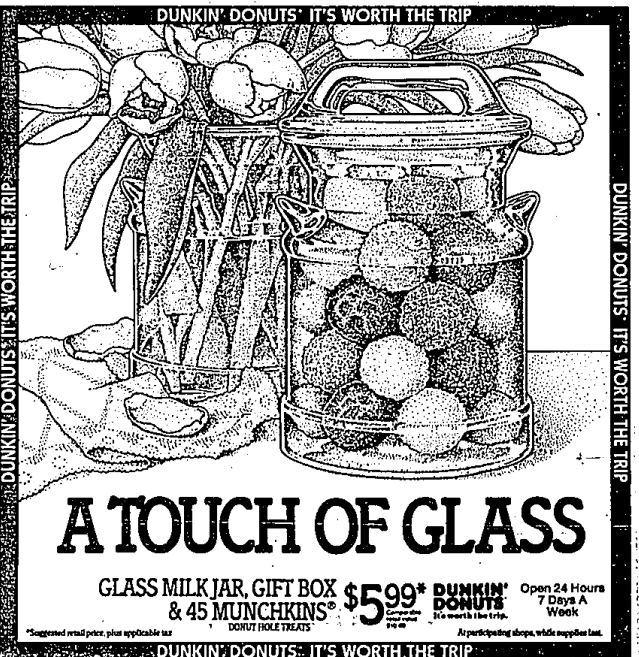
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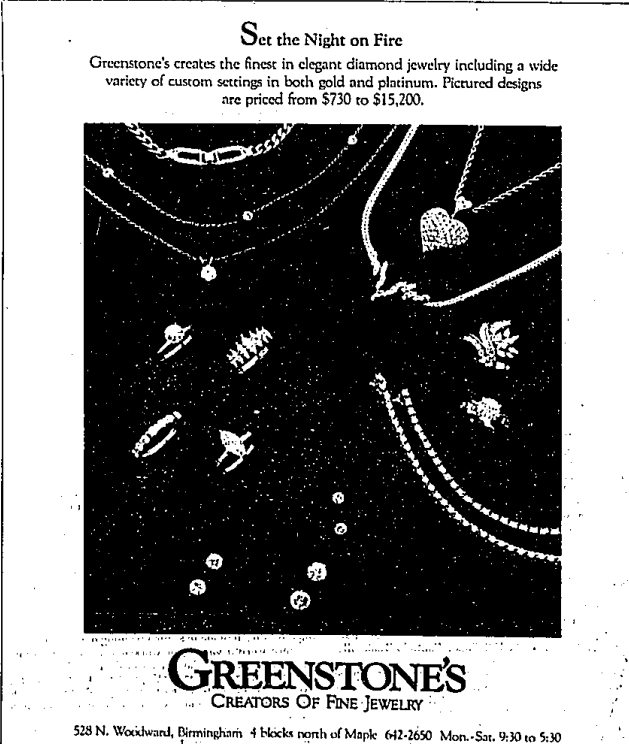
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