

West Bloomfield won't touch hot zoning issue

By Jeff Counts
staff writer

The West Bloomfield Township Planning Commission has decided it's hands off a rezoning request for a controversial portion of valuable land — at least until the township's moratorium on building multiple dwellings is over.

Although that moratorium expired last week, it's doubtful the commission will take up the issue centering on Section 34 because of a law suit filed against the township by developer Robert Sosnick.

Planning director Tom Bird told planning commission members on Tuesday that Sosnick has written a letter to the township asking that the rezoning request be temporarily withdrawn while the suit is heard. Township lawyers agreed with that position, Bird said.

The planning commission voted 8-

0 to take the Sosnick request off the agenda.

The request is to rezone the property from single family and general business to multiple family and office/retail.

Sosnick's suit, filed in July, claims the township by refusing to rezone the land denied him full value of it without due process of law.

THE LAND, considered some of the most potentially lucrative in

Oakland County, lies in the path of the once-proposed extension of Northwestern Highway. It is bounded by Orchard Lake, 1st Mile, Farmington and Maple roads.

A hotel and offices as well as multiple housing have been part of Sosnick's plan.

The West Bloomfield Township Board has had a moratorium on multiple dwellings in place while zoning restrictions are tightened.

Meanwhile, West Bloomfield is

fighting Sosnick's suit and has filed a response in Oakland County Circuit Court. The township rejected Sosnick's charges.

Supervisor Dorothy McIntosh has said the court case could take several years because of its complexity.

THE TOWNSHIP wants the land developed with single-family homes, not apartments. McIntosh has said Sosnick wants to build 1,200 apartments at the site. There are some

single-family homes in the section. Sosnick's suit contends the land can't be developed as single-family homes because of the township's welland and woodlands ordinances. The suit says the location of the land is "incompatible with the intent of a restrictive one-family residential district."

The Sosnick suit comes during a year when development has become a hot topic in the township, and anti-development sentiment is strong.

Stamper gets life for murdering 13-year-old girl

By M.B. Dillon
staff writer

In a courtroom teaming with on-lookers and armed Washtenaw County sheriffs, 18-year-old Steven Stamper was sentenced to life in prison for the murder of Mary Anne

Hulbert, 13, of Canton Township. A jury convicted Stamper of 1st-degree murder Sept. 30. Circuit Judge Henry Conlin could have sentenced Stamper to a minimum of eight years imprisonment.

Stamper, dressed in hunter-orange

overalls, white T-shirt and a camouflage jacket, said nothing after the sentence was announced.

"He just looked solemn and very circumspect," said Jeffrey Strous, Stamper's attorney. "He knew he was going to get a substantial prison term."

Stamper was one of two defendants charged with open murder in the shooting death of Hulbert, whose body was found in a Superior Township field in January 1987. The victim's father, Joseph, lives in Farmington Hills.

ACCORDING to testimony, Mary

believed she was pregnant by the co-defendant, Christopher Machacek. On Dec. 30, 1986, Stamper and Machacek drove Mary to a field where they intended to shoot rifles into the air, inducing a miscarriage by scaring Mary.

An autopsy showed Mary was not pregnant. The Stevenson Junior High School seventh grader was shot seven times.

Machacek was found guilty of first-degree murder in a separate jury trial in September. He was to be sentenced.

Addressing Stamper, Conlin said he received numerous letters from the friends and family of both the defendant and Hulbert.

"I'VE LIVED with this case now for over a year," said Conlin. "We've had a complete trial and a fair trial. After considering all the testimony, I cannot get past two or three things. One is the fact that if you hadn't

driven the car and provided the guns and bullets, Mary probably would be alive today," he said. "The other fact is that you and other people involved were partying afterwards. While that young lady was laying in the weeds, you were partying at a hotel. I can't believe it."

"The court is convinced . . . that the only appropriate sentence is life," Conlin gave Stamper credit for the 653 days already served.

"It's not over for you," added the judge. "Everything you and your attorney have said about your desire to change your life is still available to you. I'm hopeful that I'll be hearing good things about you . . . about your getting an education and learning skills. You'll have a chance to convince the parole board. You're entitled to appellate review."

Strous, who said he'd like to handle Stamper's appeal, said the average time served by those given a life sentence is 17 years.

Severals pleas preceded his sentencing

By M.B. Dillon
staff writer

Before Washtenaw Circuit Judge Henry Conlin sentenced Steven Stamper in the slaying of Mary Anne Hulbert of Canton, he heard pleas from Stamper, Hulbert's mother and grandmother.

Stamper, an 18-year-old from Ypsilanti, was convicted Sept. 30 of second-degree murder. According to testimony, Stamper and co-defendant Christopher Machacek shot Hulbert, 13, because she thought she was pregnant by Machacek. Stamper implored Conlin to be lenient.

"I understand that this is a very serious crime and that someone should be punished. I was 16 when I was arrested, and it has been a long road," said Stamper, his hair touching his shoulders.

"I believe I can go back to society and straighten things out. I don't believe I was that bad when I was out," he said.

"Debbie Hulbert is very upset. She lost her daughter, and I am sorry. I am sorry that everyone who loves her had to go through this. I just want the opportunity to show them I am a good person," said Stamper, whose grown three inches and lost 33 pounds since going to jail 20 months

ago. Stamper is 6-6 and weighs 182 pounds.

HULBERT WAS next to take the podium.

"I've been through this court process for almost two years, and it's been terrible," she said. "Part of my life has been taken from me."

"I'll never close my eyes again, or walk into my empty house and see Mary's pictures on the wall without remembering the joy she brought to everyone in our family."

"We had good times together, Steven Stamper, Mary and me," she said. "We had good times. When I was first searching for Mary, no one would help me. Steve wouldn't pick up the phone and tell me where she was."

"It will never be over for me," said Hulbert. "I don't want to see anyone on the streets who could do it again. I don't want to see anyone go through what I'm going through."

MARY'S GRANDFATHER, Norman McGarry of Canton, rose to the podium to speak halfway up to the podium. "We broke down."

Judge Conlin, as Debbie Hulbert embraced her father, told McGarry he'd read his letter, and that his

statement was being taken into account.

McGarry, superintendent of quality control at GM's Willow Run plant, later showed the letter to a reporter.

It said, in part: "I agree with the statement the assistant prosecutor made in the juvenile court hearings, that to look into their (the defendants') eyes makes shivers run down your spine."

"I looked, and I shivered. Mary had so much going for her. She had had lessons in dancing, piano and skating. She had traveled to three continents and had lived in Africa for almost two years," McGarry wrote.

"We had already established a trust fund for her education. She

never even had a chance to realize what she had and what a good future she had. Before her family ever realized what was happening, she was taken out and executed."

The letter was signed "Norman D. McGarry, Mary's grampa."

FOR A year and a half, Mary Hulbert lived with her grandparents in Nigeria, where McGarry was working. The three went on safaris in Tanzania and traveled through Europe.

"Then to come back and meet two people like this who have nothing to offer," said McGarry. "Mary was the light of my life."

"I'm just happy it's over. It's not going to bring Mary back. But maybe we can stop feeling so bad."

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Pay of State Officers

The State Officers Compensation Commission, a seven-member panel of citizens, currently is reviewing pay and expenses to be paid in 1989 and 1990 to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Justices of the Supreme Court, and State Legislators.

Comments from individuals and organizations are being sought.

On November 9, 1988, a PUBLIC HEARING will be held at 7 p.m. in the Law Building Auditorium, Capitol Complex, Lansing.

The Commission is particularly interested in views on:

- What compensation incentives for these positions will produce excellence of performance on the job?
- What levels of pay will attract and retain the highest caliber of individuals to these positions?

Contact:
Peter B. Fletcher, Chairman
c/o Edmund Perkowski, Administrator
State Officers Compensation Commission
Department of Civil Service
Lewis Cass Building - 320 S. Walnut Street
Lansing, MI 48909
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"Behind the bruises," Joan Young said, "was as lovely a child as I'd ever seen."

"I was appointed to represent the baby in this case. The father was 18, the mother was 17. He claimed the baby fell out of the car seat. Thirty days later, when she was back in the hospital with another skull fracture, he said she rolled off of the sofa. Well, at six weeks, that sweet little thing couldn't tell us what happened. Finally, he admitted that he hit her."

If you talk with Joan Young, she'll tell you that children are the biggest concern of the Oakland County Probate Court. More than half the court's cases have to do with the well-being of children, with the stability of their lives, with the illegal things some of them do, and with the possibility of their futures.

Joan Young began preparing for the job of probate judge when she started her public service career 19 years ago as a social worker. She's been a trial lawyer, a family law attorney, and administrator at Oakland County's Circuit Court, Michigan's busiest.

She wants you to think about the children of our communities. She wants you to think about our responsibility to protect these children from abuse and neglect and mistreatment; our responsibility to provide those children with guidance and hope and opportunity. That's so much of what a probate judge's work is all about. And she's ready and prepared to go to work for you.

Put Joan Young to work for you and your family and all the families of Oakland County. Vote for her for Oakland County Probate Judge, Tuesday, November 8.

TAKE A CHILD WITH YOU WHEN YOU GO TO VOTE.

Joan YOUNG

for probate judge

Rated **WELL QUALIFIED** by Civic Searchlight and Oakland Citizens League

Authorized and paid for by Joan Young for Probate Judge Committee, 5435 Corporate Drive, Suite 275, Troy, MI 48098, Fernet Greenwald, Treasurer.