

Laws to curb growth said to be needed

By Cathy Ligon staff writer

Give us the tools to manage our growth, officials of Oakland County's boom towns have pleaded.

Last week, officials of some of those growth-planned places learned that they may be looking to Lansing for those tools.

Representatives of Rochester Hills and Oakland and West Bloomfield townships attended the get-together of the Inter-Governmental Growth Study Group Thursday in Farmington Hills.

"Traditional tools are not adequate (to manage growth)," said Farmington Hills attorney Gerald Fisher, who specializes in municipal law.

He noted that some municipalities have been ordered to compensate property owners who have lost the use of their land after officials turned down proposed projects.

"We may need additional legislation to accomplish growth management," Fisher said, adding that the purpose of the Inter-Governmental Growth Study Group will be to establish models, including guidelines and legal summaries, for each community to use.

ACCORDING TO Fisher, it's getting more difficult for municipalities to slow development, partially because of court decisions.

"The Michigan Supreme Court and the U.S. Supreme Court in the last few years has sent some relatively ugly signals... maybe appropriate signals... but tough signals," he said.

The group will be meeting in the coming months to share information researched by Fisher and fellow attorney Mike Banas. The meeting was held at their office.

Also doing research will be Mark Wyckoff, editor of the Planning and

Zoning News and president of the Planning and Zoning Center in Lansing.

The Planning and Zoning Center describes growth management as "an explicit governmental program designed to control or influence the type, location, rate... and cost of population growth and development."

Growth-management techniques, Wyckoff said, include land use control, public facility improvements, taxes and fees and land acquisition.

WYCKOFF SAID some tools being used widely now, such as impact fees (asking developers to pay for items such as roads that are necessary because of their developments), are not outlined by Michigan law.

"If it's not clearly authorized by Michigan law, there's a risk in utilizing it," he said. "Additional legislation may be necessary."

Wyckoff told officials that good planning is necessary to provide a legal basis for growth decisions. The plan should include policies, clear strategic targets, clearly identified tools and establish a mechanism for coordinating the tools.

Wyckoff also discussed new land acquisition techniques, such as purchasing development rights instead of the land itself to save money but still give the municipality desired control of development.

Banas noted that it's getting more difficult for municipalities to pay for development-related improvements because of the loss of federal revenue sharing funds and tax reforms.

Other communities involved in the Inter-Governmental Growth Study Group are Independence and Waterford townships.

One idea behind the formation of the group is that it would be less costly to research growth control together.

police/fire calls

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

SUSPECT NABBED

A 23-year-old Farmington Hills man faces robbery and assault charges in connection with the attack of a 38-year-old Farmington Hills woman outside McFrook's Tavern, 27820 Orchard Lake, early Saturday.

Arrested Saturday before District Judge Dennis Pheny of Farmington, the man pleaded not guilty to one count of unarmed robbery and one count of assault with intent to commit sexual penetration. Cash/surety bond was set at \$10,000 pending a preliminary exam in 47th District Court. Conviction of either count could bring a penalty of up to 15 years in prison.

The charges stem from an incident outside McFrook's at 12:30 a.m. Saturday. After a man who approached a woman made sexual advances, she screamed, prompting him to flee with her purse. The suspect was found crouched next to a car a short time later. The purse was recovered by a wall of a nearby business, said Sgt. Charles Nebus, Farmington Hills Police Department Detective Section supervisor.

CARS RECOVERED

Three Detroit men face felony charges after two cars stolen from Farmington Hills were recovered Friday night.

Arrested Saturday before Magistrate Dennis Pheny of Farmington, the men pleaded not guilty to one count of unlawfully driving away an automobile and one count of receiving and concealing stolen property over \$100.

Bond ranged up to \$10,000 pending a preliminary exam in 47th District Court. Conviction of either count could bring a penalty of up to five years in prison.

One defendant was arrested on foot at Grand River and Gill at 2 a.m. Saturday after he left a 1985 Chevrolet Camaro near the Green Hill Apartments entrance.

The other two men were arrested at 9 Mile and Green Hill, in a car that had been found in the Camaro from the apartment complex, said Sgt. Charles Nebus, Farmington Hills Police Department Detective Section supervisor. The charges stem from the theft

of the Camaro from Green Hill Apartments and the recovery of a 1989 Pontiac Bonneville reported stolen from Independence Green Apartments Thursday or Friday. The Bonneville was recovered in a Detroit, Nebus said.

MACHETE SEIZED

A 33-year-old Detroit man faces a felony charge in connection with the discovery of a 15-inch machete in a car during a traffic stop at Lancaster and Thames in Farmington Hills Wednesday.

Arrested Jan. 12 before District Judge Margaret Schaeffer of Farmington, the man pleaded not guilty to one count of carrying a concealed weapon. Cash/surety bond was set at \$2,500 pending a preliminary exam in 47th District Court. Conviction could bring a penalty of up to five years in prison, said Sgt. Charles Nebus, Farmington Hills Police Department Detective Section supervisor.

TEAR GAS SPRAYED

Farmington Hills police are investigating a report that a man sprayed tear gas into the face of a 23-year-old Farmington Hills woman when they got into an argument after playing pool at J's Bar, 30359 10 Mile, at 11:55 p.m. Saturday.

Other bar patrons also were sprayed when they came to her aid. The perpetrator left after he was disarmed, according to a police report.

No arrests have been made.

STRING OF DAMAGE

A string of windows were shot out last week along the Grand River corridor in Farmington. Total damage was estimated at nearly \$5,000. Six incidents were reported, occurring between Jan. 8 and 13.

All apparently involved ball bearings, according to Farmington Department of Public Safety reports.

• damage of \$150 was reported to the window of a vacant building on the north side of Grand River east of Violet Jan. 11.

• damage of \$3,000 was reported to the windows at the Village Shoe Inn, 33224 Grand River, Jan. 8-11.

• damage of \$150 was reported to the windows at Craggs Cabinets, 30966 Grand River, Jan. 10-11.

• damage of \$100 was reported to a windshield of a car parked in the rear lot of Heenev-Sundquist Funeral Home, 23720 Farmington Road, just north of Grand River, Jan. 10.

• damage of \$1,000 was reported

to the windows at Suburban Catholic Credit Union, 37714 Grand River, Jan. 11-12.

WEAPONS CONCEALED

Two sets of brass knuckles, a switchblade knife and narcotic pills were among the things confiscated during a Jan. 9 traffic stop in the Ram's Horn parking lot east of downtown Farmington.

According to a Farmington Department of Public Safety report, the 23-year-old driver of the car was arrested and charged with carrying a concealed weapon; drug charges are pending against his 18-year-old female companion. Both people are from Farmington Hills.

TICKETS ISSUED

An 18-year-old West Bloomfield man was ticketed for possessing alcohol when beer was found in his possession in the parking lot at Taco Bell, 29925 Orchard Lake, Jan. 13.

A 17-year-old Livonia man was ticketed for possessing alcohol when beer was found in his possession during a traffic stop at Eight Mile and Orchard Lake Jan. 13.

Two 27-year-old Farmington Hills men were ticketed for violating the controlled substance act when cocaine residue was found in their possession during a traffic stop on Eight Mile Jan. 13.

A 20-year-old West Bloomfield man was ticketed for possessing alcohol when beer was found in his possession during a traffic stop at 12 Mile and Orchard Lake Road Jan. 14.

Three 17-year-old men from Farmington Hills were ticketed for possessing alcohol when beer was

found in their possession during a traffic stop at 10 Mile and Middlebelt Jan. 14.

Two 17-year-old men — one from Bedford Township, the other from Northville — were ticketed for possessing alcohol when whiskey was found in their car during a traffic stop at Eight Mile and Middlebelt Jan. 14.

THEFTS REPORTED

A 1987 Plymouth Sundance valued at \$8,000 was reported stolen from outside Paul Inman Associates, 30095 Northwestern Highway, between Dec. 28 and Jan. 12. It was recovered in Detroit.

A snowblower valued at \$300 was reported stolen from a garage on Bridgeman Jan. 10-11.

Construction equipment valued at \$5,150 was reported stolen from Infrate Construction trailers parked at the site of the new Target discount store, 30200 Grand River, Jan. 11-12.

Five cartons of cigarettes valued at \$85 were reported stolen from the Mobil station at 33350 12 Mile, Jan. 12-13.

A 1986 Buick Park Avenue valued at \$18,000 was reported stolen from outside Michigan National Bank, 30445 Northwestern Highway, sometime between Jan. 3-13. It was recovered in Detroit.

Tools valued at \$1,348 were reported stolen from a pickup truck parked on Hamilton Jan. 16.

Seventy cartons of cigarettes, plus cash and food stamps, valued at \$991 were reported stolen from Wine Tasters Party Shoppe, 30340 Nine Mile, Jan. 17.

WL school board seeks new trustee

A replacement for Walled Lake Board of Education trustee Sally Vaughn is being sought.

Vaughn, school board president, announced her resignation last week effective Feb. 13. She and her husband are moving out of the school district and into the Pinckney area.

The board has 20 days in which to appoint a member to serve until June 30. At that time voters will be asked to elect someone to complete Vaughn's term, which expires June 30, 1990. The board must also elect a

new president.

Residents of the Walled Lake district who would like to be considered as a trustee candidate to fill the vacancy until June 30 are asked to submit letters of interest by Friday, Jan. 20.

Send to Walled Lake Consolidated Schools, Joel Silberblatt, board secretary, 695 N. Pontiac Trail, Walled Lake, MI 48088.

Letters should include biographical information and reasons for wanting to serve.

Separation eyed for city sewers

By Casey Itana staff writer

Farmington officials are moving ahead to determine whether the city's combined sewers — about 30 percent of the system — can be separated to avoid costly, mandated water and sewer treatment measures.

Engineers estimate the move could cost as much as \$4 million. But officials say that would be less expensive than waiting for a state or federal mandate that could push that figure into the tens of millions of dollars.

"We feel we have a really good start," said Tom Korpela of the engineering firm of Black & Veatch. "They (city officials) have taken an aggressive stance on it. A lot of cities are sitting back saying, 'Make me do it!'"

If the system can be separated, the city is expected to go after low-interest loans from the state, although some property assessments may be considered, according to City Manager Robert Deadman. "The financing really hasn't even been discussed," he added.

Black & Veatch has been authorized to spend up to \$100,000 this spring to monitor the city's combined system, which runs through the Rouge River basin in the center of the city.

The combined system handles both sewage and storm water; during heavy rains, the overflow goes into the Rouge, which federal and state officials have criticized. As a result, city officials are taking steps on their own to correct the situation before they are forced into a program not of their choosing.

"We're approaching this aggressively, because we want to get at the grant funding before it's gone," Deadman added. "There's only so many dollars, then it's gone."

If the city's system cannot be separated, the city will be required to retain and treat all the byproducts. They may also be required to pay regional fees for the city of Detroit system, which many suburban communities use for obtaining water and treating sewage, according to recent news reports.

The city of Farmington is trying to stay ahead of the state Department of Natural Resources, which says the city will be required to retain and treat all the byproducts. They may also be required to pay regional fees for the city of Detroit system, which many suburban communities use for obtaining water and treating sewage, according to recent news reports.

The DNR is enforcing clean water laws as developed by the federal Environmental Protection Agency, according to Deadman.

Criticism aside, mayor fills boards' vacancies

Farmington Hills Mayor Terry Sever began his year as mayor with appointments to fill vacancies on boards and commissions.

Former zoning board of appeals member Lawrence Lichtman will replace commissioner Philo Arnold, recently appointed to the city council to fill a vacancy left by former councilwoman Jan Dolan, now 69th district state representative. Lichtman will fill Arnold's remaining term, scheduled to expire Feb. 1, 1990.

"With all the people I had to choose from, I felt it would best serve the city by picking someone from a board or commission," Sever said.

Councilman Joe Alkateeb disagreed with Sever taking Lichtman from the ZBA to the planning commission. "I don't think it's a good idea to rob one commission to fill a position on another commission," he said.

Farmington Square resident Peggy DuPont will replace Lichtman on the ZBA. Because Lichtman's term

was scheduled to expire Feb. 1, 1989, DuPont will serve a new three-year term. DuPont was instrumental in framing the city's new ordinance regulating natural gas and oil leasing and drilling. She was chairwoman of the Council of Homeowners Associations of Farmington Hills gas and oil development committee.

"IT WAS a concern of mine as well as of others that that appointment be a woman," Sever said, adding he was impressed with DuPont's work with the oil and gas drilling issue.

Sever also appointed Karen Ross and Dora Tolbert to the Commission on Aging. Ross is an assistant professor of gerontology at Madonna College, Livonia, and former Farmington Hills senior adult employee. Tolbert is a former Motel 6 employee and board member and program committee chairwoman for Warren Family YMCA.

Both replace members who resigned months ago. Ross will fill a term to expire Feb. 1, 1991.

sidewalk SALE

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