

Another accident at 14 Mile, Drake

on the agenda

Below are highlights from agendas of government meetings this week. All meetings are open to the public.

Farmington Hills City Council
City Council Chambers
31555 11 Mile
6 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 27

At the 6 p.m. study session, the council will review the Drake Road traffic issue.

Two public hearings are scheduled for the 7:30 p.m. meeting. The first is a cost hearing for Salem Road and Village Lane. The second is for the 1989-90 federal Community Block Grant program.

The council will discuss a report on the Arboretum access to Drake Road and a request for installation of a traffic signal at White Plains and 12 Mile. Requests from Drake Road residents for additional traffic regulatory actions on Drake, between 11 and 12 Mile, also will be heard.

The council will consider a request for approval of a Class C liquor license with entertainment permit for B. G. Bones, 31025 Orchard Lake Road.

Contracts to be considered include:

- For Salem Road and Village Lane water main and Power Road water main for a total \$79,564.

- For Rhoads storm sewer installation for \$43,762.50.

- For the installation of traffic signals at the intersections of 14 Mile and Drake, 14 Mile and Halsted, 13 Mile and Detroit, Bapiste Manor east driveway, and 13 Mile and Chesterbrook for a total \$45,060.

The consent agenda includes:

- Approval of traffic control order for the installation of a traffic signal on Farmington Road at Oakland Community College Drive.

- Approval for the Department of Special Services to proceed as

originally planned with renovation program for the Spicer House.

Council of Homeowners Associations Traffic Advisory Committee
Farmington Hills City Hall
Lower conference room
31555 11 Mile
7:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 27

The committee will discuss road and traffic concerns, development of an action plan and elect the chairperson and officers.

Farmington Board of Education
Schulman Administrative Center
32500 Shawwassee
Tuesday, Feb. 27

7:30 p.m. — Regular Meeting
9:30 p.m. — Special Meeting

School trustees will hear four topics from the superintendent during the regular meeting.

- The "Teacher on TV" pilot program, which allows students at remote locations to have the benefit of classes from other buildings, will be the topic of the board's study session.

- An update on the district's two construction projects: an improved media center and building improvements at Farmington High School, and the building of a new elementary school on 11 Mile east of Halsted.

- A recommendation on the Longacre retention area, as requested by local developer Frank Milo.

- A request from the Highmeadow PTA, whose members are expected to discuss attendance policies at their school, and ask questions about the new elementary on the westside.

Also on the agenda is an information item listing Teacher of the Year nominees.

During the special meeting at 9:30 p.m., trustees are expected to vote to go into a closed session to discuss special education litigation.

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and paving of some 600 feet of roadway.

Detroit Edison has already been instructed to begin laying new electrical lines in preparation of the installation of the signal, according to Farmington Hills assistant city manager David Call, who said Farmington Hills has assumed control of the two-part project in an effort to "move things along as quickly as possible."

"We know how important this matter is. In our experience the process is slower when the county (road commission) does it. To expedite the matter, we hired a consultant, drew

up plans that were approved by (road) commissioners and now we're working contracts to the lowest bidder," Call said.

BASED ON The proposal, installation of the traffic signal is expected to begin in mid-March and will be paid for by Farmington Hills, West Bloomfield and the county road commission. The job is expected to take 60 days.

The paving part of the contract is expected to begin in mid-April, "when frost is out of the ground," Call said. This portion of the project will be paid for by Farmington Hills, Oakland County and the road commission. It is expected to be completed in 45 days.

According to David Allyn, director of traffic safety for the road commission, an estimated 600 feet of roadway will require paving. A center lane for left turns will be added north of 14 Mile on Drake. It will be aligned with the center lane south of 14 Mile.

Confusion over the issue arose last week when road commission spokesman John Joy said installation of the traffic signal had nothing to do with paving. He later clarified his comments.

Installation of the signal may be initiated whether or not paving has been completed. However, the signal will not be activated until paving is complete.

Therefore, Joy said, "commissioner approval of the project is not tied to paving. But I did not make myself clear. I take full responsibility" for the confusion, he said.

Of 1,990 intersections in Oakland County where there have been five or more traffic accidents, the intersection at 14 Mile and Drake ranks 513, based upon figures supplied by the Michigan State Police, DeCorte said.

So far this year, there have been three accidents at the site, two on the same day. One was the fatal accident in which Holly Pawl, a fourth-grader at Twin Beach Elementary, died from head injuries after being thrown from a Jeep that had been struck in the left rear while crossing 14 Mile.

West Bloomfield police are still investigating the accident, which because it involved a fatality also requires review by the Oakland County Prosecutor's Office. Alcohol was not involved, according to West Bloomfield police, and preliminary investigation suggested there was no excessive speed.

Guardrail did job, say DOT engineers

Continued from Page 1

In addition to their longtime fight for a noise barrier along I-275, homeowners Joan and Bob Barber fear for their safety. "I feel totally frustrated," Joan said Friday.

In 1981, a fire came off a school bus and bounced into their back yard. Four years ago, a car carrier jumped the guardrail, skidded and fell down an embankment to the edge of the divider fence, 50 feet from their house.

Last year, a freeway grass fire burned through the divider fence and scorched some of the evergreen trees they planted to block their view of I-275 and dilute fumes and muffle noise from the freeway. The fire came within 20 feet of an old chicken shed on her property.

"It has been just a series of things," Joan said. "You just wonder where it's all going to lead as traffic increases."

"Nothing is being done to protect a home that was here before Michigan became a state," she added.

GUARDRAILS USUALLY end where the slope is gentle enough to negotiate if a truck leaves the road.

They're intended "to keep vehicles from rolling over or hitting a major obstruction," Strakovits said.

In this case, the guardrail contained the truck while near the overpass and a sharp dropoff.

But guardrails aren't meant to contain, "if so, all freeways would be continuously lined with them," Strakovits said.

"It's certainly unreasonable to expect a guy not to stop in that length of time (two-tenths of a mile). I don't know what else we could've done to prevent this," he said.

"Two-tenths of a mile away is well into what we consider the clear zone, according to highway engineering requirements," Montes said.

Variables considered in determining guardrail length include the degree of the slope beside the freeway, the geometrics of the roadway and potential obstructions (a bridge, a creek, a sign truss).

"Without knowing all the variables in this case, it's hard to say what would be required. But obviously, with every piece of guardrail, we look at the road conditions and determine what's necessary," Montes said.

Hills parcel among 20 on state auction block

A 3-bedroom ranch house on Middlebelt near Northwestern Highway is among 20 parcels of excess state highway property in Macomb, Oakland, St. Clair, Washtenaw and Wayne counties to be offered for sale at public auction March 21 in Southfield. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) auction will begin at 2 p.m. in the City of Southfield Parks and Recreation, Room 115, 26000 Evergreen Road.

A brochure containing sketches, descriptions and locations of the parcels may be obtained from MDOT's field office, 25010 Kenosha, Oak Park, 48237 (telephone 545-5322).

Following is a general description and the minimum opening bid for the local parcel: 13,570 square feet, including a three-bedroom ranch house at 31895 Middlebelt Road, lying on the southwest corner of Middlebelt and Gilchrist, 500 feet north of Northwestern Highway; \$63,600.

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