

# County officials reject C'ville recall petitions

By Maile Chestney  
staff writer

The Sept. 11 turnout of petitions to recall five Clarenceville School District trustees didn't come as a surprise to organizers of the petition drive.

After a one-hour hearing, and after saying the petition language was vague, the Wayne County Elections Commission unanimously voted to reject petitions submitted by the group, Community to Dissolve Clarenceville.

"It's exactly what we had expected," said Susan Gonzales, representative for the Community to Dissolve

Clarenceville. "The board's attorneys have been uncooperative in providing us with information to make the recall petitions accurate."

"In order to get information we needed, we filed a bogus petition, knowing it would fail. We can keep refiling it until we get it right."

THE GROUP, Gonzales said, will continue to change the language on the petitions and refile them until it gets a petition that is acceptable to the county election commissioner.

Ultimately, the group hopes to recall five of the seven school trustees and elect a school board that would be willing, despite the views of indi-

vidual trustees, to put the dissolution issue on the ballot.

"That's all we want, let the community decide," Gonzales said. "We'd abide by whatever the vote is. If the school board is so sure the community doesn't want this, let's put it to a vote."

The petitions were rejected because the language was vague, said Wayne County Clerk James Killeen, who served as chairman of the three-member elections commission last Monday.

"The language was not clear enough," Killeen said.

KILLEEN ALSO said the commissioners criticized the school board's attorneys for not giving the group the information it needed to pursue either of their two goals, recalling the school board or dissolving the school district.

"I informally told the board's lawyers and the district's lawyers that the two ladies (Gonzales and Tammy Jacobelli) complained of being treated arbitrarily when they appeared before the board. They said they couldn't get any information."

"I told them to sit down with them now and explain what they have to do. There's been poor communication within the school district. I

warned them, these are taxpayers, and their fees are being paid by the taxpayers."

(A representative for the group opposed to dissolution of the district said Friday that the trustees must pay for their own attorney to represent them in the recall effort. The school board attorney cannot represent board members in the recall.)

A great deal of hostility appears to exist between the board and the pro-dissolution group, Killeen said.

"There's so much hostility, nobody trusts anybody else," Killeen said.

AMONG REASONS for seeking dissolution of the district, the group

cites a millage rate that is higher than in neighboring districts.

The group also maintains school facilities and programs are superior in the neighboring Livonia Public Schools and Farmington Public Schools.

Clarenceville includes the northernmost section of Livonia, the southeast section of Farmington Hills and the northwest section of Redford Township.

The two trustees elected in the annual school election in June 1988 cannot be recalled. The recall effort is, therefore, targeted at five trustees.

# Costick: Hills drain work to begin next spring

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

Residents of the Westbrook Manor and Kendallwood subdivisions were reassured that Farmington Hills' storm drainage problems are still under review and that up to \$15 million in improvements will likely begin next spring.

"There's no question we have to do it and we have to find a way to pay for it," city councilman Aldo Vagnozzi said. "I'm ready to act on it."

The flood relief program is scheduled to come before the city council Tuesday, Oct. 10, when improvements and financing will be considered. City Manager William Costick said the project could begin as early as spring 1990, with the total project bid out by next fall.

Financing of up to \$15 million would likely be paid through a debt retirement bond issue that would require a property tax levy of 0.5 to 0.75 mill over at least 20 years to pay off, Costick said.

Representing the 900 residents in the 13 Mile-Farmington Road area last week was resident Grace Kennedy. She asked for the timetable and requested action before the November city council election.

Residents in both the Westbrook Manor and Kendallwood neighborhoods were hard-hit by area flooding in the June 21 downpour, due to inadequate sewer and storm water drainage. They came before the city council the following week to complain about flooding in houses and on their streets.

THE RESIDENTS have formed a Westbrook-Kendallwood Flood Committee, whose members have worked with city officials over the summer to obtain information about existing problems and possible solutions.

"For too many years, the problem has been overlooked or passed on to someone else to handle," Kennedy told the city council Sept. 11 in a prepared statement from the flood committee.

"Please consider the problem well and take positive action before November."

THE CITY administration will ask the city council Oct. 10 to approve a resolution asking the Oakland County Drain Commission to prepare petitions involving a proposed drainage district, Costick said. That could include parts of Farmington Hills, West Bloomfield and Commerce Township, he said.

The remainder of this year would be spent on project engineering.

Costick asked the council to be prepared in October to move ahead with the project.

"In our evaluation of the total pro-

gram, we would not ask the drain commissioner to prepare petitions unless we're prepared to move forward on the costs," he said.

The program will likely involve improving water detention facilities, making larger retention ponds and rebuilding sanitary sewers in the two subdivisions. Also under way are \$4 million in improvements to the 25-year-old Farmington sewer interceptor system, which should help.

Costick said in July he had already met with West Bloomfield and county drain officials to discuss flooding problems.

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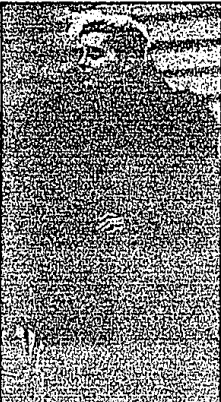
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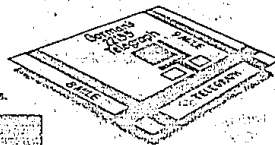
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