

Some Hills residents fear spot zoning

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represent us and not the developer. Let's stick to the master (land use) plan."

Susan Maas, who lives on Rutledge Crossing in Independence Hills, took issue with a statement made by councilman Ben Marks at a Sept. 7 city council/planning commission study session. Marks said, "I don't think that we have to succumb to a paranoia that everything that goes into this city is going to have toxic waste."

"Who will take the responsibility?" Maas asked. "Who will take the responsibility? The city can't do it,

the planning commission's not going to do it. How can we possibly feel we're protected. I would like them to vote no."

Gregg Halberstadt, a Witherspoon resident, questioned why the city council would consider a rezoning request that, in his opinion, only benefits the developer and would require increased zoning enforcement vigilance.

"I felt great at the first public meeting because I felt you really wanted to hear me," said Sue Leontowich, a Rutledge Crossing resident. "You really been listening to us? Your vote will show us if you have been listening."

WALTER DEMATTIA, who lives on Trenton Court in Independence Commons, wanted to know how the city would evacuate residents in the area if a toxic problem occurred.

"The land in question is the highest ground in that area," the engineer said. "How would the developer stop the wind from spreading the contaminants if an accident should happen?"

But Pete Clark of Rutledge Crossing, a research chemist, favored enactment of zoning map amendment allowing the rezoning.

"I have been in research laboratories for 19 years and I think I know

something about research organizations and I am for you enacting this ordinance. My experience with research laboratories is that they are more scrutinized than other businesses."

"Research is not the bad thing a lot of hysterical people and a lot of hysterical media have made it out to be. It's not the problem. In many ways, it's our only hope for solutions. It's my experience, research laboratories do make good neighbors and don't think this is a downgrading of its use."

ELDON FUNK, a Meadow Lane

resident in Hillside Estates, felt there would be less traffic with IRO zoning next door.

"I think we would be a lot better off with 10-foot-tall buildings in an IRO than we would be with (up to 30-foot-tall) office buildings," he said.

Brenda Kandt, who lives on Carrollton in Independence Hills, said IROs should be stopped. Existing ones should have greater restrictions and monitoring. "Some small companies do not have the financial strength and technical expertise to install adequate containment equipment," she said.



Susan Maas

Equipment, action saved her life

By Casey Hans staff writer

Emergency medical equipment bought one year ago helped save Tara Heichel's life, after deadly electrical voltage raced through her body and stopped her heart.

Combined with follow-up paramedics, she kept alive en route to the hospital.

"She obviously received a tremendous jolt — she's very, very lucky," said Greg Beauchemin, president of Community Emergency Medical Service, Botsford Hospital's ambulance division.

Paramedics from CEMS aided in the lifesaving effort Aug. 28, when Heichel was nearly electrocuted at a Farmington Hills apartment complex.

Heichel's was a rare instance — a young woman, with a healthy heart, who was kept alive with the help of an automatic defibrillator. The unit jolted her heart back to its natural, pacemaking mode.

The Farmington Hills Fire Department and Botsford General Hospital bought four of the \$7,000 units last October. They have been used at least 20 times in emergency scenes, mostly on older people who have had heart or other health concerns.

HEICHEL, 20, a Southfield resident, survived her experience and is gaining strength. She remains in Botsford hospital, where she is learning to walk this week, despite the loss of her little toes, removed after the accident. She had extensive skin grafting surgeries and many tests, after coming out of a coma in early September. She has been monitored by a number of medical specialists.

But her road to recovery began at

Accident victim recovering

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body, but estimates have ranged as high as 32,000 volts. She had been cleaning a Detroit Edison-owned mercury vapor light near primary power lines in an Edison right-of-way.

"Tara had her age, her good health and our response time going for her," said Kurzeja.

He was surprised to hear she was the same person he and St. Clair helped in November, and recalled that they had to use the Jaws of Life tool to remove the roof of the

car to get her out.

CRAIG HEICHEL, who works for the same company as his daughter, was told about the accident by his supervisor and taken immediately to Botsford. "They couldn't have been any better, keeping us informed and everything," he said.

Many of Tara's friends sent cards and flowers and visited as she remained in a coma her first week in the hospital. They credit her survival to a will to live. "My friends say I'm still here because

I'm stubborn," she said. "I know I am."

She's looking forward to her hospital release, so she can take a short vacation and re-enroll in classes at Oakland Community College, where she hopes to study forestry or "something with the outdoors."

She also looks forward to visiting her cat, named Honey, a constant companion around the house.

Getting well is "a nice feeling," she said. "But I think I've outgrown my nine lives."

the scene of the Aug. 28 accident at Windemere Apartments in Farmington Hills, when her ladder touched a Detroit Edison wire.

"Without the machine and the people who were trained to use it, the outcome could have been appreciably different," said Farmington Hills deputy fire chief Peter Baldwin. "We have someone who's walking, talking and breathing, who might not otherwise be alive."

"The care provided on the scene by CEMS (Community Emergency Medical Services) and firefighters makes a difference."

WALLY KURZEJA and Don St. Clair were two firefighters who administered the defibrillator to Heichel, after the Edison current traveled through her body, stopping her heart and knocking her to the ground. She had been cleaning a mercury vapor light when the accident occurred.

Paramedics Glen McDonald and

John Christiansen, who work on the CEMS, dedicated life support unit, took over at the scene, running intravenous medication to sustain her during transport.

"The whole concept... is that we had to come up with a way where people didn't need 2,000 hours of training, as a paramedic does, can use these machines," said Hills fire specialist Kevin Bersche, who coordinates many of the department's medical programs.

The automatic defibrillator unit sends electric energy to the body tissue affecting the heart directly. Three shocks is the maximum used in the Hills. Heichel was given two before she was resuscitated and transported to the hospital.

"We're trying to shock the heart so its normal pacemaker takes over," Bersche said.

ALSO IMPORTANT when using the unit is the response time to the

emergency, and how quickly they can begin to work on the heart.

In Heichel's situation, the alarm time was 2:18 p.m., with firefighters arriving just three minutes later. Paramedics arrived within seven minutes. They handled the emergency and cleared the scene in 45 minutes.

"Working hand-in-hand, they obviously saved the patient's life without question," said Beauchemin. "Time is of the essence in a situation like this."

Under the old system, without automatic defibrillators, the paramedics might have arrived on the scene with the patient still in cardiac arrest and without a pulse.

"The end result is... there's an immense amount of satisfaction," Baldwin added. "It's nice to see someone come out of this."

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