

# Stronger site plan violation sanctions eyed

By Bob Sklar  
staff writer

Farmington Hills officials are considering tougher sanctions against developers who violate approved site plans.

- On Oct. 10, the city council directed city manager William Costick to:
- Look into requiring that each planting destroyed be replaced in a 5-to-1 ratio. If the site can't accommodate the increased number, the additional plantings could be placed at public sites in need of beautification.
- Evaluate developing an ordinance that calls for cash penalties in addition to restoring damaged areas. The penalties could be based on the Society of Arborists' "Guide of Trees and Shrubs," which provides a cash value based upon condition, size and other factors.

Use of the city's tree surveys, aerial photos and topography maps could help determine the number of destroyed plantings on a site, Costick said.

COUNCILWOMAN JEAN FOX supports both proposals. "We have to be very, very strict," she said. "Our natural environment is what we're trying to save. We have to make it so they (developers) can't afford to damage it."

Councilman Paul Sowerby favors the first proposal. "We don't want to make penalties so burdensome we'd wind up litigating every single one of them," he said. "Make recompense practical yet make it so we get some natural beauty from it."

Councilman Aldo Vagozzi also favors the first proposal. "Once trees are bulldozed or wetlands are covered over, the deed has been done,"

he said.

Currently, city staff handles site plan violations by taking one or more of these actions:

- Issuing a stop-work order on the entire job or on the affected area.
  - Requiring a replacement-restoration plan or a revised open space plan subject to planning commission approval.
  - Withholding occupancy certificates.
- "STOPPING WORK on a project and requiring the submittal of a restoration plan is a punitive action and certainly gets the attention of the developer," Costick said.

He said he doesn't "envision losing the stop-work order. We'd stop work until the matter is settled and a cash value is determined."

The call for tougher sanctions arose after developer Gidon Zafi apologized for his contractor, who mistakenly destroyed small trees and shrubs in the wetlands at Meadowridge Condominiums, under construction at Middlebelt and I-696.

The West Bloomfield developer submitted a plan to relandscape the environmentally sensitive area, clearly off limits to the contractor, who apparently used it as a shortcut

to the south property line. Zafi accepted responsibility, willingly boosted his landscape budget by \$100,000 to help make amends and promised better on-site supervision.

But Fox and Sowerby feel the new plantings — 24-inch-tall winterberry and red twig dogwood — won't match the lushness of what fell to the dozer, making the apology nothing more than a slap on the wrist.

In imposing cash penalties, Vagozzi reminded the city will be "forging new ground." He asked for a report about the legal aspects of that.

# Schools plan drug abuse awareness activities

To help maintain the high level of enthusiasm generated by "Drug Free T-Shirt Day" on Oct. 8, various Farmington schools have planned activities aimed at continuing substance abuse awareness.

At Beechview, Flanders, Forest, Kenbrook, Lakeshire, Fairview, Gill, Woodcrest, and William Grace, students have designated T-shirt days throughout October.

Several schools have arranged for

substance abuse awareness assemblies. Fairview, Highmeadow, Longacre, Pine and East.

In addition, East Middle School has arranged a program for teachers featuring a speaker from the Henry Ford Maple Grove Chemical Dependency Center.

Additional money continues to be donated by students from Highmeadow via a canister collection. Parents from Wooddale continue to

donate as well as decorate their school with posters.

East Middle School will publish two newsletters devoted to substance abuse awareness. At Gill, fifth grade students wrote stories with a drug education related theme for their weekly newsletter. At Beechview, the halls will be decorated with posters created by the students in all grades.

ALL SCHOOLS continue to en-

courage the wearing of red ribbons throughout October. Each school can be seen adorned with ribbons on flagpoles, windows, trees and doors.

At Harrison, Students Against Driving Drunk helped with the distribution of the T-shirts. As an extra incentive, the school will offer prizes to students wearing their T-shirt to school in the next few weeks. SADD students also passed out SADD contracts to students as part of their

membership drive.

Also at Harrison, Student Athletes Detest Drugs is conducting a membership drive.

In response to the many requests received for individual T-shirts to buy, a quantity has been made avail-

able at various locations throughout Farmington Hills.

For \$5, T-shirts can be bought at the Rocking Horse, 32445 Grand River, the Discount Pop and Beer Store, 32434 Grand River; Farmington Area YMCA; and the Kroger Store at Grand River and Halsted.

# Rouge cleanup volunteers honored

By Norven Flack  
staff writer

A tree limb plaque was presented to Farmington Hills last Monday to recognize local Rouge Rescue volunteers who participated in the fourth annual cleanup along the riverway on June 3.

In blue jeans and boots, 200 volunteers worked at the Farmington Hills cleanup site outside the Farmington Nursing Home, southwest of Folsom and Tuck.

"I feel it fitting that the past endeavors and accomplishments and for those of the future be recognized and remembered through this gnarled tree limb recovered from the Rouge River during the 1989 cleanup," said Donald Millington of Farmington Hills, a volunteer who

preserved the tree limb.

"This memento symbolizes the strength and the fortitude demonstrated by the cleanup participants and their outstanding efforts for restoring one of our natural resources back to its original beauty," he said.

Millington pulled the piece of wood from the river and took it home as a remembrance. Once the piece dried out, he coated and sealed it with polyurethane and had it mounted on a base by artist Mark Read of Farmington Hills.

THE PLAQUE will be displayed in the city hall as a remembrance of past projects and to encourage more participation for the future. Millington said.

Jean Barrett, assistant to the Farmington Hills public services di-

rector, coordinated the local cleanup group.

For Rouge Rescue '89, about 4,000 people volunteered at 25 sites along the 125-mile Rouge River watershed basin.

Though the Rouge has raw sewage and toxic pollutants, the annual cleanup is designed to remove debris, legions and other objects that pile up in the waterway and either block the flow or change its course.

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The period of the day that the foot or ankle condition worsens, provides a clue to the cause of the discomfort. Arthritis increases with walking and lessens when you are resting. The same holds true for problems in arterial circulation of the blood. Thus, impairment of the leg due to narrowed arteries, like arthritis, improves with rest.

In contrast, nerve ending conditions become worse at night. The reason is that during the day, other input reaches the brain and blocks attention on a disordered sensation. At night those stimuli decrease, and the brain has no distractions from the foot discomfort.

Compression of the sciatic nerve may cause a similar burning in the foot, but the pattern of numbness is sufficiently different to permit a distinction between sciatica and a nerve ending disorder.

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