

# Boys Republic zoning gets December hearing

The next court date in Farmington Hills' zoning dispute with Boys Republic is mid-December.

Oakland County Circuit Judge Jessica Cooper will consider a motion that the Farmington Hills City Council's August stop-work order violated Boys Republic's constitutional rights and did not provide for due process.

Farmington Hills intends to counter with a motion to have Boys Republic's claim dismissed, said John Donohue, special legal counsel for the city.

"When we file our motion, in order to give Boys Republic sufficient time to respond, it probably will require that both motions be rescheduled from Dec. 13 to Dec. 20. That's what we anticipate," Donohue said.

In an executive session Tuesday, the city council authorized Donohue to prepare for trial, scheduled for next July.

A temporary home for juvenile offenders, Boys Republic has been embroiled since August in a zoning dispute with Farmington Hills.

The facility — private, non-profit and state-subsidized — houses boys ages 12-17 in a medium-security setting on 80 acres northwest of Nine Mile and Inkster Road.

IN MID-SEPTEMBER, Farmington Hills sued Boys Republic, saying security renovations and the new assessment program represent "an expansion of a non-conforming use in violation of the city's zoning ordinance."

The city is seeking a permanent injunction against expansion of the non-conforming use, Donohue said.

In mid-August, Boys Republic sued Farmington Hills, seeking roughly \$50,000 in alleged damages

incurred from the two-week, stop-work order that cost the social service agency \$3,700 a day.

The city issued the stop-work order to give police and staff time to review the renovations and the new program.

On Aug. 29, Cooper lifted the stop-work order. She said the city violated its own charter by waiving zoning board review of the renovations and the new program.

A building permit was issued in error last December because the city was not told then about details of the new program, Donohue said.

IN THE assessment program, the Department of Social Services assigns wards of the state to Boys Republic for a four-week evaluation before they are placed in a long-term treatment program.

Boys Republic doesn't plan to extend the assessment program beyond the one-year contract it has with the state, board president James Gramon has told the city.

In exchange for improving campus security, the DSS, strapped for beds for juvenile offenders, not only will continue sending boys to Boys Republic, but will do so at a higher daily rate to help pay off a \$1 million mortgage taken for the improvements.

The 40 boys in the assessment program have committed the same types of crimes and are no more dangerous than the 22 boys in the "open campus" treatment program, Boys Republic officials say.

Improved security and increased staff are meant only to decrease truancies and make the neighborhood safer, campus officials said. But some neighbors fear the new program will bring hard-core criminals and create a mini-prison

# Crumbling of Wall stirs joy locally

By Noreen Fleck  
staff writer

Farmington-area residents with German ties see good things happening with the East German government's announcement it would lift all travel restrictions, including those at the Berlin Wall, which has stood as a symbol of East-West political tensions for 28 years.

Karl Kretzl, president of George Fischer-Bohle Machine Tools Corp.

in Farmington Hills, was born and raised in Bielefeld, West Germany.

"It is just mind-boggling what is happening over there," said Kretzl, a Bloomfield Hills resident who often travels to West Germany. "No one anticipated this kind of speed. With travel restrictions and everything, to wipe all that away like a bad dream, I don't know if that is possible."

"Everyone needs time to absorb that the wall is open now and that people can move freely," he added.

**'I see a united Germany in the future; what it was before, what it always should be.'**

— German-born Walter Reddig  
Farmington Hills

German-born Walter Reddig of Farmington Hills said the border opening is an important phase in history for all Eastern bloc countries, not just East Germany.

"Somehow, when anything is under force, it will not last under those conditions — under forced conditions," he said. "I see a united Germany in the future, what it was before, what it always should be."

BENITA KAWKA, administrative director at St. Paul's Latvian evangelical Lutheran Church in Farmington Hills, agreed that changes in East Germany may stir changes in

other Communist countries, such as Latvia.

"Of course, we are all happy for them (East Germans) and we hope that will bring some luck in getting freedom for Latvia, but the Baltic Sea and that area is so important to the Russians, I doubt that they would be willing to give Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania their freedom."

Rosa Flum of Farmington Hills, was born in Schoenau, Austria, and lived in a Russian sector of the country for seven years.

"You get to the point where you die, you say, 'Give me freedom, or let me die,'" Flum said. "I guess that's where those people were."

## Mail early for holidays

This year the U.S. Postal Service is joining with the business community of Southfield in urging customers to ship early and mail early for the holidays.

Many overseas mailing deadlines, including those for the armed forces, international overseas, occur this month. While there are no domestic mailing deadlines, early mailing avoids unnecessary worry about a possible

winter storm that could delay delivery.

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