

# Freedom Square housing project delayed

By Casey Hane  
staff writer

A Farmington Hills senior housing project has, once again, been delayed after several city council members became concerned about the terms surrounding a "fee in lieu of property taxes" agreement.

The council will reconsider the Freedom Square apartment development at its regular May 14 meeting.

Concerns surrounded the developer receiving a 30-year tax break, with the city receiving a rent schedule of only five years. The fee paid to the city is based on a percentage of rental fees, less utility costs.

"I really support this project and this housing, but I can't support giving them 30 years and feel we're only getting a commitment for five years," said city councilman

Jonathan Grant.

Councilwoman Nancy Bates concurred. "I'm not resisting senior housing. I just want to make sure we have low-income housing after five years."

"We want to be sure we don't stub our toe here," added Mayor Jean Fox. Councilman Terry Sever asked that residents surrounding the site be made aware of the project before it is approved.

DEVELOPER PAUL Hendrickson, of the FCA Senior Housing Corp., told the city his development would be highly regulated through the Michigan State Housing Development Authority.

"Our budget and rent increase schedule must be approved each calendar year by MSHDA," he said. "We do have that as a continuous check and balance as long as there's

a mortgage on the project."

The 144-unit Freedom Square project, to be on 9 1/4 acres of currently city-owned property on Freedom Road east of Drake, has been studied for more than two years. The property was donated to the city in 1984 to be used for "senior (citizen) purposes," said Steve Brock, assistant to the city manager.

The agreement would allow the FCA Corp. to buy the parcel for \$266,680 and develop it. Aldo Vagnoli, a city councilman and member of the committee studying the issue, doesn't foresee any problem with approval in May, after council members get all the necessary information and neighbors are notified.

"I just think (rental costs) will still be as low as we can get it, considering today's construction costs."

The city council voted April 23 to introduce an ordinance establishing the payment-in-lieu-of-taxes schedule, but did not approve an agreement that addresses financial details, site plan, and living unit mix. Mayor Fox voted against the motion; councilman Ben Marks was absent.

THE COUNCIL retains control over a final vote when the ordinance is presented for enactment, and when they reconsider the agreement between the city and FCA.

Because it is city-owned land with a specified use, the city sought a developer who could handle senior housing. FCA also developed and manages the Tapscott Village Apartments on Eight Mile. The city signed an agreement with FCA in August 1988; the agreement proposed on April 23 was based on that one with some amendments.

The development is designed to include regular one- and two-bedroom apartments and cluster housing of various sizes.

Rentals for the units are proposed to be in the following ranges, using a one-bedroom apartment as the lowest and a two-bedroom cluster unit as the highest rent: \$440 to \$590 in year one; \$450 to \$600 in year two; \$460 to \$610 in year three; \$480 to \$630 in year four; and \$490 to \$640 in year five.

In the ordinance introduced last week, the city proposes to allow FCA to pay a percentage of gross rents, less utilities, as a fee in lieu of taxes.

The ordinance stipulates the following fees:

- Two percent in years 1-10.
- Three percent in years 11-20.
- Four percent in years 21-30.

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## Veteran science teacher honored

Farmington schools science coordinator Kathleen McAdaragh has been selected to receive one of the Michigan Technology Council's Science and Technology Quest Honor Roll awards.

Science and Technology Quest brings Michigan business people and educators together in efforts to make math, science and technology more exciting for youngsters to study and to show students how success in these subjects can lead to ex-

citing careers. The awards are being given during April as part of Science and Technology Month in Michigan.

MTCC's executive director William Cassell describes the Quest program as "the kind of partnership between business and education that will determine whether or not our young people can compete in a technology-oriented world."

McAdaragh, who is based in the Wood Creek Elementary science

center, has long been an advocate of hands-on teaching in science and technology.

After teaching at the high school and middle school levels for 15 years, she developed a pilot program for a hands-on approach to science in elementary schools. It is now used for all fourth and fifth grade students in the Farmington district.

As science coordinator, McAdaragh developed a science curriculum

and furnished all the schools with the equipment and materials to fulfill it.

A former president of the Michigan Association of Science and Education Specialists, McAdaragh also has served on the boards of the Michigan Science Teachers Association and the Metropolitan Detroit Science Teachers Association.

McAdaragh will receive her award on April 27 at a banquet hosted by the University of Michigan.

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