

Hospital, Hills settle lawsuit

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Council members — mandated by the court, but not posted as a meeting — a continuation of the Friday morning meeting which was posted.

The approved settlement will allow Providence to develop an office building space of up to 170,000 square feet on the 8.1 acres east of the existing tree line. Three acres of woodlands between the tree line and Peble Creek must not be disturbed without the approval of the city council. Remaining acreage can be developed only as single family homes, with no provision for cluster housing. Provisions were also made limiting the height of any office building.

The hospital's claim of \$1.9 million in punitive damages against the city was dismissed as part of the judgment.

IN 1989, the Southfield-based Providence proposed a women's health center be built on the site, and wanted up to 15.8 acres rezoned for office use to allow a building of up to 235,000 square feet. The city council voted against the proposed rezoning, wishing the property to remain zoned for single family homes.

The hospital subsequently sued, claiming the city had deprived it of its property rights.

In a prepared statement Tuesday, City Manager William Costick said he believed the settlement addressed many neighborhood concerns. "The city was... able to

preserve all of the wooded area on the property and protect and maintain residential zoning abutting Woodcreek, thereby protecting interests of the Woodcreek subdivision," he said. He said the settlement will protect "the rights of the city and the neighboring properties, as well as those of Providence Hospital."

City attorney John Donohue, who recommended the city accept the consent judgment, concurred. "I am convinced the city could not provide a better protection for the residents of Woodcreek than we have by this settlement," he said. Donohue based his recommendation on a Michigan Supreme Court Case, Smith vs. Woodcreek Farms, in which the high court ruled that four properties at various locations on Northwestern no longer could lawfully be zoned single-family residential.

Kathleen Kluthe, an attorney representing Providence Hospital, said the hospital has "no definite plans" of what the hospital might build on the site which it has owned for the past 4½ years. "Time has passed, the area has changed," she said. "We have to assess the community's needs, and those of Providence."

"Certainly the hospital is pleased we've been able to reach a mutual compromise settlement," she added.

Douglas Ellmann, an attorney representing the Woodcreek residents in 1989, said this week he had not yet seen the consent judgment, so could not comment.

Liquor sting Businesses pass police test

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attitudes by local businesses and Liquor Control Commission officials, and stepped up efforts by community drug-awareness groups and police. "It's education and enforcement — one helps the other," he added.

In Farmington, police work throughout the year with businesses to ensure compliance with the laws.

In the spring, when liquor licenses are renewed, police visit each licensed business to talk with the owners and managers. They are encouraged to talk with their employees about the laws, and police offer stickers the businesses can display. In the fall, public safety officials distribute letters reminding the businesses about the laws, and telling them they will be checking.

Typically, sometime in the fall, police visit the businesses using underage police cadets who try to purchase liquor. Those businesses who sell to the youth are ticketed. Although businesses are warned, they do not know

Police make routine visits to businesses using underage police cadets who try to purchase liquor. Businesses are warned but don't know when the visit will occur.

when police will visit.

"We're not going to predict when we need to do it," Goss said. "We'll do it more often if we need to. We'll also go out individually if we have a specific complaint."

Goss said they handle the visits to each business in exactly the same way.

Dealer to keep Saturday hours

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He said he has not received any threats this week and does not expect protesters on Saturday.

Saks said he stays open on Saturdays because it is more convenient for many husbands and wives to shop together for cars than on weeknights after work, noting that he may sell up to 12 cars on a Saturday.

The protesters, many of them employees of other car dealerships, said that keeping dealerships open on

Saturdays takes away from time with their families.

But Saks said he has a sales crew of 45 and can rely on enough of them to work on Saturday in exchange for a weekday off.

Detroit-area dealerships generally have closed on Saturdays, the unstated reason being to prevent customers from having all day to shop for the best car deal.

But those days are gone, Saks said, adding that between 25 and 50 car

dealerships may be open on a Saturday.

"I think you'll see a lot more dealerships open on Saturdays," he said. "With economic conditions the way they are, dealerships can't afford not to stay open."

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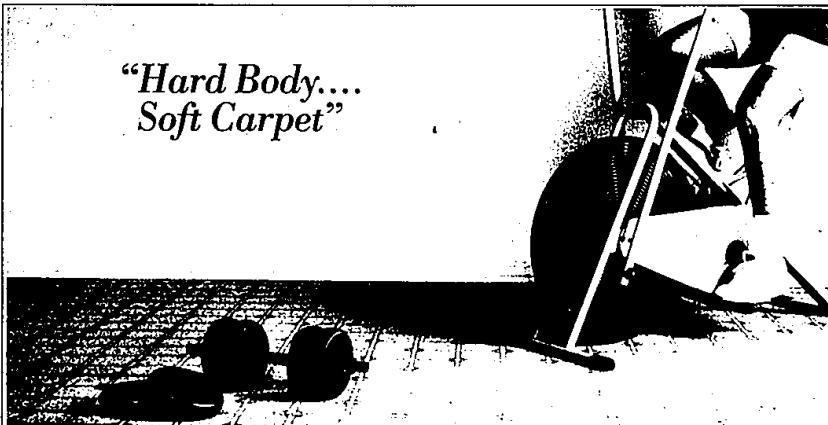


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