Housing rehab program to be reviewed by city

Conlinued from Page 1
added.
In 1991-92, the city earmarked
\$251,000 (including \$60,000 of loan
repayments) of the total \$394,000
block grant money for about 40
housing rehabilitation projects.

INCOME-ELIGIBLE residents apply for loans or grants to the Housing Rehabilitation Loan Board. Successful applicants are given a list of contractors for need-dwork. Project costs are brought back to the city. But the loan board apparently does not see the bids, Costick said.

"Frankly, the (Ransesbottom's) report is quite critical. The last thing we want is to fose this money coming to this community." coun-

climan Aldo Vagnozzi said.
Ranesbottom told the city council she would send her written statement to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, which finances and administers block grant programs.

Costick said Plante & Moran au-Costick said Plante & Moran additors are expected to develop.Improved procedures for the housing program governing how applications and bids are processed, record keeping, as well as improving communication between the loan board and residents who receive help.

"We'll be looking at getting more feedback at the close of each project," Costick said. "There hasn't been a formal appeal process before."





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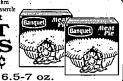




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Blight remains despite enforcement

by Joanne Malerewak!

Ida Hancsbotton will toll you that with house priced \$72,00-\$125,000 Olde Town and Kneed \$72,00-\$125,000 Olde Town and Kneed \$72,00-\$125,000 Olde Town and Kneed State of the Stat

officer."

RANESBOTTOM WASN'T alone. Some council members Monday agreed that block grant money should not be used to help pay the salary of a code enforcement officer. But surprise crossed their faces when Ranesbottom told them zoning and code problems are worse today than two years ago when the officer was hired.

"They very ones (complaints) he was hired to clean up, flat bed trucks, flat bed trucks that are double-wheeled, trailiers that park on the street and the property of the offenders have increased. We are told these trailers are used for the offenders' hobbies," Ranesbottom said.

"When zoning complaints are placed the usual excuses are, made: prove li; we have them in

court; let's make a deal; neighborhood feud," Ranesbottom said. "The list of why a complaint cannot be handled is long. However, one excuse we get is it's an ongoing problem. Our question is why? Why are zoning violations ongoing?"

No answer was given by council members or city administrators. But promises were made to check into the problem.

check into the problem.

"I think Mrs. Ranesbottom is expressing concern we have to pay attention to," councilman Terry Sever said. "We're not delivering to the community when we go 20-some months before this comes to the council."

Using block grant money to defray the cost of a code enforcement officer's salary was started two years ago when residents in southeast Farmington Hills complained about code and zoning ylota-

IN THE FIRST year, block grant money alone was used for the new officer. Last year, the city council agreed to pay half the \$42,000 salary and fringe benefits, with the other half coming from block grant money.

For 1992-93, City Manager William Costick has recommended that block grant money pay 75 percent or \$32,000 of the position.

recommended that block grant money pay 75 percent or 132,000 of the position.

With news that problems are not being solved in
southeast Farmington Hills, decisions on the distribution of block grant money between the housing rehabilitation program, code enforcement,
capital Improvements and administration, were
postponed until April 13.

That's when the council wants some answers.
For starters, Sever requested — and Costick
agreed — that block grant program administratiors Richard Lampi and Dale Countegan sit down
with residents and determine goals and objectives
for improved zoning and code enforcement.

"Short of that, I'm reluctant to spend anymore
money." Sever said, adding he nonetheless agrees
the sade enforcement officer should be financed
with block grant money.

Costick said Tuesday that meeting will take
place within a week. "We'll talk about a concerted

effort with goals and objectives that can be mea-sured. I want to address the issues raised to im-

sured. I want to address the Issues rateed to im-prove the program."

Olde Town resident Massie Kurzeja, chairwam-n of the Farmington illik Zoning Board of Appeals, told the council site wanted a zoning in-spector hired for the whole city, not just the southeast section. Money for a code enforcement officer should be put toward the capital improve-ments section of the block grant program. "Hire two inspectors for the city out of taxes," she said.

COUNCIL MEMBERS also asked for a report of zoning and code violations on record in the city's planning and community development department. "I would like to have those numbers," said councilman Ben Marks, who opposes using block grant money for the code inspector program.

gram.

Ranesbottom and Kurzeja also questioned the process used to develop the proposed Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategles Report, which is part of the application process for block grant money from the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

A public hearing was scheduled to discuss the report. But it was not a city council hearing and the public was notlified of the December hearing through a legal ad in the Observer.

through a fegal ad in the Observer.
"The resident of Farmingion Hills and you, as our representative, should have informed us as a whole, how we would be affected, let us know what is going on, let us know what is required in the application and why the Jive-year plan became a part of the CDBG application," Reneabottom said.

The plan is a document that identifies the need for affordable housing and offers a plan on how that need will be fulfilled.

"We handled it administratively," Costick said, referring to the document and the public hearing.

Kurzeja requested a copy of the report under the Freedom Of Information Act from HUD. "I feel it is your responsibility to let us know."

