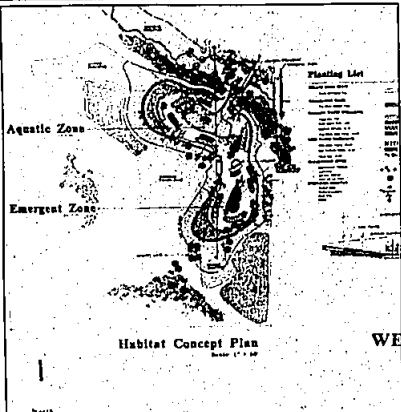




This is what the proposed wetlands on Peltz-MDOT look like on paper. In reality, the wetlands will have flooded roads, grasses and aquatic plants. Dead trees will be brought in as roosting and perching spots for wildlife. A kidney-shaped area of 5-foot-deep water also will be part of the wetlands.

Healthy habitat is wetlands goal

Continued from Page 1

Land around the wetlands will be sloped and seeded with native grasses. In some areas, clover will be planted. Altogether, about 3.5 acres of M-24 will be disturbed for the wetlands, Holloway said.

AS A WATER source for the wetlands, plans include flooding part of an adjacent wooded area. "We'll add water opportunities for plants that are not now on site and birds and reptiles and potentially fish," Holloway said.

The areas of water, such as where it will be 6 feet deep, will meet all Oakland County safety standards, Holloway said.

"There won't be any easy access to the open water," said Mark Davis, chairman of the Peltz-MDOT ad hoc committee.

Holloway's plan does not include

Cheerleading honors swept again by FHS

On Feb. 1, both the Farmington High School varsity and junior varsity squads performed in and swept the cheerleading competitions at Livonia Churchill High School. It marks the second year Farmington High has captured the trophy.

The participants were teams from Northville, Farmington, Harrison, Walled Lake Central, Plymouth Salem and Livonia Stevenson, Franklin and Churchill high schools.

The Farmington High varsity squad, led by senior captain Christine Gates and Heather Matthews, placed first in both the team cheer and the crowd participation cheer

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Hills planners OK zone change

Continued from Page 1

FLEISCHACKER wondered whether tenants for the expanded center would come from nearby centers or outside the city. "I don't know about the economic viability of Farmington-Farmington Hills."

Wendy Strip-Sittler, executive director of the Farmington Downtown Development Authority, read aloud a resolution adopted by DDA members who oppose the rezoning for expansion.

Unused commercial property in both cities, as well as both cities' history of considering the compatibility of uses along shared borders, were among reasons mentioned by the DDA for opposing the rezoning.

...the city of Farmington had similar opportunities to rezone properties at the corner of

Drake and Grand River Avenue, but elected to maintain the office zoning so as not to adversely impact the area already overbuilt retail space.

...according to the resolution.

Jim Mitchell, chairman of the Farmington Planning Commission, also asked commissioners to consider the total impact of the rezoning on the entire Grand River corridor.

"The Farmington community doesn't need this expansion and certainly it is unwise in these economic times," Mitchell said.

FARMINGTON HILLS residents Cheryl Oliverio and Mary Duha agreed with Mitchell.

"We are ODing on these little malls with grocery stores. I think we've got enough. People will only spend so much money," Oliverio said. "You

will hurt downtown Farmington. We're overloaded with this stuff. There's got to be a stop somewhere."

Mary Duha wondered whether the Bestak Building Co. is in the wrong business. "They keep telling me, 'Gee, this shopping center has not been profitable since the day they opened it,'" she said. Bestak Building Co. has not been denied the use of its property. "I don't think they have done a good job up till now so I don't have a lot of faith ...," Duha said.

She compared the Muirwood Center with other centers near Grand River and Drake roads that are still in business. Prices are lower in those stores, Duha said. "Maybe they (Bestak officials) have forced the economic hardship on themselves."

Plan includes \$3 million 'throwaway'

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

The proposed expansion of Muirwood Square includes the demolition of 30,000 square-feet of the existing center on the northwest corner of Drake and Grand River.

That represents a \$3 million throwaway, said architect Leonard Siegal, who presented the Farmington Hills Planning Commission with a basic overview of the proposed expansion.

In addition to demolishing a portion of the center on its western edge, plans call for building 84,000 square feet of new space, making an expanded center of 105,000 square feet. Plans include space for a 40,000 square foot anchor, which will likely be a grocery store.

Siegal told planning commissioners that the Bestak Building Co., which owns the center, is talking to four possible tenants who — if all goes well — could possibly occupy 70,000 of the 84,000 square feet that will be built. Other tenants in the center could be relocated.

center or indoor recreation area on the property, Siegal said.

The rezoning request is actually three different rezonings:

- Rezone about 1.7 acres on the north edge of the complex from B-2, community business district, to BC-2, multiple family. The parcels front Drake Road.
- Rezone about half of a little more than 12-acre parcel west of the center from multiple family to community business. The parcel fronts Grand River.
- Rezone about an acre of P-1, parking district, to B-2, community business.

Bestak's rezoning request has a long history — three years long to be exact. Since 1988, the proposed expansion of the center has brought support and opposition from area businesses and residents, as well as local politicians.

PLANS CALL for expanding on six of 12 vacant acres immediately adjacent to the western side of the center. The remaining six acres would be maintained as open space unless the Muirwood Apartments decides to open a private day care

"No question there's going to be some increase in traffic here," Siegal said, adding that would happen if Bestak built apartments and offices as the existing zoning would allow.

Apartment would bring new traffic to the area. Office use would bring traffic probably from outside the city. An expanded shopping center would be mostly redistributed Farmington Hills traffic, Siegal said.

Bestak, however, has agreed — if they receive rezoning — that they would improve the Grand River-Drake intersection on the Farmington Hills side, if the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills don't do it.

HERE'S WHAT'S happened with Bestak's intentions to expand in the last three years:

- Dec. 1, 1988 — planning commissioners study a rezoning request but take no action.
- Feb. 16, 1989 — a public hearing is held before the planning commission, which recommends denial of the rezoning. Bestak withdraws its request.
- Aug. 3, 1989 — Bestak resubmits a plan and the planning commission, again, studies the request.
- Nov. 16, 1989 — commissioners have another public hearing and recommend approval of rezoning.
- Dec. 18, 1989 — the Farmington Hills City Council denies rezoning request.
- Jan. 9, 1992 — Bestak appears before planning commissioners, proposing another rezoning for the Muirwood Square property.
- March 19, 1992 — planning commissioners have a public hearing and recommend approval of the rezoning request.

on the agenda

Below are highlights from the agendas of government meetings this week. All meetings are open to the public.

Farmington Hills City Council
Council chambers
31555 11 Mile
7:30 p.m., Monday, March 23

Two public hearings are scheduled:

- Rezoning request from OS-1, office service, to B-3, general business, at 30000 Orchard Lake Road. Proponents and owners: Sondra and Jared Schubiner.
- Consideration of determination of special assessment district for road improvement for Ruth Avenue.

Farmington Hills Zoning Board of Appeals
Council chambers
31555 Eleven Mile
7:30 p.m., Tuesday, March 24

Please call zoning office for agenda, 473-9540.

Farmington Hills Planning Commission
Council chambers
31555 Eleven Mile
7:30 p.m., Thursday, March 26

At this study session, commissioners are expected to receive an active

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11:30 AM, 1:30 PM, 3:30 PM, 5:30 PM, 7:30 PM, 9:30 PM

MEDICINE MAN (PG-13)
7:30 AM, 9:30 AM, 11:30 AM

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST (G)
11:30 AM, 1:30 PM, 3:30 PM, 5:30 PM, 7:30 PM, 9:30 PM

ONCE UPON A CRIME (PG)
11:30 AM, 1:30 PM, 3:30 PM, 5:30 PM, 7:30 PM, 9:30 PM

BARGAIN MATINEES — MON-FRI. ALL SHOWS BEFORE 6 P.M. SAT-SUN. BEFORE 1:30 P.M.

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