



Looking at a problem: Steve Brock (left), Farmington Hills assistant city manager, looks over the flooded area with resident Leonard Zak.



STAFF PHOTOS BY SHANNON LE MEIER

Water water everywhere: Leonard Zak's flooded yard at right is separated by a fence from Botsford property.

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Botsford property will actually lessen flooding on Zak's property and that the Randall drain would not have caused more problems had Zak not taken matters into his own hands.

"It (Zak property) was part of a natural drainage area," said assistant city manager Steve Brock. "We've tried to help him. We even gave him a permit to fill (the lot east of Zak's house)."

There had been a natural swale (low, marshy area of land)

between Zak's two lots that drained off of his property, Brock said. But the addition of a 12-inch drainage pipe changed the swale, effectively making it into a retention pond.

"On his own and without a permit, he built that pipe," Brock said.

Zak said he installed the drainage pipe before he learned that the city was planning a large drainage pipe for the Randall Street paving and improvement.

"If I had known this ahead of time, I would have done it differently," Zak said, adding that the city didn't adequately inform him of the project and its impact on his property.

Zak missed a golden opportunity to solve his problem when Botsford and the city earlier offered to engineer and build a trench to ease the flooding, Brock said.

"Unfortunately, (now that Botsford has completed its

trenching) that offer may be off the table."

Until Zak's 12-inch pipe is removed, the problem will persist, Brock said.

"What everybody predicted would happen, happened," he said.

Building a drainage system that borders Zak's property would cost the city \$70,000 to \$80,000, Brock said. Improvements to the grade on Salisbury

■ 'It (Zak property) was part of a natural drainage area. We've tried to help him. We even gave him a permit to fill.'

Steve Brock
assistant city manager

and the completion of work at Botsford will help, but until Zak's pipe is removed, the problem will likely stay, Brock said.

Zak said he hasn't given up hope that at some point the city will step in to solve the problem. "Deep down inside, I think they're going to do something about it," Zak said.

Hills ordinance puts cover on unsightly satellite dishes

BY BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Trying to decide which restrictions to put on satellite antennas is like looking into a crystal ball and foretelling the future of TV viewing.

The Farmington Hills City Council unanimously voted to amend its city zoning ordinance to require residents to screen their satellite antennas from the view of neighbors.

Not only did the vague language have to be changed, but council members aren't sure that such regulations will mean much as the technology of TV communications changes at such a fast pace.

"I don't think this is going to be a very common problem," said Mayor Larry Lichtman.

Lichtman said the ordinance, which limits the height, location and calls for screening satellite antennas, may be made obsolete because of advances in fiber optics and other technologies. The satellite dishes have also been reduced in size, making it easier to screen them.

But councilman Aldo Vagnozzi said the ordinance, which requires screening, limits the amount that must be spent to screen a dish to 50 percent of its cost.

"What happens if someone buys a used dish?" he said. "I think we should set the figure at 75 percent (of the cost of the dish)."

The ordinance had said that screening, berms, landscaping, depressions, walls, fences or a combination could be used and required that the antenna be "screened from view."

"That's too vague," said Claude Coates, the city's zoning consultant.

City attorney John Donohue said the FCC regulations do not specify cost.

"That figure (50 percent) represents the collective judgment of the planning commission."

In other action, the council: ■ Voted 6-1, with councilwoman Nancy Bates opposing, to approve a special assessment for dust control of dirt roads.

"People are entitled to live on a dirt road without paying extra," Bates said.

The cost of the dust control program is \$70,482.24, and will be entirely paid by residents on those roads. Assistant city manager David Call said the city compared 10 paved roads and 13 gravel roads in the city and found the cost to maintain gravel roads 3.9 times as much as to maintain paved roads.

■ Determined a special assessment district for water main installation for the northwest portion of Quaker Valley Farms. Four of five property owners affected support the installation, which will be paid for in a special assessment that will average \$8,799.07 for each property owner.

The council also set April 11 as the date for a public hearing on the water main construction and a public hearing on sanitary sewer construction. All five property owners support the sewer project.

■ Scheduled a public hearing on a proposed ice arena for the March 28 regular meeting.



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Students invited to compete for Excellence in Music award

Applications are now available for students in grades 7-12 who plan to compete for Farmington Musicals' Award for Excellence in Music.

This annual competition offers cash awards to students who qualify and who will use the awards to further their education.

The competition is open to students who attend a Farmington public or private school, to children of a Farmington Musicals member, and to those whose primary residence is in Farmington or Farmington Hills but who attend school elsewhere.

Applications have been distributed to the music departments in all the middle schools and high schools of Farmington and Farmington Hills. They may also be obtained from Beverly Notestine

by calling her at 476-1729.

The application forms must be completed and returned, postmarked by midnight, Friday, April 1.

This year the competition will be Saturday, April 23, at Nardin Park United Methodist Church in Farmington Hills.

Categories will be: piano, string instruments, wind, brass and percussion instruments divided into three grade levels: 7-9, 9-10, 11-12. The vocal category will be divided into two grade levels: 9-10, 11-12. Cash awards will be given in each grade division.

In addition, the Strey-McCallum Memorial Piano Award, a single award given to the piano student who is judged to be the "most outstanding pianist" re-

gardless of grade level will be awarded.

First- and second-place winners will perform their winning compositions in a recital at the Farmington Hills Library at 12:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 4. Awards will be presented at this time, and the Strey-McCallum Piano Award winner will be announced.

The recital is open to all those in the Farmington community who have an interest in the music education of young people.

The Farmington Musicals is a member of the National Federation of Music Clubs. Meetings and programs are on the first Wednesday of the month in the Farmington Hills Library. For more information, call Notestine at 476-1729.