

This column highlights promotions, transfers, hearings, awards won and other key personnel moves within the suburban real estate community. Send a brief biographical summary—including the town of residence and employment and a black and white photo if desired—to: Movers & Shakers, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, 48150. Our fax number is (313) 591-7279.

## Bradick joins realty



Jo Anna R. Bradick, a Troy resident, has become an associate broker with Jack Christensen Realtors in that community.

Bradick, a 15-year sales veteran, has acquired the professional designation of Certified Buyer's Agent.

## Murray named VP



John C. Murray has joined First American Title Insurance Co. Commercial Advantage Division Troy as vice president and special counsel.

Murray, who lives in Troy, brings 25 years of experience in all phases of sophisticated commercial real estate transactions.

He's also a published author and lecturer on various real estate, environmental, bankruptcy and taxation topics.

## Gozdor certified



Frank Gozdor, a sales associate with RE/MAX in Rochester Hills, has received the professional designation of Certified Residential Specialist.

Gozdor, a Rochester Hills resident who also holds the Graduate Realtors Institute designation, has been an agent for 24 years.

## Futernick joins realty



Margaret Weissman Futernick, a West Bloomfield resident, has joined Ralph Manuel Associates-West in Farmington Hills as a Realtor.

She holds a B.A. degree from the University of Michigan and a Master of Business Administration from UCLA.



## Classified Ad Index

## CLASSIFICATION NUMBER

- Autos (500-600)
- Employment (500-599)
- Help Wanted (500-599)
- Home and Service Guide (1-299)
- Merchandise for Sale (700-778)
- Real Estate (300-399)
- Rentals (400-499)

Face-to-face: Michael R. Hillman of Flagstar Bank and Sally A. Gibson of SOC Credit Union demonstrate one end of an interactive video exchange mortgage application system.

## Interactive video speeds loans

By DOUG FUNKE  
STAFF WRITER

Timing increasingly drives residential real estate transactions. Buyers must be willing to move quickly. Mortgage approval can enhance or bog down the process, make or break a sale.

Speed is especially crucial when housing demand exceeds supply.

Flagstar Bank in Bloomfield Hills recognizes the scenario.

Flagstar also recognizes that most mortgages are sold to other financial institutions like itself so originators can replenish their money supply.

Flagstar's response: to provide Lenders Interactive Video Exchange (LIVE) and establish a working relationship with SOC Credit Union in Troy plus other lenders and brokers to expedite the application process.

"It substantially improves the service we all offer customers," said Michael R. Hillman, vice president of business development for Flagstar. "The end is better service to our customers. Technology is a means to the end."

"The (approval) process typically takes two to four weeks," said John Collins, senior loan underwriter with Flagstar. "Basically, everyone stays in limbo. When you bring the borrower face-to-face with the decision maker (LIVE), you typically decide within an hour."

"We're always looking for something

better for our membership," said A. Gibson, vice president for loans and member services at SOC. "The technology is there. We're using technology. We feel there's value to quick approval for members."

Here's how LIVE works.

An SOC Credit Union member looking for a mortgage shows up at the Troy office with basic application materials. Those materials are faxed to Flagstar's office in Bloomfield Hills.

The applicant then talks to a Flagstar representative via video camera mounted on a computer for a more personal information-gleaning interaction.

Flagstar inputs the information to a computer program operated by the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corp. for credit analysis.

The link with Freddie Mac, an ultimate guarantor of secondary market mortgages, enables Flagstar, which will buy the mortgage from SOC, to give an immediate answer, Hillman said.

"There are lenders who are using video conferencing, but no one is combining video conference with access to automated underwriting to provide loan approval at the time and place of application," he said.

"You want to talk to people making decisions," Hillman said. "You don't want a run-around. Buying a house is an important decision, a huge investment. People aren't unhappy about being denied as being sprung

along."

There isn't any additional cost other than traditional application fees for consumers who go LIVE, Hillman said.

Flagstar and SOC Credit Union have been linked by LIVE for about six weeks. Only a handful of mortgages have gone through the pipeline, but the marketing effort is just gearing up.

"The reaction of our members—they're ecstatic," Gibson said. "The ability to talk with the decision maker, the man with the checklist, gives them peace of mind, comfort."

Laura Stevens, senior account executive with Cambridge Mortgage, a subsidiary of Century 21 Town & Country, also deals with Flagstar through an interactive video computer.

"Very often, I'll be doing a mortgage approval line while the agent is typing an offer," she said.

The big draw for consumers?

"You have some dialogue with the underwriter," Stevens said. "Buyers love being able to talk to the person making the ultimate decision."

Cambridge/Century 21 Town & Country has eight video conference sites set up in the metro area for the convenience of customers.

SOC is the first credit union to hook up with Flagstar's LIVE. Some 450 mortgage brokers also have access

through a similar network.

Joyce and Robert Puckett experienced interactive video conferencing through Town & Country, Cambridge and Flagstar.

The couple changed mortgage companies in midstream within a week of their closing date.

"I was really, really impressed this happened so quickly without glitches," Joyce said. "I felt like I was in a Jetsons movie. I would do it again in a minute."

Debra and David Freeman utilized LIVE through SOC and Flagstar.

"We got an answer rather quickly. It was only a matter of a couple hours," Debra said. "We expected to go in and fill out papers and wait."

The ability to explain things face-to-face and interact directly with another person is much less intimidating than writing out an application, she added.

There isn't much question that computers and interactive video will do for the mortgage process what computers have done to replace multi listing service books.

"Everyone's thinking about it," said Steve Lukas, vice president and mortgage sales manager for National Bank of Royal Oak. "We have to. It's the nature of the beast now. Everyone wants to be faster and faster."

"It's our belief everyone will be using this capability eventually," Hillman said.

## New freeway may be grounds for legal action

## REAL ESTATE QUERIES



Q: They just built an expressway near my house and I believe that I have now experienced an unreasonable diminution in value of my residence following the construction of that expressway and service drive next to the residence. Do I have any basis for relief in an action against what I would understand to be the Department of Transportation?

A: I believe that you have a strong argument for compensation. It has long been recognized that a diminution in value of property where there is no direct invasion of property does not result in the "taking" under the Constitution that requires compensation. However, this principle is founded upon necessity and is limited accordingly, but compensation can be obtained where the burden to the property goes beyond the incidental injuries that would normally be attendant and shared gener-

ally by the property owners whose land lie within the range of inconveniences. You will have to establish that your use and enjoyment of the property has been detrimentally affected to a degree greater than that of the citizenry at large in conjunction with the normal use of a highway. You should obviously consult with an attorney to assist you in that matter, particularly since in a condemnation matter, you may also be entitled to recover your attorney fees.

Q: I am a newly elected member to the board and discovered an alarming situation, that is, our management company representative apparently looks at all of the bids from the contractors before submitting the bid from an affiliate of the management company who I find nearly always gets the job and is the lowest bidder. Is this fair and reasonable?

A: The management agent is a fiduciary of the association. The contractors which are bidding on the project presumably are doing so in good faith, believing that their bids are being reviewed by the board of directors in a fair and equitable fashion. Obviously, to

the extent that the managing agent is using its position to gain benefit for its own management company or its subsidiary or affiliate, this is an unfair and abusive advantage and, ultimately, will be a detriment to the association. The fact that the bid that ultimately comes in from your managing agent's affiliate is the lowest and best does not necessarily mean that they are the most capable to do the work or that the circumstances allowing such a condition are proper. It would appear to me that actions of that type on the part of the management company are grounds for termination and the board should seriously consider doing so since that may well be the tip of the iceberg.

Robert M. Meisner is an Oakland County area attorney concentrating his practice in areas of condominium, real estate, corporate law and litigation. You are invited to submit topics which you would like to see discussed in this column by writing Robert M. Meisner, 30200 Telegraph Road, Suite 467, Bingham Farms, MI 48025. This column provides general information and should not be construed as legal opinion.