

Robberies from page A1

The man was wearing a black baseball cap, black jacket, blue jeans and brown boots and was walking on south shoulder of Grand River over I-276, near the scene of the attempted holdup.

The man started to jog north over Grand River between traffic when a marked patrol vehicle pulled up and told him to stop. The man hesitated at first when he was ordered to lay on the ground so he could be handcuffed.

He told the officer he was having work done at Weingartz and was walking down to Your Attie.

The man became angry at being held and said the officer "embarrassed" him, police reports said.

"It was a serious enough of an offense where what we do is detain them in the scout car and then bring a victim by that can positively identify them," Swanson said. "In this case, they said 'no,' that's clearly not him and he was released."

"We hope in these situations that, while it is embarrassing and uncomfortable for them, they'll hopefully understand why we're doing what we're doing."

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Condos from page A1

PUD process, city officials said.

"We're almost there," Mayor Aldo Vagnotzi said.

Still to be decided is how four acres of proposed parkland be developed, and by whom.

The developer, Steve Schafer, wants the area to remain passive. The council agrees, but members want it to be open to neighboring subdivisions and their children.

Schafer could keep the land or hand it over to the city. "My destiny is in your hands as to what ultimately happens with the open space," Schafer said to the council.

The 4 acres is part of 8 acres that includes wetlands and woods that will remain undeveloped. The condominiums are concentrated on only 4 of the site's 12 acres, a peace offering from the developer to residents.

Three lots off Bartlett Avenue will be landlocked. An attorney for one lot owner said he wants to build there, even though the area is mostly wetland.

Schafer offered right of way on his property for a road extension. But when a resident suggested the developer should extend the road, Schafer's attorney grabbed the microphone and said no.

"The answer is no because we have reached the point where every time we come back there will be another concern," said Joe Galvin. "I think the single issue before the council is if this qualifies as PUD."

His frustration is understandable, Vagnotzi said. But the mayor added, "We have wouldn't gotten along further if there was meaningful conversation between the homeowners and the developer in the beginning."

At the city council's request, Schafer met with Highmeadow homeowners association members at Hills Fire Station Headquarters Nov. 11. That's when the developer offered the parkland in exchange for higher density.

Highmeadow residents initially wanted the land rezoned from RA-2 to the more restrictive RA-1; the developer was seeking multi-family zoning.

Eight acres of open space appeased some but not all Highmeadow residents, who spoke at Monday's public hearing.

"How can you justify this density?" said Fran Vailley, Highmeadow association president, referring to the plan's 5.3 dwelling units per acre. "These density numbers do not reflect compatibility."

Andy Nickelhoff, Council of Homeowners Association president and resident of nearby Westgate subdivision, wanted to know how the PUD will affect surrounding single-family zoned neighborhoods. The 12.1-acre site is not being rezoned under the PUD, said Farmington Hills Councilwoman Nancy Bates.

"I think that strengthens the single-family zoning that remains," Bates said.

Others wanted to make sure the developer keeps his promises, concerning additional trees and other buffers between them and his townhouses. Those will be put in writing, council members said.



"The plans that are spoken here are rosy," said James Viazanko, a nearby resident, "and it would be nice to have them that way through the continuation of the project."

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Traffic from page A1

Mile Road area, affectionately known as "dysfunction junction." The Michigan Department of Transportation will start the first phase of a widening project this year, which should provide relief. A second phase is also planned but no timetable is available.

At Orchard Lake-12 Mile, suggested improvements include adding northbound and southbound dual left-turn lanes; adding a westbound right-turn lane; convert the existing southbound right-turn lane into one shared by through traffic and those making right turns.

A proposed interchange on I-696 at Tyler or Franklin roads would also cut down on traffic exiting and entering on Orchard Lake ramp, the study suggested.

Nadeau's coworker at Silverman's said rush hour is the worst at the Orchard Lake-12 Mile intersection. "If you leave at 4 p.m., you're

fine. If you leave at 4:30, you're going to hit traffic," said Bonnie Friend, who also commutes from Westland.

The cost to improve the Orchard Lake-12 Mile intersection is \$600,000 to \$850,000. In all, the study proposes nearly \$6 million in traffic improvements.

Therein flashes the yellow light of caution, Hobbs said.

"We don't have that money sitting in our piggy bank right now," Hobbs said.

The study has been given to Farmington Hills City Council members to consider how to proceed.

From there, the findings will be formally presented where the public can comment on the plan before it is adopted.

In the meantime, city officials will be looking for ways to pay for the proposed improvements, perhaps with federal and state money.

"All options are on the table," Hobbs said.

Hills community police win again

The Farmington Hills Police Department captured the triple crown, collecting a third award for its community policing programs.

This time the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police honored the department. The award was presented to Farmington Hills Police Chief Bill Dwyer and Assistant Chief Marty Bledsoe at the association's mid-winter conference Feb. 12.

Farmington Hills police were also recognized by the Michigan Municipal League and the National League of Cities for its community policing efforts, which includes more than 30 programs involving everyone from senior adults to children.

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