

Condo OK ends 2-year fight

More than two years of heated, sometimes hostile, wrangling between residents, a developer and the City of Farmington Hills over a proposed 13 Mile Road condominium development reached a conclusion Monday night when the city council approved the site plan.

The approval — which came after three hours of questions and last-ditch efforts by area residents to scuttle the project — set the stage for the next step: The city attorney will write a contract, which, as council members told pains to assure protesters, will spell out the specifics and therefore protect their interests.

The Planned Unit Development (PUD) contract should be ready for review at the council meeting May 17, officials said.

Monday night's vote to approve Glen Oaks Village Condominiums, as it is called by its developer, Phoenix Land Development, wasn't unanimous: Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi voted against passage in a 6-1 roll-call tally.

Nevertheless, approval of the city planning commission's recommendation for the 12.1-acre, 64-unit attached-townhouse development on the south side of 13 Mile, east of Orchard Lake Road, was viewed by supporters on the council as being as close to a "win-win" situation as possible.

They noted the scaled-down



"We've tried to do our best to limit it."
Jerry Ellis
—councilman



"I think that is setting a bad precedent."
Aldo Vagnozzi
—mayor

to their neighbors' nearly one-acre single-family residences, and they deserve some open space of their own, he said.

Vagnozzi charged that the proposal is "riding over the zoning code and I think that (approving such a proposal) is setting a bad precedent for the council." He said building heights exceed code and setbacks are "approximately one-third over zoning."

However, Sever said he believes the variances are considerably less than that.

The mayor also said he has "a problem with the change in appearance of the structure" from what was promised.

Schafer said the condos now will have a brownstone-type brick appearance complementing, rather than mirroring, neighboring structures, which are more of a sandstone color.

Legal woes?

Sever recommended the city try to avoid legal problems in vacating the Bartlett Road right

Trash outside Dumpster ends in assault charge

Farmington police are investigating a 41-year-old White Lake Township man's allegations that he was assaulted by a garbage truck driver at 8:45 a.m. Saturday outside a Grand River business.

The victim, a maintenance employee at the Winery Offices, 31505 Grand River, told police he was taking photographs for his employer to document continuing poor service by Waste Management.

The man claimed a Waste Management driver who empties a Dumpster outside the Winery was sloppily leaving some garbage behind on a regular basis.

On Saturday, the victim and another maintenance employee watched as the garbage collector lifted the Dumpster, emptied its contents into the truck, and put it back on the ground. Several pieces of trash fell to the ground during the process. The victim then took photographs.

That apparently prompted the alleged assault. According to police reports, the truck driver, a 41-year-old from Milford, then accelerated and drove toward the victim, who tripped to the ground trying to run away from the truck. The truck came to a stop

about 4 feet from the fallen man.

At that time, the driver exited his truck and yelled "Don't threaten me with pictures."

The victim was struck four times by a 26-inch wooden baseball bat. He sustained cuts and bruises to his left arm and left leg and was treated and released from Botsford Hospital.

A witness told police he saw the victim get clubbed by the baseball bat.

A description of the man and vehicle led to an arrest by Farmington Hills police, near 10 Mile-Orchard Lake roads. The Milford man was arrested for felonious assault. The case will be submitted to the Oakland County Prosecutor's Office for warrant consideration.

Meanwhile, the truck driver, in a statement to police, said the victim used foul language and was one of "three or four guys" who came toward him with boards. One of them picked up a piece of concrete and tried to throw it through the windshield.

"It hit the truck and I picked it up and threw it back. I felt my life was threatened. These guys came out of nowhere, like it was set up."

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