

AGENDA

Farmington City Council
23600 Liberty Street
8 p.m. Monday, June 1

- Agenda items include:
- Recognition of Jack Curd - Citizen of the Year; William Burke - Diamond Award Recipient.
- Adopt 1998-99 budget and establish millage rate.
- Consider renewing Oakland County Personal Property Assessment agreement.
- Reports on 1998 Paving program construction Estimate on concrete contract and asphalt contract.
- Report on payment request for sealcoating and striping contract Downtown Center lot.
- Reappointments to Board of Zoning Appeals and Farmington Area Arts Commission.
- Consider new appointments to Historical Commission.
- Consider setting study session regarding Museum Development Committee Report.

Curbs on water urged

Farmington and Farmington Hills residents are being asked to curtail sprinkling while a pump is being repaired.

Detroit Water and Sewerage asked for the restriction after one of the pumps failed that serves the Farmington area. Some Hills residents are experiencing lower water pressure as a result, said Tom Biase, Public Services Director.

The restriction is in effect until the repair is made, which is expected to take two weeks, Biase said.

People with even-numbered addresses are asked to sprinkle on even-numbered days. Those with odd-numbered addresses can sprinkle on odd-numbered days.

Residents are still allowed to water lawns with hand-held hoses daily.

"In accordance with our code, (the sprinkling restriction) is required," Biase said. "Most people comply. There has been

lower water pressure in the city. When they see it firsthand, they understand the need for it."

Farmington residents also are impacted by the voluntary water restriction, said Kevin Gushman, who heads up the city's public services department.

According to Gushman, the days people may water their lawns depend on the last number of their home addresses.

"If their addresses end with an odd number they water on the odd-numbered day" and vice versa for even-numbered days, Gushman said.

This time, however, those who choose not to participate will not be ticketed - unlike the mid-1990s, when the city followed mandatory water bans during successive summers.

Gushman said it is important for Farmington residents to take the voluntary water restriction seriously for two reasons: communities in north Oakland County need as much water pressure as possible; if enough people don't participate on a voluntary basis, the City of Detroit might impose another mandatory ban.

As of now, Farmington residents will not be hampered by low water pressure, Gushman noted.

Green light?

Residents want less stop, more go from Hills traffic

If traffic is to move unhindered through Farmington and Farmington Hills, it starts with green lights.

There simply aren't enough of them, residents say.

Traffic signals are part of the problem when it comes to gridlock, said speakers at a public information meeting Wednesday in Farmington Hills City Hall.

City officials are looking for feedback on the recently-released Farmington Hills Mobility Study, which proposes "tweaking" troublesome intersections in the form of additional turn and through lanes.

Improvements would cost at least \$8 million, officials said.

The study, which was done by The Metro Transportation Group in Hanover, Ill., does suggest retiming traffic lights. Many of the 20 or so people at the meeting were stuck on the subject.

"One of the things that irritates me is whenever I drive on Orchard Lake to 14 Mile Road, the left turn signal is only on for 10 seconds," said Sam Rolick of Farmington Hills. "There are 10 cars in back of me and only two or three can get through at a

time. That's asinine."

Another resident said he's worried about how the planned improvements at the M-6/Grand River interchange will increase traffic trying to turn left from Grand River onto Halsted. A new ramp will allow motorists to exit M-6 onto eastbound Grand River.

Michigan Department of Transportation is set to start construction on the project in July.

"You're going to let more people come off there and there are still only two lanes," said Torkild Nielsen.

Another resident is upset about the timing of lights, complaining about the inactivity of city officials on the matter.

"I told you this two years ago," said Ed Kohl, who has complained about the lights on 12 Mile Road between Orchard Lake and M-6.

Few took exception to the mobility study, which doesn't call for road widening or isn't intended to be a master plan. Instead, the report concentrates on existing intersections.

Residents have two months to comment on the recommendations.

After that, Farmington Hills City Council members will act on the study. One major task will be coming up with the \$8 million to pay for improvements.

Public Services Director Tom Biase gave an overview on 10 irksome intersections identified in a survey as part of the mobility study.

Number one on the list - Orchard Lake and 12 Mile - would see additional left-hand turn lanes as well as dual right turn-only lanes for east to south-bound right-turns. That would diminish the backlog traffic waiting to turn, Biase said.

"You have to get that (turning movement) out in order to free up through traffic," he said.

While the price tag is estimated at \$500,000 to \$650,000 for that intersection, it doesn't include the cost of obtaining right-of-ways. As a comparison, the cost to fix Middlebelt and 13 Mile was \$850,000, which is paltry compared to the \$2.3 million to widen one mile of road, Biase said.

The director also cautioned against blaming motorists from other areas for congestion woes. Around the Farmington, Drake and 13 Mile area, there are 1,100 homes within a square mile. That generates an estimated 11,000 car trips per day.

"It's important to realize we are the ones driving on the roads as well as those going north and south through our community," Biase said.

While the study focuses on intersections, off-road solutions are considered. People would be encouraged to carpool or use flextime where they're not all leaving work at the same time.

People need to look at non-motorized transportation, a resident said.

"I'm not sure I want to live in a community where you have six-lane roads where you have 48,000 cars traveling on them ... Where do you stop with the process of building wider roads to accommodate more traffic?" asked Fred Dora, who lives in the 13 Mile/Drake area.

"I think you need to back up and take a long hard look at what type of community you want."

Farmington Observer
(USPS 187-640)

Published every Sunday and Thursday by Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Farmington, MI 48333-0910. Farmington postage paid at Farmington, MI. Second-class postage paid at Observer & Eccentric, Farmington, MI 48333-0910. Postmaster: Send address changes to Observer & Eccentric, Farmington, MI 48333-0910. Telephone 544-1100.

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by Josephine Finazzo, D.M.D.

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