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REAL ESTATE

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Residents request postponement

■ Residents who live near where the San Marino Golf Course will be expanded and where the Eleven Pines golf expansion and residential development will occur asked the city council to slow down the process. Council members were surprised with the request.

By TIM SMITH
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Farmington Hills residents Monday night took off on the city council about the proposed Eleven Pines/San Marino golf course expansion and housing development at Halsted and 11 Mile roads, generically referred to as the Eleven Pines project.

Many residents, during a sometimes angry public hearing to qualify the combined 191 acres of property at the southeast and northern corners of Halsted-11 Mile for a planned unit development, accused the council of putting the project on the "fast track"

and of not providing adequate information as details about what would be a \$11 million project unfolded in recent weeks and months.

At the conclusion of the public hearing, the council unanimously approved the PUD qualification, thus opening the door for further study, essential in fine-tuning the massive, multi-faceted project. The city, which owns the property, has a developer ready to start work on it.

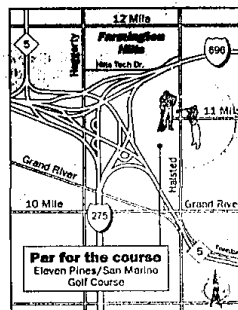
"You're telling us you're doing what the bulk of the community wants," argued Michael vonSteg of the Historic Homeowners Association. "Everyone at this podium says they

don't want any more development. ... We want a nice golf course that has trees, not homes."

Nick Philko, a resident in the Saratoga Farms subdivision - located just north of the Eleven Pines property - told the council, "If you lived in Saratoga Farms, would you want 382 apartments in your backyard?"

Other residents of Saratoga Farms expressed concern about how the project would further worsen traffic-flow concerns in the area, among other issues. The condominiums would share a common access road (11 Mile Court) with the proposed apartments. Some asked if provisions were made if too many children moved into the apartments, when nearby Hillside Elementary School is virtually at capacity. City officials stressed that "empty nesters" are being targeted for the various residential units.

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Details in sex case fill room at station

By JONI HUBRED
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As the investigation continues into the activities of a suspected pedophile arrested Friday, 35 years worth of details are piling up at the Farmington Hills Police Department.

In addition, Police Chief Bill Dwyer said detectives from the Hills and Michigan State Police spent Tuesday morning at the Detroit News, where 55-year-old Jim Thompson worked as assistant sports editor. He also wrote a column about professional wrestling under the pseudonym M. L. Curly.

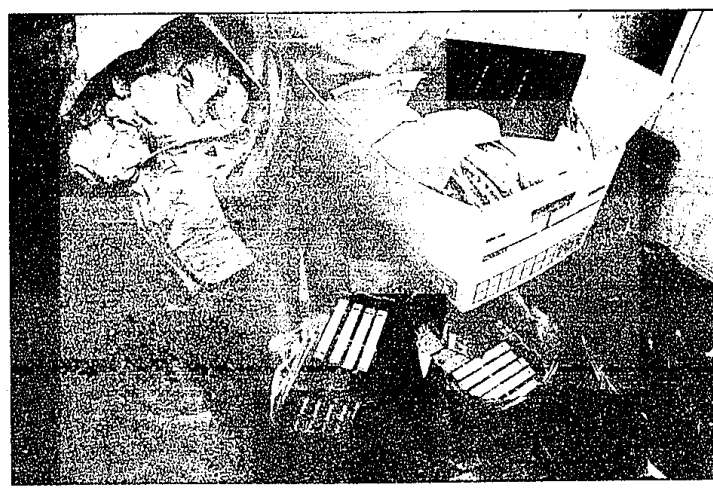
The Detroit News has cooperated fully with the investigation, according to Assistant Chief Charles Nebus. The company is downloading information from Thompson's computer, and Hills detectives will examine whatever records can be

Please see TAPES, A14



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL DEWELER

Process: Farmington Hills police Detective Rose Mackie brings defendant Jim Thompson in for arraignment on Saturday afternoon. Below are some items from Thompson's home that police confiscated. They fill a room at the police department.



Caution urged in e-mail process

By TIM SMITH
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The computer age is on the horizon for the Farmington Hills City Council, with agendas to be sent electronically instead of on paper beginning in mid-March.

But council members were advised Monday by Farmington Hills city attorney John Donohue to be careful, particularly when using e-mail, to not cross the line set by the Open Meetings Act.

"You cannot deliberate on e-mail," said Donohue, during a study session when council members were given a primer on how to retrieve agendas on their new laptop computers.

The attorney also emphasized that electronic packets are to be considered

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Court to determine girl's fate

By JONI HUBRED
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The question of custody still hangs in the unusual case of the 17-year-old West African girl who has told police she was kept a virtual prisoner in a Farmington Hills home.

While the case is new to Hills police, however, federal investigators have formed a task force to deal with the issue of children being brought to the U.S. under similar circumstances.

Hills Assistant Police Chief Charles Nebus said Wednesday another hearing has been set March 17 in Oakland County Probate Court to determine where the girl should live, and to establish who her real parents are. She told police the couple who brought her here three years ago forced her to maintain the house and care for their three children.

The girl has also alleged she was physically abused, and that's where Hills police have focused their attention.

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District will again opt out of schools of choice

By TIM SMITH
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Students from other districts in Oakland and even Wayne County could apply for enrollment to Farmington Public Schools, according to a revised state law pertaining to interdistrict schools of choice.

If there was room, that is. During a Farmington Board of Education

Policy Committee meeting which preceded Tuesday's regular board meeting, it was determined that the district again should not accept students who reside elsewhere. An official resolution is expected to be approved at the board's next meeting, Tuesday, March 14.

"We feel that if we would allow students to come in," explained Priscilla Brouillette, school board president, "they would want assurances to keep

them (in the district) throughout their school career. Because we are full in the middle school and high school buildings, that wouldn't be likely."

The district, however, currently is stepping up marketing efforts to better compete against private schools and pre-school programs for those Farmington and Farmington Hills families with younger children.

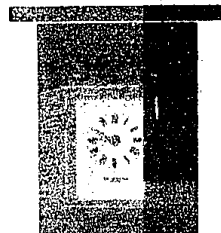
Frank Reid, of the board's policy committee, said the decision not to participate

was largely due to two reasons: a desire to keep class sizes smaller, hence maximizing one-on-one instruction; and no programs are in danger of being cut due to poor enrollment.

"There was no real good reason to support schools of choice," Reid said during the policy committee's report to the full board.

Brouillette said the only way the

Please see CHOICE, A7



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