

# Batch plant decision disappoints Hills residents

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A firm recently cited by the state for spewing dust in a Keego Harbor neighborhood is coming to Farmington Hills.

But company representatives say they'll take extra measures to head off a repeat cement dust release, which caused some affected parents to keep kids indoors. The incident drew two citations from state environmental officials.

The assurances came Thursday before city planning commissioners, as Florence Cement Co. sought approval for the temporary operation of a cement mixing plant west of Farmington Road and north of Eight Mile Road. The "batch" plant mixes cement for use in the adjacent Farmington Road paving project. Planning commissioners said they didn't like the temporary

set up near residential development. But they voted 6-1 to allow it, after directing the operators to keep children away and to guard against dust.

The batch plant is to begin operation Thursday south of Rocker Street. It will operate again in October, April and July, to support Farmington Road paving. The plant is to operate from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday during each period.

Rain could cause each period to be extended to up to 14 days, according to the resolution approved Thursday.

## DEQ citation

Florence Cement Co. was cited by the state Department of Environmental Quality for having a site plan that didn't identify homes that were near the operation. The firm was also cited for emitting harmful amounts of air

pollutants.

David Haron, planning commission chairman, turned quickly to the Keego Harbor incident, asking company representatives to explain. Project engineer Tony Sarotte said the dust was released when a truck driver delivering cement powder failed to shut a pump off after a warning light was activated.

"It was a one-time occurrence," Sarotte said. He said the company is putting a new system in place "so that doesn't happen."

Owner Angelo Lanni said sand and rock dumped at the site, used in cement making, is relatively clean and does not cause dust to spread. He said water would also be available at the site, to keep dust down.

Responding to a question from Planning Commissioner Phillip Harwood, company representatives said they had researched other industrial sites to place

the batch plant, but none were found.

Planning Commissioner Paula Haynes asked whether there would be protective screening of the site. Lanni said the site was protected on three sides by dense trees. He said the closest home would be 300 feet away.

## Residents concerned

Frank Gariepy of Flanders Street was among four neighborhood residents addressing planning commissioners on the issue. "There is a plethora of property on Eight Mile zoned industrial," he said, adding that when tree foliage is shed in the fall, construction traffic will be visible.

"I'm concerned about security. There are a lot of children in the area," he said. Jim Sweeney of Flanders Street asked what assurances could be given that children would not get hurt.

Lanni said the site would be

watched 24 hours per day, adding security guards would be on site until construction crews returned the next morning.

"I've been doing construction 38 years. You've got to run 'em off. Sometimes you have to be vocal with them," Sarotte said. Planning Commissioner Paul Blizman said, "I don't want this in my backyard, but I'm also sick of construction. I'd like to get it done. We're only talking about a few days."

In moving approval of the batch plant request, Blizman read a list of stipulations the

company is to follow, based on planning commission and citizen suggestions.

Robert Bruckner, planning commission secretary, was the lone member voting against the request. "I just don't think they looked beyond a mile in any direction. I don't think that's the place for it."

After the vote, Gariepy said he was disappointed in the planning commission approval. "I don't know that all the (location) options were really explored that well."

## CORRECTION NOTICE

In our August 26 insert, we advertised Powerman 5000's latest CD, "Anyone For Doomsday?," as being available Tuesday, August 28. Due to a printing error, our correction, this CD will not be available until a later date. We will issue rainchecks for this CD through September 1.

We apologize for any confusion or inconvenience this may have caused.



## CLARENCEVILLE SCHOOLS

### Time to register

Anyone who lives in the Clarenceville School District and is interested in voting in a special Oakland County millage election for that district must be sure to register to vote by Monday, Aug. 27.

The special election is Sept. 25 and features two questions - approval of almost 1.2 mills of tax for special education programs and just under a quarter of a mill (almost .23 of a mill) of tax for vocational education programs. For the owner of a home worth \$126,000 the two taxes

add up to about \$87 a year in taxes.

The money will be used to maintain current programs for special education programs while supplementing the funding being taken from present general program budgets. Meanwhile, the vocational education

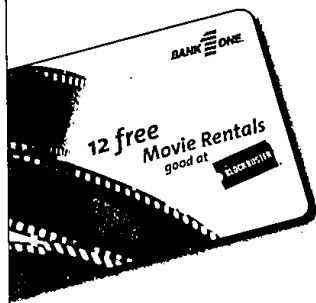
program will continue operations and improve curriculum and technology at the four Oakland Technical Centers.

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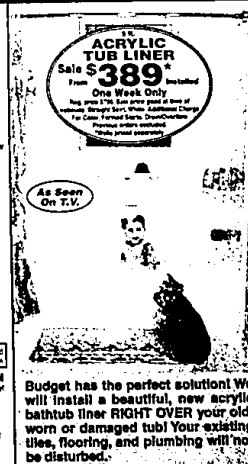
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