

Hills council to review 11 Pines development deal

BY KEVIN BROWN
STAFF WRITER
kbrown@hillsobserver.com

A simplified four-page agreement on an Eleven Pines site plan is expected to be presented to the Farmington Hills City Council at 7:30 p.m. Monday.

The letter of intent between the city and developer Selective Group of Farmington Hills will specify terms for a developer to prepare a site plan. The plan is to include residential development and a nine-hole expansion of the San Marino Golf Course.

City Manager Steve Brock said Thursday, of the letter of intent, "We're still putting the finishing touches on it." He said it would be ready for the council meeting Monday.

Council asked for a simpler agreement than the one presented Aug. 20. That multi-page agreement also referred to exhibits that were not

included in the agreement.

The letter, Brock said, "essentially deals with the obligation on the part of the city with Selective going forward as a proponent (developer)." "This is essentially to get them moving on the site plan process," he said.

Brock said the value of establishing a site plan is that the development of finer details regarding various aspects of the plan — which includes 72 duplex condominiums, a driving range, new parks maintenance building, tunnel, new nine-hole golf course layout — can then follow.

The \$10 million Eleven Pines project, planned for 90 acres on the southwest corner of 11 Mile and Haledale roads, has been identified as an issue by some candidates running for Hills political office this fall.

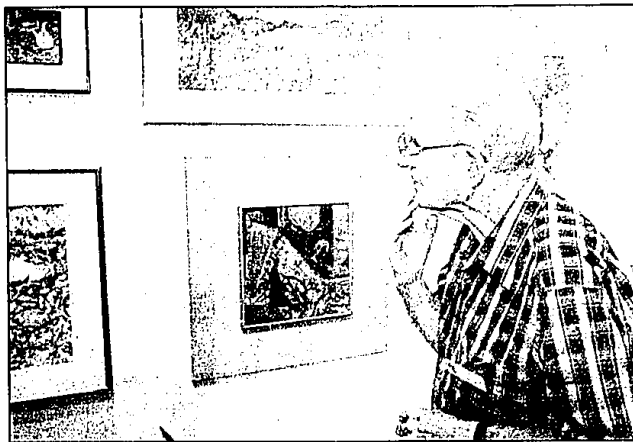
Ron Oliverio, challenging incumbent Mayor Nancy Bates who supports the project, charges city council "has not been up front about the Eleven Pines development."

He said a \$5 million sewer fund, planned to be dedicated to the project, "is supposed to be used to repair storm sewers. People have leaking basements. Instead, they use that as down payment for Eleven Pines."

City Council candidate Ken Massey has called for the establishment of a citizens' advisory committee, to determine what should be established at Eleven Pines.

The site plan should be completed in time to go to the city planning commission "probably in a couple of months," Brock said.

The plan should go to city council early next year, he said.



Viewing pleasure: Historical Commission member James Dermody looks at art by past Farmington Hills artists-in-residence.

Art from page A1

effort to reach out to the community's youth.

"I think we're getting the children involved an awful lot," she said, noting the commission donates funds to each school every year for cultural arts activities. For the past 10 years, there have also been student art awards.

Officials from both Farmington and Farmington Hills and representatives from both the Community Arts Council and Arts Commission were on hand for the event.

Ellis said the addition of a full-time staff person, Coumoundouros, has really

made a difference in the fostering of cultural arts.

"She's been the spark that's been there to ignite everything," Ellis said. "It's been so wonderful to see it all happen."

Completed as part of a larger renovation at the Center, the gallery's first display is that of works submitted by former Artists in Residence. Tom Hale, who held that honor in 1983, submitted pieces to represent his specialty — automotive art.

A resident of Farmington Hills, Hale has been making his living as an artist since 1985. He said the Artist in Residence honor helped him promote his

work.

"It happened to me fairly early," he said. "I had lived here six or seven years. It was kind of thrilling to be recognized in the community. It creates an awareness you are not able to do on your own."

Hale has also appreciated being part of the Artist in Residence group and seeing the extent of their work.

Coumoundouros said the display will change every three months. The city will solicit art works and collections. "It's going to be a true community gallery," she said.



'She's the spark': Longtime arts commission member Bev Ellis praises the new gallery and recognizes the work of Nancy Coumoundouros.

Coyotes show up along Bell Creek; pack sighted in Redford Township

BY JEFF COUNTS
STAFF WRITER
jcounts@hillsobserver.com

You may want to stay indoors the next time you hear what sounds like howling dogs in your neighborhood.

A Redford Township woman reported seeing a pack of four coyotes near her Denby Street home recently, the second sighting in recent weeks. Coyotes have also been spotted in the Farmington Hills area.

"It was the most amazing thing," said Lisa Dushart, who has lived in her Redford home for 16 years.

"We've seen rabbits and deer but never coyotes," she said.

The sighting, about two weeks ago, came at about 1 a.m.

"I couldn't sleep and I was looking outside. I saw one and thought it was a dog, and then I saw another and another," she said.

"I counted four," she said.

Then the next night her husband, Daniel, and son, David, 12, were driving near Bell Creek Park and they saw another crossing Inkster.

She said she was skeptical at first, but her son said he'd studied coyotes in school and was sure it was one.

"She also talked to a neighbor who is knowledgeable about coyotes and she was convinced," she said.

Also, she said that there are fewer rabbits in the neighborhood this summer.

"The coyote is a predator that feeds on rabbits and other small animals. Another resident near

Bell Creek reported finding a mangled rabbit recently. They also will feed on garbage.

The sightings are the second in Redford and the third in recent months in the Bell Creek area.

Along Bell Creek

A state Department of Natural Resources wildlife biologist confirmed that coyotes could be in the area and could be moving along Bell Creek, which is part of the Rouge River system.

Joe Derek, a naturalist for the city of Farmington Hills, said coyotes could easily be in Redford, especially along Bell Creek.

"I live along a tributary of the Rouge and I had two in my yard about two months ago," said Derek, who is a Farmington Hills resident.

He said he's heard of sightings in just about every community around western Wayne County, including Detroit. They've been at Five and Six Mile roads near Merriam in Livonia, he said.

He said he was in the area of Michigan Avenue and Inkster on the Memorial Day weekend and saw a coyote watching a state police officer writing a ticket. In all there have been about 20 sightings in the Farmington area over the last four or five years.

He attributed the sightings to the spread of coyotes through the country, and added that the predators are becoming less afraid of humans.

"They're getting to be like raccoons, skunks and Canada geese," he said, adding that

those species have adapted to having humans around.

In one case, a coyote was showing up at a dog run in the mornings to play with two domestic dogs.

"They'd run the fence together and were making friends," he said.

He said people shouldn't be afraid of coyotes. But they shouldn't feed them either.

"People have put dog food out for them and I warn them not to," he said. "Coyotes will eat small dogs and cats."

Unlike most dogs, coyotes have no trouble jumping a fence.

"If there's some puff ball in a yard, the coyote will get it," he said.

There are benefits to having coyotes around. They're predators and will keep the numbers of rabbits down in a neighborhood, a benefit to gardeners.

There's also evidence that coyotes are feeding on the resident Canada geese, which have plagued golf courses and parks in southeastern Michigan.

"They've been finding piles of feathers. A fox can't do that," he said.

The coyotes have also been doing their job of being predators in Heritage and Woodlands Hills parks in Farmington.

"They've been feeding on the stray cats in the parks," he said, adding that people often drop off strays.

Wild cats feed on the eggs of ground nesting birds. With fewer strays, there are more birds in the parks.

Schoolcraft offers Sunday Health Club

You have more than a month of Sundays — in fact, you have 26 Sundays — to get in shape by joining Schoolcraft College's Sunday Health Club. Members can work out every Sunday afternoon of the fall and winter sessions. The fall session continues from Sept. 16 through Dec. 16, and the winter session begins Jan. 6 and continues through March 31.

Membership fees are \$35 for individuals and \$74 for families for one session or \$60 for individuals and \$132 for families for both fall and winter sessions.

Each Sunday 1-5 p.m. members have access to two gyms for basketball and volleyball; six handball, paddleball and racquetball courts; wallyball courts; weightlifting machines, treadmill, exercise bikes, and other aerobic equipment in the fitness room; the swimming pool with two one-meter and one three-meter diving boards; and saunas in both the men and women's locker rooms.

The activity is at the level and intensity you set. Members must furnish their own locks and towels, and children under age 16 must be accompanied by an adult or guardian. For additional information or to receive a registration form, call 734-462-4413.

Schoolcraft College is located at 18600 Haggerty Road, between Six and Seven Mile roads, just west of I-275.

Trial from page A1

was returned to the Oakland County Jail, where he has been lodged 14 months.

Judge Alice Gilbert set his sentencing date for 9 a.m. Sept. 20. Evelyn Djoumessi, who has been out on bond during the trial, had a sentencing date set for 9 a.m. Oct. 11. Dressed in a tan suit and wearing wire-rimmed glasses and her dark hair pulled back, she also showed emotion at the reading of the verdict.

Fru, not 15, said he was not present. "I think he's probably thinking about homecoming and important things in his life," Matthews said.

Farmington Hills Police Chief Bill Dwyer said, "I am pleased that the Djoumessi was con-

victed on some of the charges, but disappointed regarding the not-guilty verdicts on many of the serious charges.

"I am grateful that Pridine Fru, age 18, will never have to live as a prisoner in a concrete bunker again," Dwyer continued. "The filthy basement living conditions, the scars on Pridine's body, and the look in her eyes said it all."

He commended Matthews, Dot Sandra Redford, neighbor Susan Aschoff, and Patrick Che who testified to Fru's sexual abuse, for giving Pridine her freedom.

While members of the jury declined to speak with the press, a court officer who spoke with the jury following the verdict

said some were unsure of Che as a witness.

Che, a Detroit teacher from Cameron who is a cousin to Evelyn Djoumessi, testified that Joseph Djoumessi admitted to him that he raped Fru.

But Che, who wore dark glasses on the stand, admitted under questioning that he denied Djoumessi's involvement when Farmington Hills police first questioned him. He testified that he decided to follow his conscience, and told police the next day that Djoumessi admitted to the rape.

Of Fru, Matthews said, "She made a fine witness and did a great thing and had a chance to stand up to the people that harmed her."

ARE YOU AT RISK?

CRITTENTON HOSPITAL MEDICAL CENTER

presents

"SCREENING FOR LIFE"

A free program about colorectal cancer, the second most common cancer death in the U.S.

SEPTEMBER 12, 7-9 P.M.

Jon Hain, MD

"Reducing your Colon Cancer Risk: early diagnosis and treatment options"

Call (248) 652-5269 to register or to receive free screening packets, available through Sept. 15.

CRITTENTON HOSPITAL MEDICAL CENTER

Quality Care...Close to Home & Work