

Board moves toward tax break

BY BRAD KADRICH
STAFF WRITER

The Robert Bosch Corp., one of the world's largest automotive suppliers, wants to build a new research and development site in Plymouth Township, and is going to need a tax abatement to do it.

On Tuesday, the Plymouth Township board took the first step in making that happen by approving the area where Bosch will build, at Haggerty and 5 Mile, as an Industrial Development District. Bosch's automotive headquarters is located in Farmington Hills.

The move clears the way for Bosch to purchase the property from its current owners, MAV Development Company, and build its new facility on some 75 acres in the area.

The request, made by MAV in an Oct. 16 letter, will allow Bosch to apply for an industrial facilities exemption certificate, once negotiations for the purchase of the property are completed. The township board will hear the request for the exemption at a public hearing set for

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Dec. 17.

According to township officials, MAV Development had planned an office complex with space for several leases on about 60 acres, which would have left an addition 15 acres in the area available for another developer.

Instead, if the agreement between Bosch and MAV works out, Bosch will develop the entire parcel, which will actually make it less dense, according to Supervisor Steve Mann.

"I think it's a lot more residential-friendly than the first proposal was," said Mann. "It's still going to be a large development, but it's a lot more residential-friendly."

According to Becky McDonald, Bosch's director of communications, the automotive supplier will use the development for research, development, applications engineering, sales and administrative

offices. She couldn't say how many jobs that would bring to Plymouth Township.

"We have more employees in Farmington Hills than we have space for in the building we own in Farmington Hills," McDonald said. "We haven't made a decision on which division or functions would move, so I couldn't speculate on how many jobs there will be. We're doing a lot of analytical work right now."

Bosch's chances of getting the tax abatement they're looking for would seem to be pretty good. The Plymouth Township board as a general rule is favorable to such exemptions. In this case, even Clerk Marilyn Massengill, who generally votes against abatements on principle, said she might be able to support this one.

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JAN JAGOTLO / OBSERVER

Carrier of the year

Farmington carrier of the year, Jon Garvey, of Farmington Hills, has been named Carrier of the Year for the Farmington Observer. He is pictured with manager Greg Phillips. Garvey is a senior at Harrison High School with a 3.5 GPA. His favorite subject is American Government and he also plays in the Harrison Marching Band. In his spare time Garvey enjoys weight training and various other fitness activities. Garvey's favorite part of being an Observer carrier is his customers. He also enjoys developing his people skills and learning to manage money.

MOVERS AND SHAKERS

Sears hired

Mitsuhiko Yamashita, president, Nissan Technical Center North America Inc., announced the appointment of Renee T. Sears as a director in the vehicle engineering department at the automaker's North American vehicle development headquarters.

Sears' responsibilities will include the engineering of interiors, including cockpit modules, trim and seats, for North American-produced vehicles.

She will report to Robert Sump, vice president for vehicle engineering.

Sears comes to Nissan after spending more than 13 years with Ford Motor Co. primarily in powertrain engineering positions. Sears was awarded a master's degree of engineering degree from Cornell University in May 1989, a year after she received a bachelor's of science degree in mechanical engineering also from Cornell.

Since September 2001, she

has been a member of the Society of Automotive Engineers Board of Directors, and is a member of the SAE's Diversity Acceleration Council and Quality Improvement Committee.

Heritage Bank promotion

Richard J. Hollowell has been named managing director of commercial real estate at Michigan Heritage Bank in Farmington Hills.

Hollowell served five years as a commercial loan officer at Sterling Bank in Southfield. Prior to that, Hollowell worked for two years in commercial lending area with Michigan National Bank in Farmington Hills.

Hollowell received a bachelor's degree in finance from the University of Michigan. Prior to college, he was a member of the Marine Corps.

A Michigan native, Hollowell lives in Plymouth. He serves on the Plymouth Area Chamber of Commerce.

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