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Twenty-Five Cents

Commission on Aging listens Senior citizens map out needs

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

Older persons and some of their younger neighbors got together at Farmington City Hall Thursday night to tell the Commission on Aging how to handle the problems of the elderly.

Lack of transportation, sidewalks, senior housing and the ever-rising cost of living are among the concerns that were voiced at the standing room only session. Another session was held in the Farmington Hills council chamber Friday.

Commissioners were reminded more than once of the seniors' desire for mass transportation systems that would serve them. Expanding Farmington's taxi system to include the Hills would be way to tackle the problem, according to some of the 77 older persons at the meeting. Suggestions for a dial-a-ride system and a senior van also received support.

Farmington's taxi service, which is restricted to the city, was criticized as inadequate.

"I WANTED TO GO to Botsford Inn, so I could catch a bus to the airport. But the taxi wouldn't take me there," said Betty Patterson. "It would take me to Botsford Hospital, and I could walk with my bags to Botsford Inn."

While the Farmington service could take her to the city's hospital, it would have to overstep its boundaries were it to transport Mrs. Patterson to the Inn, in Farmington Hills. One of the advantages of the taxi service is that the cab is much closer in appearance to a family car than a van, according to Commissioner John Keeler.

Taxis are the next thing to a car and are not large when you see them on the street. But a taxi can only hold five people with the driver. A van

holds more people," Keeler said.

Both cities could sponsor a van to run a regular route for seniors, Keeler suggested.

Vans are being considered for the area by the Commission and the Hills city council, which has earmarked \$12,000 for such dispatchers, oil and gas and service costs. That amount excludes the cost of a van. Farmington Jaycees are beginning a drive to raise money for the vehicle.

IN THE MEANTIME, Farmington Hills City Councilman Robert Amori explained to the group the city's funding of the van operating costs.

"As you project your needs to our commission, then we (council) with budget funds, can channel them to the areas of need," he said.

Dial-a-ride found a supporter in Grace Lloyd of Farmington Hills. Ms. Lloyd moved last year from Cadillac, where such a system is in use.

"We lived in a town with vans, and in bad weather they were there. We paid 25 cents a ride, and we got where we wanted to go. They still have the system. Everyone uses it," she said.

Another plan using vans as a basis of senior transportation is being considered by Oakland County, according to State Representative Sandy Wilbur (R-Farmington).

Oakland County has proposed to use 20-30 vans seniors throughout its area. "At least it would be the start of dial-a-ride countywide," he said.

From seniors who prefer to walk, there was a different set of complaints. Most pointed out the limited number of sidewalks in cities designed around the use of cars.

"THERE'S NO WAY to walk from Floral Park to Belaire to shop. There aren't any sidewalks. You take your life into your own hands when you walk down Shawwassee to Orchard Lake Road," said Howard Estep, of Farmington.

Farmington Hills made people put in sidewalks. They run the length of the building and go smack into a fire hydrant," he said.

Housing is a need that has been ignored by the cities, according to Betty Patterson. For ten years, the Farmington Hills council has dragged its feet on the issue, she said.

That issue, along with other senior (Continued on page 8A)



Jere Berkley feeds her new-found companion, Sammy, who came to live with the Farmington Hills resident after losing his home to developers. (Staff photo by Harry Maute)

...as housing spokesman calls it quits in Hills

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

Two weeks after resigning from the Farmington Area Commission on Aging, senior citizen advocate Rev. Meredith Moshauer has moved to Warren to devote his time to developing senior residences on his own.

His move comes at the end of his eight-year term as associate pastor of Nardin Park Methodist Church. Rev. Moshauer decided to take a leave of absence rather than transfer to another parish, according to William Twigg, a member of the Nardines, the church senior citizen group.

Moshauer was unavailable for comment. But Bruce Robinson, of Robinson Reports, Farmington Hills, confirmed that his firm is recommending Moshauer as a developer to the Cranston real estate firm Callabino Brothers. The firm owns the property, located on Van Dyke in Warren, which is slated for senior residences.

"HE HAS A BACKGROUND in gerontology and nursing home administration," Robinson said. "We'll be recommending him as a developer in the seven county area."



Rev. Meredith Moshauer commending him as a developer in the seven county area.

Moshauer was slated to sign a contract with realtors over the weekend to begin work on the development, to

be called the Warren Terraces senior residences.

Moshauer's projects will be privately funded without the aid of state or federal funds, according to Robinson.

Among his duties as a full-time private developer will be to put the entire senior residence concept together into a salable package, raise funds and supervise construction and design, Robinson said.

Moshauer attracted public attention last year when the Nardines made a bid to have property behind the church at Eleven Mile near Middle Belt rezoned to permit a senior citizen apartment complex in a residential zone. When the plan met with opposition from homeowners, the group, which claims 70 per cent of its membership from Farmington and Farmington Hills, asked the Hills to consider a special senior citizens zoning change. Moshauer was present with the group during their council appearances.

"HE WANTED to carry the banner by himself," said Robinson, who last year developed a market research survey on the feasibility of the senior residences for the group.

Twigg and Robinson doubt that Moshauer's move from the city will affect the push for senior citizen housing.

"I don't think it will change matters much. I want elderly housing in the city. We're going to have it sooner or later," said Robinson.

"They've made their contribution to the community. It's just that we keep them here," he said.

Twigg indicated that Moshauer will keep his ties with the senior citizen's group.

newspaper survey will be used to determine if the city can best serve seniors through the passage of a special zoning ordinance. The ordinance would designate land for senior citizen housing.

Two ordinances are being looked at by the housing and planning commission. One, dubbed RCE, would allow senior complexes to be 30 feet high. Another, RCE-1, would provide for complexes which could be as high as 60 feet. Botsford Hospital, by way of comparison, is 59 feet high.

Both surveys are aimed at gathering information about the needs of seniors in the city, according to Farmington Hills administrative assistant Michael Dorman.

"This is a survey for seniors, not zoning," Dorman said. Residents who have elderly parents are asked to fill out the newspaper survey before June 23. Inclusion of the telephone number is optional. Send signed surveys to the City Manager's office, Farmington Hills City Hall, 31555 Eleven Mile, Farmington Hills, 48024.

Sammy the starling finds a friend in Jere Berkley

By LYNN ORR

When Jere Berkley nursed a baby starling back to health a few months ago, she didn't expect to expand her family's menagerie.

But Sammy the Starling had other ideas.

A Farmington Hills resident, Mrs. Berkley found the baby starling sitting in a parking lot on Northwestern between Twelve and Thirteen Mile. "They just leveled the land to build a shopping center, and they chopped down these 40-foot spruces," Mrs. Berkley says, "then came the nests, of course, and I saw him standing in the parking lot near a car—so I decided to take him home."

At first, she fed Sammy, with an eye dropper and gradually he started eating a mixture of dogfood, egg yolk and milk. About three weeks ago, Mrs. Berkley put him in a tree, and he left with the other starlings that night.

Much to her surprise, however, Sammy wasn't gone for good.

"My neighbor came over the next day and said 'Your bird is sitting on my father-in-law's head.' So I went over, and it was Sammy."

Sammy has continued to reappear in her yard, chirping a special sound

that means feeding time.

"It's a special sound that he gives when he wants to eat," Mrs. Berkley says, and she responds with a "kissing sound." Sammy promptly lands on her shoulder, finger, hand or head, opens his beak and waits for his ration.

SOMETIMES Sammy will rest on the Berkleys' outdoor deck next to Mrs. Berkley, or he might just fall asleep perched on her finger.

"He's a very loving, little bird," she explains. "For a bird to sit there, puff up his feathers and spread his wings, then close his eyes and go to sleep, he has to be pretty tame."

Mrs. Berkley contacted Alan Valentine of the Detroit Audubon Society to discover if Sammy's home attachments were unusual—and Valentine came out to the house to see Sammy in action and was surprised.

"He's going to band the bird for me," Mrs. Berkley says.

She believes Sammy comes to her at feeding time, about four times a day, when other young starlings return to their mothers.

"Instead, he'll come to me," she says. Starlings are permanent residents in the state, so Mrs. Berkley cannot project just when Sammy will,

if ever, cut the apron strings. But she doesn't seem to find keeping one more pet on her feeding list.

In addition to Sammy, the Berkleys have two cats, one dog, a half-moon parrot, and fish—one of which is 17 years old, Mrs. Berkley claims.

And Mrs. Berkley's two children are learning to feed Sammy so they can assume some of the responsibility. The kids love Sammy and Sammy appears to return to their affection.

Nursing wounded animals and birds isn't unusual for Mrs. Berkley. She has chaffered many of the injured to the veterinarian, including some injured morning doves.

And Sammy isn't her first lengthy experience with a creature of the wild. Mrs. Berkley nursed a robin back to health after a cat tore off one wing. She kept the robin for five years.

"I had to keep him in the house, though," she says. "This is the first time that I found something that was able to go back into the wild."

Because Sammy isn't housebroken, accidents sometimes happen—but never on his head," Mrs. Berkley says good-naturedly. "And it washes off."

Public input asked

Farmington Hills' Housing Commission is asking residents who have elderly parents to help the group compile information on the need for senior citizen residences in the area by filling out a six-question survey.

Information gained through the survey will be part of the commission's July 7 presentation to the planning commission. At that meeting, the housing group also will reveal the outcome of a survey it sent this week to 2,700 seniors in Farmington Hills.

"We want to get information from a group we couldn't reach directly," explained Tom Czubiak, chairman of the housing group.

"We want a truer picture of the need for senior citizen residences," said Farmington Hills City Councilmember Jan Dolan, who is a member of the housing commission. "The survey we mailed didn't count people in the subdivisions who have parents in another city and are trying to get them an apartment near here."

COMBINED RESULTS FROM the mailed survey to the seniors and the

Dudley withdraws, Lichtman retires

By STEVE BARNABY

Farmington editor

In a surprise move last week, Farmington Hills Councilwoman Joan Dudley withdrew as a candidate for reelection to the city's legislative body.

By removing her hat from the ring, the Hills council elected in November will be devoid of all councilmembers who were also members of the Farmington Hills Charter Commission. Earlier this year, Councilman Fred Lichtman announced he wouldn't run for reelection.

Robert McConnell, another charter commissioner, resigned his seat last January after being elected to the Oakland County Board of Commissioners.

Mrs. Dudley, an East Junior High School teacher, began her political career in 1972 when she was elected to the charter commission. She presently is serving as mayor pro-tem and was next in line to serve as the city's mayor.

"I have reset my priorities and have decided that my family and friends come first," said Mrs. Dudley.

"OVERALL, I'm relieved. But in a way I'm shaky because I'm going to miss it," she said.

Last week's action caught many political observers by surprise because Mrs. Dudley had circulated petitions for the August 2 primary and had filed them at the city clerk's office. But she had a change of mind and reversed her decision by the charter-mandated deadline of last Friday, which is the last day a candidate may withdraw from the election and have their name absent from the ballot.

In her remaining six months on the council, Mrs. Dudley says she will work towards seeing that a parks plan is implemented for Farmington Hills. She has been a chief advocate in the fight for the establishment of a parks

system. Presently, Farmington Hills has only one park, Waldron, in the city's south end.

Mrs. Dudley and Lichtman have been political allies on many of the issues which have come before the council.

Lichtman's 10-year political career in Farmington Hills includes service as mayor, township trustee, charter commissioner and councilman.

Candidates seeking a place on the ballot in the fall election are: George T. Roberts, 21421 Onnago; Jihad (Joe)

Alkateb, 25815 Arden Park; Robert Amori, 39227 Charter Crest; Earl Oppert, 32216 Baintree; Ben Marks, 25187 Briarwick; Jo Ann Sorenson, 35546 Springvale; Melvin Paunovich, 26425 Springfield; Catherine Jones, 23659 Purdue; Jack Renaldi, 25555 Inkster; Marilyn Duguid, 28700 Briarton; and Robert Anzlov, 30157 De Orr.

The only remaining elected incumbent in contention is Oppert. Amori was appointed to fill the seat vacated by McConnell.

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Let Something good be said
The Farmington Community Center is one of those institutions that makes the Farmington area a nice place to live. But it needs your help. To see what the Crackerbarrel Debate has to say on the subject turn to page 8A.