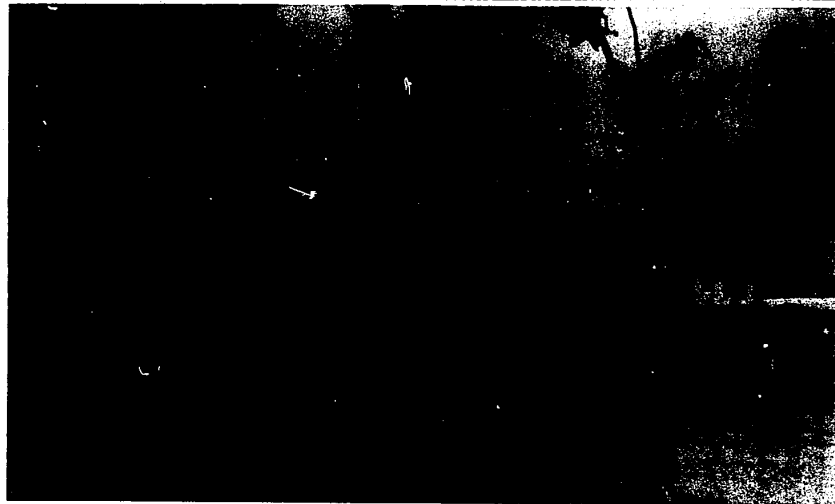




Security guard Phil Stenning checks in a visitor through the Ramblewood subdivision security gate.



The Maple Wood and the Cherry Wood homes are two models offered in the 300-unit Ramblewood complex.

Single housing hits new high

Story: LYNN ORR
Photos: HARRY MAUTHE

*They took all the trees,
Put 'em in a tree museum.
And they charge all the people
A dollar and a half just to see 'em.
Don't it always seem to go
That you don't know what you've got
till it's gone.
Pave paradise, put up a parking
lot."*

—Joni Mitchell

Bulldozers, construction workers, dirt roads, piles of two-by-fours—the sure signs of summertime and new housing have vacated the landscape in recent years as the housing industry itself was left in the dust during tight-money times.

But business is booming once again in Farmington Hills.

"There are more single family subdivision plans this year than in the last five or six years combined," says Hal Rowe, Farmington Hills zoning office supervisor.

And the emphasis is back on single family units, as opposed to the multiple housing trend.

"The market is in single family homes, not apartments," says Rowe. "And families seem to be able to afford the prices."

RAMBLEWOOD subdivision, under the auspices of the Uniland Company, is one of the largest subs under construction. Located between Thirteen Mile and Fourteen Mile east of Halstead, the subdivision homes are large, priced from \$85,000 to about \$180,000, and "selling like hotcakes," according to Rowe.

The sub includes a special attraction for security-conscious suburbanites—a guard house for round-the-clock security in admitting persons to the area. The guardhouse seems to be the "in" thing for the housing market, a marketing trend picked up from the multiple housing trade.

And security is important during the construction period, according to Phil Stenning, Pinkerton guard at Ramblewood.

"Construction companies are losing about \$900 a day, they tell me," Stenning says. The security system will continue after construction as well.

"Ramblewood guarantees the homeowners that this place will be covered with 24 hour security," he adds.

FARMINGTON GREEN, a modestly-priced subdivision "in today's market," says Rowe, is underway on Twelve Mile near Drake, by Pulte construction company.

And another sub is going in on Drake between Twelve and Thirteen Mile.

On Ten Mile between Middlebelt and Inkster, a parcel is being developed for single-family residential housing, while other subs like Heritage Hills in the north section and Meadowbrook Hills in the south are being expanded.

A 53-acre subdivision is underway next to Green Hills apartment complex on Nine Mile near Drake.

Other housing plans are in the talking stages, according to Rowe, including a subdivision on Drake across from Independence Commons between Eleven and Twelve Mile.

In Section 6, 478 acres in Farmington Hills, although part of the Walcott Lake School District, is being considered for a subdivision on Fourteen Mile near Haggerty. Another 600 acres in the northwest section of the city is also under consideration for single family housing, he adds.

The east side of town is also being

affected by the housing market. Two areas along Middlebelt, one near Ten Mile and another on the north side of Twelve Mile, are being considered as possible housing sites.

Commercial and multiple housing plans are also underway, including the Cordoba Apartments planned for the south side of Twelve Mile between Middlebelt and Orchard Lake Rd. Plans for the northeast corner of Nine Mile and Drake include apartment consideration.

EASIER FINANCING seems to be the key in the housing industry, Rowe says. "It's not cheap, but it's available," he maintains.

Farmington Hills, however, isn't the only suburb with a housing boom, he adds. "All the communities are bulging."

An expansion of the Wynset condominium complex on Farmington Road south of Grand River in the City of Farmington is underway at present.

And a casual afternoon drive around the northwest suburbs confirms the housing boom. It may not be parking lots, but the trees are giving away to cedar shingles and lots of sod.



Cement worker Setti Mo puts the finishing touches on this garage floor in Farmington Green subdivision.



The sewers go in first as construction workers begin the job of leveling the land for new housing.



This massive bulldozer does an optimum job in preparing the ground for future housing sites.

HOME CANNING?

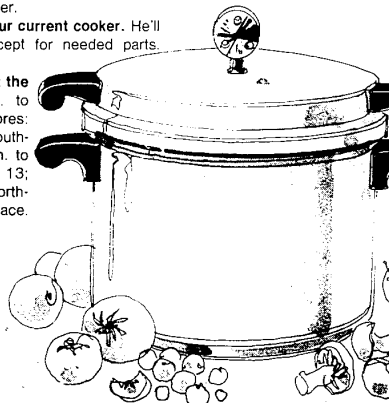
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