

Farmington Observer

Volume 90 Number 84

Monday, August 6, 1979

Farmington, Michigan

40 Pages

Twenty-five cents

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Red tape attacked at meets

By STEVE BARNABY
Farmington Observer

Roger Walker wants to tell Jimmy Carter about the importance of small business.

He could get that chance. The Farmington Realtor has joined a select group of other businessmen from around the country in discussions with White House staff members.

After participating in the Michigan Conference on Small Business earlier this year, Walker will set off for Chicago this week to participate in a regional conference.

That conference will select delegates who will go to the White House early next year to talk directly with the President.

"The real momentum of the economy comes from the little guy," says Walker. "If all the small businesses die out, we'll have a business oligarchy and that just shouldn't be."

Less paper work and more loans for small businesses are two of the points participants are trying to make with the White House personnel.

"We hope to see a streamlined government assistance to aid the small businessman," he says.

Presently, businessmen are tied down to reams of paperwork to meet the Small Business Administration regulations.

"A lot of small businesses can't afford to hire a lawyer to keep up with the complex paperwork," he says.

Obtaining small business loans are one big concern of small businessmen, according to Walker. It takes as long as

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Aussie Graham captures PGA

Australian David Graham embraces his caddy while accepting congratulations from Ben Crenshaw after winning the 61st PGA Championship at Oakland Hills Sunday in a sudden death playoff. It took Graham three extra holes to defeat Crenshaw. Graham nearly lost the championship by taking a double-bogey six on

the 18th hole to set up the playoff. Over 145,000 persons attended the week-long event at Oakland Hills. For more photographs and complete details on the PGA see the back page of this section and the front of today's sports pages.

(Staff photo by Steve Cantrell)

Utility network crowds cities' underworld

By C.J. RISAK

Underneath the very streets Farmington's residents tread upon runs miles and miles of sewer and water lines.

What could possibly lurk down there? Huge tunnels, twisting and turning underneath unsuspecting cities have provided homes, in fiction and film, for evil beings of the night. It was from the sewers of Paris that the Phantom of the Opera made his raids of terror.

In "Them," a classic science fiction film of the early '50s and one of the

first dealing with nature's reaction to the atomic age, giant ants hide in Los Angeles' sewers and have to be flushed out by hordes of soldiers.

Well, Farmington, you need not fear. Nothing quite so dangerous or exciting threatens you from underneath the streets. Even the romantic notion that characters like Ralph Krausend's seldick, Ed Norton, in the television show "The Honeymooners," might spend their days in a world where "water is thicker than blood," (as Norton would say), would be a misconception.

When evaluating the sewer and water systems of Farmington and Farm-

ington Hills, the most surprising discoveries are how extensive they actually are and the money that goes into operating them each year.

"I would say over \$100 million has been put into the water and sewer systems since 1960," said Farmington Hills City Clerk Floyd Cairns.

Since 1960, when the first city water and sewer systems were constructed, Cairns estimated that, "over 165 miles of sewer lines and 275 miles of water have been laid."

NEITHER OF THOSE figures include main lines, which would add 30 miles to the sewer total and 45 to 50 to the water.

"It just staggers the mind," he said when asked about the cost. "It is expensive."

"Our first sewer was in Franklin Knolls subdivision in 1960," Cairns recalled. "The average cost of a lot, at that time, was \$810. Now, it's \$4,000 to \$5,000."

Cairns estimates that \$2 million is spent every year on sewer and water in Farmington Hills. Much of this is recovered with special assessments. At the moment, there are 140 special assessment districts, but that figure is always going up.

"We have 10 more assessments waiting for approval," Cairns said. The history of the Hills water system dates back to 1937 and to Section 36. The cost of that system compared with those built today was small.

"If a homeowner has a water pipeline running through his property and he wants a direct connection, if the pipe is 16 inches (in diameter) or less, it will cost him between \$400 and \$500.

Every year 10 to 15 miles of both sewer and water lines are constructed in Farmington Hills. Any developers, however, must contract and put in their own systems.

THERE ARE FIVE main sewer arms in the Hills, with extensions being added constantly. What cost \$10 million in 1960 "would be worth about \$30 million today," Cairns said. The arms carry the main load of the systems.

In the City of Farmington, a new project has been proposed to upgrade the sewer system.

"We have a \$1 million project in design and going to bid in the next month or so," Farmington City Manager Bob Deadman said.

The water system is also going to be revamped, according to Deadman. "It's undervalued for current needs," Deadman explained. "Some areas are deteriorating, but the main problem is the old four-inch system is vastly undervalued for fire-fighting needs and can't keep the water pressure up for the demands in the area."

The Farmington city water system

dates back to the early 1900s, when it was originally made of wood. It was reconstructed in the early '30s, and "much of system is still in the ground," according to Deadman.

The city sewer system was built in the 1920s, Deadman said. There are presently 40 miles of both water and sewer lines in the city. Deadman estimates maintenance cost at \$300,000 per year.

ONE OF THE major problems that faces sewer and water workers, when repairing or replacing worn-out sections, is dealing with other things under the ground. Gas, telephone, electric and some public lighting lines all criss-

cross throughout Farmington.

"We cause problems for each other," Deadman explained. "There's just not enough room for everything underground."

As an example, Detroit Edison has "thousands of miles, tons of stuff" all over Farmington, according to spokesman Joseph Ford. There are five different types of power cables: 120 volts, 4,800 volts, 13,200 volts, 24,000 volts and 48,000 volts.

Some, according to Ford, are in trenches with telephone or gas lines. Most is direct-buried, which is "just digging a hole 40 inches deep or so and laying in the cable." Other lines are in conduit.

But it is all underground. Since a state ruling in 1971, all subdivisions must have their power lines buried. It makes it very congested.

Part of Farmington's solution is the "Miss Dig" program. According to Deadman, whenever a utility company wants to dig anything, they must call the city and find out if any one of the other utility companies, or the city, has anything already there.

There is a lot that goes on under Farmington's earth. But, with the largest diameter of pipe in area sewers measuring 48 inches, it is safe to say nothing too harmful can emerge.

Agendas posted for the week

FARMINGTON HILLS CITY COUNCIL

7:30 p.m., Aug. 6

31555 Eleven Mile

• Tonight's special meeting will discuss the following:

• Recommendation to purchase radio equipment for the Police Department with a waiver of sealed bids.

• Recommendation to purchase word processing equipment for the police department with a waiver of sealed bids.

• There will be a study session immediately after the special meeting.

FARMINGTON CITY COUNCIL

8 p.m., Aug. 6

23600 Liberty

Presentation: Oakland County Road Commission

• Proposal: Orchard Lake Road improvements from Grand River north to I-698.

Petitions and Communications

• Applications for special 24-hour license re: Oakland County Tennis and Crumpets Benefit for Children's Hospital.

• Letter of resignation from J. Barbrick, Farmington Reaffirmation Committee.

• Letter from City of Keego Harbor re: Opposition to House Bill 4199 on absentee ballots. Reports from City Manager

• Special assessment bond sale — \$102,000.

• Proposal for water and sewer rate study.

• Bids: Sidewalk ramp program.

• Insurance Program 1979-80.

• Six year capital improvement program 1979-84.

• 1979-80 Sidewalk repair program.

• First estimated payment — 1979 road improvements.

• Third estimated payment — 1979 road repair program.

• Proposed amendment to uniform traffic code for cities, townships and villages.

• Proposed municipal building energy review.

• Request for reduced assessment by Community Living Centers, Inc.

• Safety problem: Mobil gas station

and handicapped parking violation enforcement.

Miscellaneous

• Appointments: boards and commissions.

• Establish public hearing to review zoning ordinance amendment parking requirements.

• Establish public hearing to amend zoning ordinance, Hannan parcel from R-1 to R-1-0.

• Public safety department second quarterly operations report.

• Financial report general fund: 12 months ended June 30, 1979!

Resolutions and ordinances:

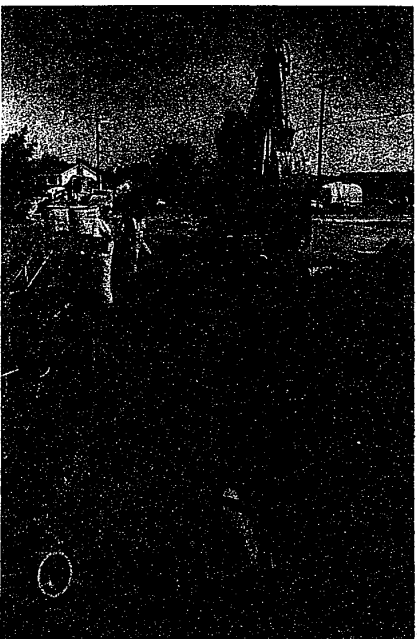
• Adopt ordinance C-447-79 amending taxi cab rates.

• Introduce and adopt ordinance C-449-79 traffic code for cities, villages and townships.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR
The long hot days of summer getting you down? Don't let boredom get to you. Turn to the Farmington Community Calendar on Page 4B and see what new experiences you can discover.



Sewer construction, such as this in the Pleasant Valley subdivision, is big business in the Farmington and Farmington Hills area. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)