

Owner still steaming as business opens

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portable sign he was using to advertise his business violates city sign ordinances.

City Planner Rick Lampe said Arnold must meet six conditions before a temporary certificate of occupancy can be granted.

THE BIGGEST obstacle to Arnold's securing the certificate apparently is his failure to post a letter of credit or cash bond from a bank guaranteeing that \$25,450 worth of construction work on the property will be completed.

The city says Arnold must still pave and stripe the 108-space parking lot; install handicapped parking signs; adjust the alignment of a manhole on the east corner of the property; stabilize a flood plain at the rear of the property; and get approval from the Michigan Department of Transportation for the grade of the property's entrance.

Arnold said he will meet all requests but maintains that Hills city officials create problems by failing to notify

businesses of regulations in advance. In addition, he says, city ordinances often conflict with state and county requirements putting developers "in a Catch-22 situation."

"It's like they're laying back to shoot at you," Arnold says.

The businessman says he's no fan of government in general, saying he subscribes to the philosophy that the less government the better.

"I hate governments of all types," Arnold says, "but on the other hand I realize there's a great cry from the public for enforcement and city officials have to listen to that. Every issue isn't black and white, even though I tend to see things that way. There's a lot of gray out there."

CITY PLANNER Lampe says Arnold's run-ins with the city started about four years ago when he bought the property which backs up to the flood plain, making any plans for developing the area subject to approval from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

"The idea I get is he doesn't like government too much," Lampe says. "He tried to develop the site without hiring an engineer and an architect. Sites with a flood plain are harder to develop in terms of city approval. Plus, he has an arcade which requires special use approval from the planning commission."

The approval of an arcade on the property zoned for general business was eventually granted. But Arnold claims that in four previous miniature golf courses he built he did not run into such rigamarole. He said he was required to obtain 14 different permits.

Arnold owns Putt-Putt golf courses in Livonia, Warren and Walled Lake and recently sold another in Broughton Lake.

He cited as an example of bureaucratic blundering, the city's ordinance requiring three parking spaces for every miniature golf course hole and 58 spaces for the 36-game video room which could hold 100 people. By these standards, he would need 162 spaces for the golf course and a total of 220 parking spaces, he said.

Arnold says his Livonia Putt-Putt course is the busiest course in the country during summer months and he is only required to have 88 parking spaces at the 36-hole facility.

LAMPE POINTS out that members of the Zoning Board of Appeals reduced the parking requirement to 108 after Arnold appealed.

Handicapped parking will be provided in accordance with law, Arnold says, even though he can't imagine how someone in a wheelchair could get around the obstacles on a miniature golf course.

One of the reasons for his problems with city officials, Arnold says, is the fact that the business attracts youths and features video games.

"At first I figured I wouldn't call the place an arcade, but then I figured—on it, it's an arcade," Arnold says. "People associate an arcade with drink, fast-foods and dope. But it's not that. It's a wholesome atmosphere. It's clean, it's all-American and I got the s.o.b. all paid for."

Juvenile charged in wrench beating

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At that point in the plans, Lintz and Yousif testified, Al Frederick, one of the six runaways, decided to go, leaving five in the shed for the night.

In the morning, the five waited for Foreman to emerge to be robbed by Baldwin and Merrick. However, he didn't come out on schedule and the group grew cold, tired and impatient.

All but two youths, Merrick and Lintz, stayed, according to testimony by Lintz and Yousif, with the other three leaving just minutes before the attack occurred.

Testimony indicated that Merrick knew Foreman carried large amounts of cash because he'd slept at the home and drove to a friend of his in Sterling Heights, counting the money in the backseat of the cab and sharing a marijuana joint with the driver.

Both Yousif and Lintz told the court that after he was arrested, Merrick tried to convince them to tell police Baldwin did the beating. Lintz told the court he participated in the robbery but Merrick did the beating.

Lintz told the court he ran away after demanding money from the elderly man and receiving \$3 from him.

"HE PULLED OUT \$3 and gave it to me," Lintz said in court. "He just hand-

ed it to me. He said it was all he had, that it was his lunch money. Kevin said he had (more) money, he saw a bulge in his pocket. I started to walk away."

As he was leaving, Lintz says, he saw Merrick hit Foreman repeatedly in the head with the wrench.

"I heard Kevin call my name a couple times," Lintz said. "I heard the man scream a couple times, that was it."

When Merrick finished beating Foreman, Lintz said, he and Merrick met each other on the road and went to a fast-food restaurant. There, Lintz testified, Merrick washed the blood off of his cheeks and hands and Lintz bought two cups of hot chocolate.

Lintz says the two called a taxi cab because he'd slept at the home and drove to a friend of his in Sterling Heights, counting the money in the backseat of the cab and sharing a marijuana joint with the driver.

In Sterling Heights, the two bathed and washed their clothes in his friend's house while the boy's parents were away, Lintz said.

They gave money to two youths who helped them by shopping for clothes and stereo headphones radios at a shopping mall.

Another youth, Lintz said, drove he and Merrick to the airport where the two were arrested on a plane cleared for take-off to Orlando, Fla.



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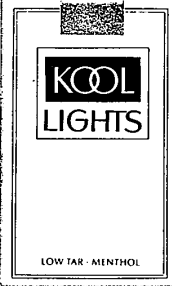
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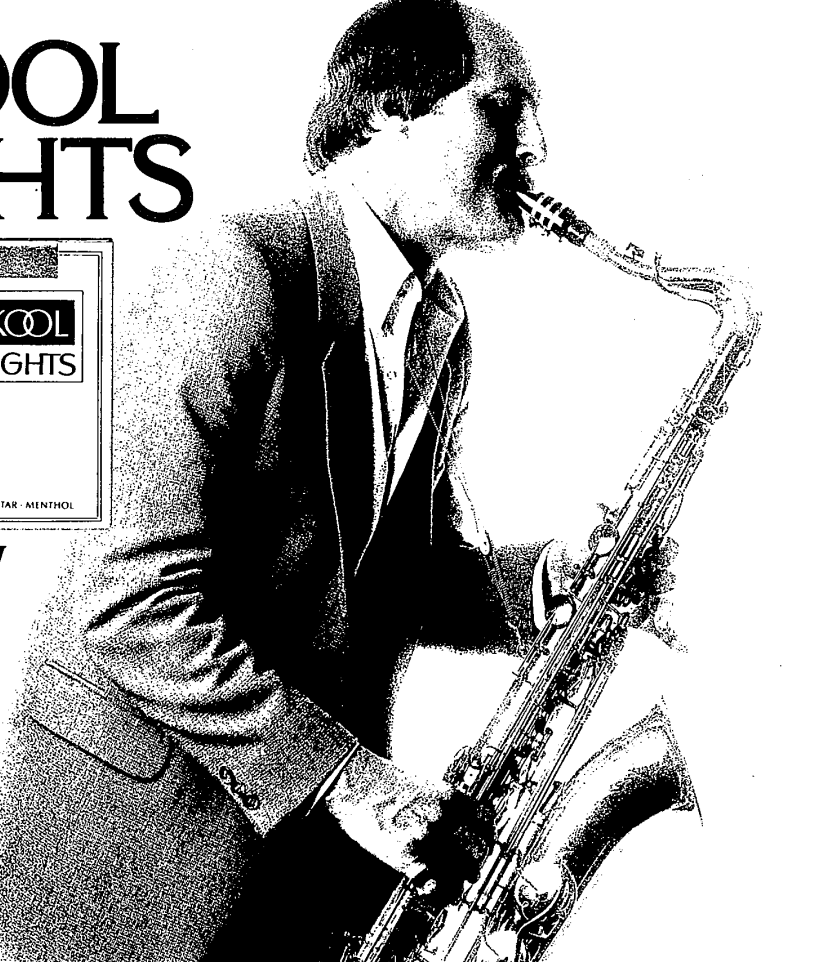
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