



# Farmington Observer

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Twenty-Five Cents

## School trustee calls it quits

By Tom Baer  
staff writer

The big news at last Tuesday's meeting of the Farmington Board of Education wasn't listed on the agenda — or rather it was hidden in "II. Items from the President, B. Announcements."

Announcements were promised, an announcement there was.

Trustee James E. McGilincy, a member of the Farmington Board for almost six years, announced that he will not run for re-election when his four-year term expires in June.

Board President Helen Prutow, whose term also is up in June, announced that she will seek re-election when the district's voters go to the polls on June 11.

Long active in the Parent-Teacher Association, McGilincy was first appointed to the board in July of 1978 to replace Dr. Mervyn Ross, who resigned and moved to Arizona.

In 1979, McGilincy ran successfully for the year left on Ross' term, and then won a four-year term of his own in June of 1980.

"I make the decision with regret," McGilincy told the board. "It's certainly not the company. It's just that there are going to be some changes in my life, and I may not be able to give the job the time it deserves."

After the meeting, McGilincy, who'll turn 54 on April 1, explained that he plans to retire soon from his position as head of personnel and labor relations

for Wayne County General Hospital in Westland, ending 28 years of service to Wayne County.

"I didn't make up my mind until the last week or so," he said. "It's not really complicated. It's just that I'm retiring from my present employment."

"After some time off, I'll probably be seeking employment elsewhere. In seeking such employment, I want to leave all options open. I very well might change my whole field of endeavor, but my plans aren't finalized right now."

MOGLINCY, a Farmington resident since 1969, serves as the chairman of the board's curriculum committee.

"I do regret leaving," he said, "but I think I'm leaving at a time when

there's some stability on the board. I've never known a finer group of people who are dedicated to the mission of the schools."

"I would encourage anyone with a devotion to community service and to the education of our youth to seek election. It's been a rewarding experience for me."

Discussing McGilincy's decision, Prutow, a board member since 1975, said, "I'm disappointed. We're all going to miss him. He's been an excellent board member and a very thorough man in his position of chairman of the curriculum committee."

Lynn Nutter, Farmington's assistant superintendent for instruction, added, "We hate to lose a man of Jim McGilincy's character. He's been very active in

every aspect of the school district. He's been an outstanding board member."

Prutow said she thought the vacant position would draw some candidates.

"People sometimes are reluctant to run if there's an incumbent," she said. Last June, with one seat open and the incumbent not running, six candidates ran.

At Tuesday's meeting, the board set June 11, a Monday, as the date for the annual school board election. The motion passed, 5-0. Trustee Richard Wallace was at home recuperating from back surgery, and Secretary Emma Makinen was vacationing in Florida.

The Farmington Board meets next at 8 p.m. on March 27, a Tuesday, at Warner Middle School, 30303 14 Mile.

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James McGilincy will not seek re-election

## Residents to review designs

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

Farmington Hills Councilwoman Jean Dudley has a better idea.

That's the consensus of the city council which voted unanimously Monday to ask residents, builders, architects and engineers to play devil's advocate and look over design plans for the proposed new police building.

"It's really all in the spirit of cooperation," Dudley told council. "It would be a short-term ad-hoc, and I mean that literally, group."

City officials, she said, could ask "experts" in Farmington Hills to meet with architects Luckenbach & Ziegelman of Birmingham on perhaps Saturday mornings and offer their perspective on the designs.

Having a sort of "kaffe klatch" type of gathering between Luckenbach & Ziegelman and other architects, builders and engineers could ensure that concerns previously raised by Councilman Joe Alkateeb about the existing plans "are covered," Dudley said.



An 8-76 Sikorsky helicopter rests at the Independence Green heliport while a business meeting takes place inside.

## The big birds come and go from Farmington's heliport

By Tom Baer  
staff writer

Real estate developer Tom Duke is a bird watcher. From his Farmington Hills office, he can watch them come and go from from a nearby nest.

But Duke's no ornithologist. The birds he sees are helicopters, and their nest is a raised circular plot of asphalt known as a heliport, owned by Duke's company and located behind a bank just off Grand River between Gill and Drake roads.

"I see them come and go all the time," said Duke, whose father, Tom Sr., built the heliport 10 years ago when he was an active pilot and used a heliport in his business.

"I'm not very good at giving brand names, but there are big Bells and Hughes, and there's a French make I don't know the name of."

LISTED AS the Independence Green Heliport in the state-published Michigan Airport Directory, the facility is licensed by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and meets all requirements, Duke said.

The circular "touch down area" is 50 feet in diameter and surrounded by a fence. The area is lighted for night landings and is yellow wind sock flaps from a pole.

The heliport is 850 feet above sea level, according to the Michigan Airport Directory.

Duke said he didn't know how much it cost to build and maintain the heliport.

"It's really not that expensive. It's a matter of grading the dirt level, putting in the pavement on top, putting up the fence, lights and wind sock. That's about all there is to it."

DUKE'S COMPANY handles the maintenance, which he called minimal.

"It's just a matter of ground care and making sure the wind sock doesn't get any holes blown in it."

The heliport is heavily used, although Duke couldn't give the number of take offs and landings.

"I'd be hard pressed to say, but we have a number of landings there. Many people who know who owns it will give us a call and ask permission to use it. Some pilots just see it from the air and drop in."

"We find more people know about it than we ever thought. It gets quite a bit of use. We call it a private heliport, but it's licensed by the FAA, so it's really open for public use. We do try to keep it on a permission basis."

Duke doesn't charge for the use of the heliport. "We're not professional aviators. We don't make a living by shuttling helicopters in and out."

MANY BUSINESSES own or rent helicopters to cut down on travel time, Duke said.

"When we did a lot of flying, it was quite useful. We could shuffle around Michigan and view different properties."

"We feel that in the future, when we get some tenants for some office buildings around it, it would be a real nice amenity."

Duke's company plans to build a complex of nine office buildings with the heliport in the center, he said.

"All would have access to it (the heliport) and free use of it. We're building for lease right now."

The heliport is the only such facility in Farmington Hills, Duke said.

"To the best of my knowledge, it's the only one for the surrounding area. The next closest would be down I-275 at Metcalf Airport (near Plymouth)."

## Missing money is probed

An unidentified Farmington Hills employee has been suspended indefinitely without pay following a preliminary investigation into the disappearance of approximately \$3,000 from the city finance department.

"The prosecutor undoubtedly will be issuing a warrant, and he will be naming names," said City Manager Lawrence Savage.

On March 1, finance department officials discovered that cash receipts for reimbursing police auxiliary services had been tampered with, Savage said.

The preliminary investigation shows that only one employee is involved, Savage said. The employee was suspended for failure to follow proper departmental cash receipt procedures.

Additional accounting tests and checks are being conducted to determine if the scope of the investigation needs to be expanded, Savage said.

The city's independent auditors and the state Treasurer's Local Audit Division were notified at the start of the investigation, he added.

## Council debate stalls height study

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

certain areas of Farmington Hills to bolster the city's tax base is still alive despite attempts to quiet debate.

Farmington Hills City Council voted

**oral quarrel**

**Who'd be your pick if you voted now?**

Election '84 is in full swing. Super Tuesday (five primaries and four caucuses on the same day) is a vivid memory, and the Michigan caucus is coming up on Saturday.

Let's rush things just a little and pretend that today is election day. Good citizens that you are, you'll all be making that trip to the polls to cast your ballots.

Today's Oral Quarrel questions are:

4-2 Monday to ask the city's planners to determine the cost of a study which would show the tax revenue that might be generated by high- as opposed to low-rise buildings.

The study of undeveloped land will be based on increased building heights of 10 and 20 feet in the industrial and office zones.

Mayor Charles Williams and Councilman Donn Wolf opposed the request.

This is the second request for a price quote. The initial proposal from planners Villcan-Leman & Associates was facing defeat by a tie vote of the council which would have ended future debate on the issue.

"Unfortunately, the proposal from Villcan-Leman is totally wrong," said Councilman Joe Alkateeb, referring to the planners' first proposal for a building height study.

"That is not what we're asking at all."

PRESENTED TO council this week, the planners' proposal called for a \$1,000-\$2,000 study to determine the revenue that would be generated from increasing the height in industrial and

large office districts in 10- and 20-foot increments.

Alkateeb said council asked the planners to estimate the cost of a study based on an additional tax revenue generated per acre of land taking into consideration the increased acreage necessary for parking to service a tall building, the increased traffic flow and increased city services to the building.

"The existing buildings are not the issue here," Alkateeb said.

Council sentiments were divided on the planners' proposed study, so Councilwoman Jan Dolan withdrew her motion because of Councilwoman Jodi Soronen's absence Monday. Soronen voted in favor of the original request for a cost estimate when council first considered the issue on Feb 27.

Withdrawing the motion to prevent a tie vote on the issue would guarantee future debate.

Instead of allowing the issue to be dropped, Alkateeb, who has consistently said "there will be no increase (in tax revenue) per acreage," made a motion requesting the second price quote for a more specific study based on revenue generated per acre.

DOLAN STARTED the debate Feb. 27 when she asked council to consider increasing building heights in certain areas to promote more intensive development for an increased tax base. She said she is concerned that the city may eventually lose its ability to attract industrial and commercial development.

"I would like us to know we can help maintain our low taxes by maintaining our tax base," Dolan said.

"We are not in a crisis state. (But) don't wait until we are 'Oh my God, at 10 mills' (city charter limit). Now is the time if we're going to do any forward thinking," Dolan warned.

"I don't see the added benefit of going up higher (in building heights)," Williams said. "I would probably vote against most anything I saw on that."

Williams also pointed to the defeat of advisory ballot questions in 1979. The ballots asked if senior citizens housing and industrial-research office buildings should extend beyond 60 feet in height.

Voicing her opposition to any proposed study on building heights, Councilwoman Jollicann Hovanecian, president of

**what's inside**

- Amusements . . . . . 11-15c
- Business . . . . . 7-10c
- Classified Ads Sections D-E
- Crackbarrel Debate . . . 14A
- Club Circuit . . . . . 4B
- Community Calendar . . 3B
- Crossword puzzle . . . . 7B
- Engagements . . . . . 3B
- Memory Lane . . . . . 3A
- Obituaries . . . . . 2A
- Recreation News . . . . 6A
- Sports . . . . . 1-5C
- Suburban Life . . . . . 1-10B
- Travel . . . . . 8B

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- Business . . . . . 7-10c
- Classified Ads Sections D-E
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- Club Circuit . . . . . 4B
- Community Calendar . . 3B
- Crossword puzzle . . . . 7B
- Engagements . . . . . 3B
- Memory Lane . . . . . 3A
- Obituaries . . . . . 2A
- Recreation News . . . . 6A
- Sports . . . . . 1-5C
- Suburban Life . . . . . 1-10B
- Travel . . . . . 8B

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**Spring Fashion**

Special Section

Please turn to Page 10