

Tax development plan stalls as state decision is awaited

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To get the answers, school officials have asked the state attorney general's staff for an opinion on TIFA. The letter to the state attorney general also boasts the support, by signature, of some state legislators such as Rep. Sandy Brotherton, R-Farmington, and Sen. Jack Faxon, D-Farmington.

School officials have yet to receive a reply to their request for an opinion.

City council last November adopted a resolution in order to create an authority and district.

FURTHER ACTION on the proposed TIFA plan was put on hold after school officials during a public hearing in December strongly opposed the financing scheme.

Normally, school districts receive the majority of tax revenue in a municipality. If TIFA goes into effect, the city will capture most if not all of the future tax revenue in the specified 12 mile area.

And that is exactly what bothers school district officials.

Under TIFA the present property value in the proposed 3 1/2-mile financing district would be frozen. The city would then have the option of taking all or part of any property tax revenue based on the assessment increase.

If the city chose to take 100 percent of the increased value, the local school district, community college and county wouldn't benefit. But the governmental units would continue to garner funds from the frozen property value assessment.

"It is worth a lot of money from this district," Schulman said.

The school district's request for an opinion from the state attorney general's office is in large part based on school officials' feelings that the city could be misusing TIFA.

"Are they misusing the act (TIFA)? That's the real question," Schulman said.

TIFA was designed to solve economic development problems a city faces when private development cannot occur unless public improvements are made, according to city officials.

School district officials have another point of view.

In their written opposition to the proposed use of TIFA, school officials in December indicated that the financing scheme was intended to "prevent urban deterioration, encourage neighborhood revitalization, and to eliminate the causes of decline in property value."

City officials contend that without improvements to 12 Mile, a decline in property value along the growing office strip will occur.

School officials disagree.

When city officials know exactly what effect improvements on I-696 will have on the 12 Mile corridor as well as the final cost estimates for improvements along both 12 Mile and I-696 (in the Farmington area), school officials will be provided with all the information, Costick said.

"Everything will be laid out very clearly," he said. "It's totally unfair for anyone to address it (TIFA) until the facts are known."

OTHER TIFAN an opportunity at

public hearings to voice their displeasure and opposition to TIFA, school officials have little power to prevent the city from implementing the proposed financing scheme.

Following a public hearing last December, however, city administrators indicated they plan to work out an agreement with other governmental units so they would not entirely be denied revenue from the increased value of property along the 12 Mile strip.

City officials have the option of taking less than 100 percent of the designated area's increased value, consequently allowing the other governmental units to benefit from improved values.

While state officials continue with their study, Farmington Hills officials are continuing to follow the city master plan for improving 12 Mile Road, Costick said. Those plans call for widening and improving the road between Farmington Road and 1,000 feet east of Orchard Lake Road.

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New library trustees are appointed

The Farmington Library Board now has a full complement of eight members.

Both city councils recently voted to expand the library board from four to eight members.

Robert Plummer was appointed to the Farmington Community Library Board of Trustees at the May 13 Farmington Hills City Council meeting.

Council members voted unanimously to approve Plummer's appointment to a two-year term, which will begin June 1 of this year and will end March 31, 1987.

Members of the Farmington City Council appointed two library trustees — James Lanigan and Dorothy Stoutjesdyk — at the May 6 meeting.

Lanigan is principal at Lakeshire Elementary School, and Stoutjesdyk is a librarian in the Redford Union School District. The Farmington appointees' terms will begin June 1.

Plummer's background in labor relations will be an asset to the Library Board, Mayor Jan Dolan told her fellow council members.

"There seemed to be, not a weakness, but an expertise that was not on the board that was needed," she said.

Plummer has been employed for 30 years by the Ford Motor Co. in a variety of industrial relations positions. He is also a past member of the executive

boards for the Quaker Valley Farms Association and for the Farmington Soccer Club.

Recent appointments to the Library Board followed decisions by the city councils in Farmington and Farmington Hills to expand the size of the board. Previously, each council had appointed two members; each will now appoint four, for a total of eight members.

Farmington Hills City Council members appointed Charlotte Yaverski to the Library Board at the April 8 meeting. Yaverski's term began May 1.

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