

Farmington Observer

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Hillspols bid for 4 seats

Five candidates, three incumbents, one newcomer and one who has made four bids for council, have filed for this fall's Farmington Hills City Council election.

When they go to the polls on Nov. 5, Farmington Hills voters will elect four council members.

Those five candidates are:

- Jan Dolan, 30324 Wicklow Road. Dolan currently serves as mayor of Farmington Hills. She is active in the local community in aiding senior citizens.
- Ben Marks, 25187 Briarwyke Drive. Marks is a current city council member. He has served on the city's planning commission and is a developer.
- JoAnn Soronen, 35546 Springvale. Soronen is a current city council member and also the executive director of the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce.
- Jonathan Grant, 31863 Kingswood Square. Grant has been active for the



Exhausted

This exhausted festival-goer found a welcome more highlights of the annual festival turn to shoulder to rest on during the weeklong Farmington/Farmington Hills Founder's Festival. For

City offers minor home repair funds

By Jean Adamczak staff writer

Low- to moderate-income families and senior citizens in Farmington will get a financial hand in maintaining their homes, thanks to a new minor-home repair program.

Farmington City Council members unanimously approved the eligibility criteria and implementation procedures for the program on July 15.

The city will receive about \$7,000 for the minor home repair program which is part of the 1985-88 Community Development Block Grant Program, said Robert Deadman, Farmington city manager.

"The purpose of the program is to maintain an acceptable housing stock in the community, to enable people to live independently as long as possible and to improve living conditions for the less fortunate," Deadman said.

Funding for the CDBG program originates at the federal level and is distributed through individual counties. This is the first time Farmington has requested funds for a minor home repair program, Deadman said.

"This money is not intended for major repairs, but for minor repairs and emergency repairs," Deadman stressed, "and is only available to eligible low to moderate income families and senior citizens."

Funds from the program could be used in such instances as to repair a leaky roof, broken furnace, failed plumbing unit or to remove a deteriorated building such as a shed or garage, Deadman said.

"The funds are not intended for minor chores like snow removal or grass and weed cutting," Deadman said.

MINOR HOME REPAIR monies can also be used to fix housing code violations, Deadman added.

The program will run in Farmington as long as funds are available, said Deadman, adding that he is pleased the county approved the \$7,000 amount Farmington requested.

Hills golf club makes room for new industrial park

By Joanne Maliszewski staff writer

After years of talk, plans are being made to move the Farmington Hills Country Club.

The private country club and 133-acre golf course, which has been on the south side of 12 Mile and Haggerty roads since 1935, will move to the north side of the intersection. The move will make way for what is expected to be the city's largest contiguous office and industrial research park.

"It's a unique land swap," said Ronald Hughes, who is working on the project with developers Robert Katzman of Abbey Homes and Peter Burton of Burton Developers. "We're joint venturing all the aspects (of the project)."

The estimated \$350 million project includes the construction of a new golf course and club house across the street, construction of homes and condominiums around the new course and the development of an office and industrial research park where the existing country club sits.

The office zone will stretch for the first 400 feet from the south side of 12 Mile, said Hal Rowe, Farmington Hills zoning supervisor.

The office area will serve as a buffer zone between the residential section on the north side of the thoroughfare and the industrial research area (situated behind the office zone) that will dominate the 133 acres of land on the south, Rowe said.

"We did not want industrial, if you will, abutting 12 Mile with residential across the street," he said.

The new development on the north and south sides of the intersection will increase the city's tax base. And the city is in great need of an industrial park of the size planned, Hughes said.

Several companies in the industrial parks in Farmington Hills are moving their operations to nearby cities because they need more space than is available in the city.

"This parcel will attract industry that has been avoiding Farmington Hills," Hughes said.

The parcels in the proposed industrial research park are all contiguous, he added. "We have the flexibility to do planned development."

The idea of moving the country club north across the street was originally Bill Bowman's of Thompson-Brown Realtors in Farmington Hills, Hughes said. But when Bowman developed the idea about three years ago, the economic timing just wasn't right, he said.

Then about six months ago, Bowman approached Hughes and his associates with the idea.

Charles Bartlett, Farmington Hills Country Club manager, also pointed to the city's zoning ordinances as a good reason for moving the golf course across the street.

Under the city's ordinances, industrial research and office is prohibited on the north side of 12 Mile near the Haggerty intersection. But a golf course is allowed in that residential zone.

A swap with the country club was necessary in order for the developers to have a piece of land in Farmington Hills large enough for an industrial research park, Bartlett said.

"If they built a new golf course and club house to our specifications, we would swap," Bartlett added.

This week the Farmington Hills City Council took the first steps in making the proposed project a reality.

"The city council gave their blessings to the rezoning requirements that are necessary," Rowe said.

The property where the golf course now sits has been rezoned to accommodate a new office and industrial research park. The property on the north side of the intersection has been rezoned as planned residential development (PRD) to accommodate the golf course and residential area.

The council allowed the developers to count the new golf course toward fulfilling the open space requirements



Plans are being made to move the Farmington Hills Country Club across the street from its existing site on the south side of 12 Mile and Haggerty roads. The move will make room for what's expected to be the largest industrial research park in Farmington Hills.

in the PRD zone, Hughes said.

"We're a long way from home on this," Rowe said.

Developers have yet to present a site plan of the proposed project, he said. Two public hearings before the planning commission and city council will follow before building permits are issued.

But there's more to the project than making room for more office and industrial research.

On the 270 acres on the north side of the 12 Mile and Haggerty roads will sit a new golf course and country club surrounded by houses and condominiums, Hughes said.

About 700 condominiums and 187 single-family homes are planned, Hughes said.

The new golf course is expected to be about 170 acres compared to the approximately 133-acre existing course, Bartlett said. That means the yardage of each of the 18 holes can be increased.

Aesthetically the new course is expected to be quite an improvement over the existing, somewhat flat course, Hughes said.

"It's gorgeous," Hughes said of the golf club's new location. "We will maximize the lay of the land."

The developers, Bartlett said, will

also build a new club house at a minimum of 24,000 square feet. A new swimming pool and tennis courts also will be constructed.

The proposed single-family homes and condominiums will surround the course, creating a "self-contained community in that area," Hughes said.

There's a big demand for the self-contained community concept, Hughes said.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE proposed project will take place in three stages, Hughes said.

The first on the north side of 12 Mile Road, east of Haggerty Road, will begin about a year from now with the planning of the residential areas and golf club.

The second phase will include the construction of the golf course and club house.

Finally, when the new course is in place, the development of the south side of the intersection, where the country club now sits, can take place, Hughes said.

"The south side we can't start until the golf course is moved," Hughes said. The final phase won't get off the ground for a minimum of two years, he said.

Church fire listed as suspicious

By Julie Brown staff writer

Fire struck early Saturday morning at the Seventh-day Adventist Church, 29931 W. 10 Mile Road in Farmington Hills.

The origin of the fire is considered suspicious.

"It looks like just malicious vandalism," said Lt. Tom Shurtliff of the Farmington Hills Fire Department. There are no suspects, he said.

Firefighters received the call at approximately 2:30 a.m. Saturday.

"We were called to a possible building fire at that scene," Shurtliff said. "The gas meter was looking when we got there. The flames from that were contacting the building. The firemen had to shut the gas off before they could put out the fire."

The building was unoccupied at the time of the fire. One firefighter was treated and released at Botsford General Hospital in Farmington Hills for an eye irritation.

Those with information on the fire are being asked to contact the Fire Department at 583-0740.

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...for those who expect more

IN THE OBSERVER & HERCULES THURSDAY EDITIONS

Voters to decide charter changes

Farmington Hills City Council has approved the ballot wording for several proposed amendments to the City Charter.

A public hearing on the proposed amendments was held June 24. They will appear on the ballot for the general city election on Nov. 5.

"We've decided to let the voters decide on these," Farmington Hills Mayor Jan Dolan said Tuesday. "I'm sure there will be more discussion closer to that time."

The proposed amendments cover several areas, including:

- Having newly elected City Council members take office at the first regularly scheduled meeting of the council, rather than on Jan. 1 following the election.
- Filling council vacancies at the next odd year general election, rather than at the next November general election.
- Eliminating the primary election for nomination of council candidates.