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Little Caesars wins school property

District reaps \$3.5 million on sale

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Little Caesars' offer of \$3.5 million beat out three other area developers for the purchase of almost 39 acres on the corner of 12 Mile and Drake roads owned by the Farmington School District.

On recommendation of the district's finance committee, school board members Tuesday voted 6-1 to sell the property to the Farmington Hills-based Little Caesars pizza company for approx-

imately \$2,000,000 an acre. Owner Mike Hill's bid was the highest of four purchase offers. Trustee James Abernethy opposed the sale to Little Caesars.

Proposals for large office parks were rejected from three other area developers including Jay Eldridge of the Samuelson Development Co., Mel

Rosenhaus for Farmington Partners and Bob Rosen. The price and terms of their offers weren't disclosed.

The school district will reap about \$7 times as much as they bought the property for at \$94,000 in 1985.

CONSTRUCTION of the proposed Little Caesars headquarters on the

Farmington Hills site could begin as soon as the property is rezoned from its current residential use, site plans are approved and building permits are issued, said Charles Jones, corporate senior vice president.

But specific plans depend on whether Farmington Hills officials would agree to rezone the land from its existing res-

idential use. The property sits on the edge of the city's rapidly expanding commercial corridor near I-696.

Little Caesars officials have requested financing for the proposed project through the Farmington Hills Economic Development Corp. No decision has been made.

In opposing the sale to the pizza com-

pany, Abernethy said he was impressed with a proposal from the Samuelson Co. for an office park that would combine the school property with 45 acres it owns just west of the school site. An estimated one million square feet of office space was planned.

"I was impressed with the potential of attracting a larger development which might have brought immediate and long-term benefits to the community," Abernethy said. "The two offers

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ACLU looks at party ordinance

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has taken notice of Farmington Hills' relatively new Party Ordinance prohibiting the serving of liquor to minors in private residences.

"A new Farmington Hills ordinance raises several civil liberties issues," according to a newsletter from the ACLU's Oakland County branch in Birmingham.

"It is now criminal for parents to fail to take reasonable steps to prevent teen-agers from consuming alcohol or drugs in their home," the newsletter said. "An investigation towards challenging this ordinance must be performed."

Yet officials in the county branch office have not yet discussed the city's ordinance or taken a position on it, said Howard Simon, director of the Michigan ACLU.

"I CHECKED with them. They don't plan on discussing it again until their next meeting (in September)," Simon said. "There isn't a position the organization has taken on it yet."

"They won't be in a position to discuss it until after their next meeting," he said.

Although city officials adopted the ordinance in May, it wasn't until last week and again this week that police cited individuals for violation of the new ordinance.

Police cited Karen Powtress, 18, of 21105 Westfarm Lane, Farmington Hills, for allowing alcohol to be consumed by minors during a party last Saturday, said Chief William Dwyer.

"We received a call there was a fight in that particular location," Dwyer said. "Several people were injured."

ALTHOUGH NO one was arrested in connection with the fight Dwyer said, "I would speculate and assume we would have some felonious assault complaints coming down on some individuals."

Powtress is scheduled to appear Monday in Farmington's 47th District Court on the ordinance violation, Dwyer said.

The week before, two Farmington Hills brothers, ages 17 and 18, were also cited for "operating a house with minors and alcoholic beverages" in connection with a July 28 incident.

In both incidents, the parents of the young people were not cited for violating the ordinance even though the parties were on their property. Under the ordinance a 17-year-old is considered an adult.

Had the parents been at home and had knowledge of the parties they could have been cited, Dwyer said. But in both cases, the parents were out of town and were unaware of the parties taking place at their homes.

Conviction under the ordinance includes up to \$500 fine or imprisonment in the county jail for up to 30 days for the first violation. For subsequent violations, the penalty can be a fine of up to \$500 and/or imprisonment for up to 90 days.

THE ORDINANCE was adopted by the Hills council after Farmington Families in Action (FFA) lobbied for its passage as the high school prom and graduation season was drawing near.

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Homesick camper

It's only down the block, but Lindsay Schuster (right) was feeling a little blue about being away from home — even for two hours. She's one of the children who took part in a day camp in Farmington Hills' Canterbury Commons subdi-

vision, organized by two 10-year-olds, Jennifer Hextall (left) and Karen Mulbarger. For more pictures and the story of their 1½-week enterprise, please turn to Page 3.

High tech firm grows

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Just three years after its arrival in Farmington Hills the high-tech West German Robert Bosch Corp. is deepening its roots in the city with an estimated \$2.5-million expansion.

The \$5.5-billion worldwide manufacturer of fuel-injection and electrical systems for the automotive industry will add 15,000 square feet of laboratory space to its facility. Completion is expected to be sometime in October, according to Ray Elsbrenner, Bosch spokesman.

When completed, the Bosch Corp. will have approximately 51,000 square feet of space on a 40-acre site off I-96 between Halsted and Haggerty roads. "We believe this expansion will enable us to work more closely with U.S. auto manufacturers at a much earlier point in the development stage and continue right through to the delivery of parts," said Bosch President Leo Weber.

Bosch officials moved their sales, engineering and administrative groups from Southfield to the Hills in 1982.

"IT WAS quite a coup to get them here," said Hal Rowe, Farmington Hills zoning supervisor. "They add prestige to our industrial park."

Although Bosch Corp. is not in the top 15 commercial/industrial taxpayers in Farmington Hills, the city received almost \$58,000 in taxes this year from the international company, according to city officials.

The expansion of the Farmington Hills facility was no surprise to city officials who were aware of the company's plans to eventually expand as the auto industry regained its strength following an economic recession.

"They are expanding to the west of their current building. That was in their master plan," Rowe said.

The existing Bosch facility was financed in 1982 with the help of \$7 million through the city's Economic Development Corporation, said City Manager William Costick.

WHEN BOSCH officials were considered for the Hills in 1982.
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Harger House: Preserving history is hard work

By Lisa Simon
staff writer

The Harger House reigns on a half-acre lot, home to a modest public library and a dedicated public space.

As the construction from large, heavy square granite a previous era, a modern suburban population is searching for a place to call home. The Harger House is a place to call home.

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a viable solution that will benefit the community. The hope is that negotiations will progress into democratic decisions.

THE HOUSE, which sits on a small suburban open space on a wooded hill, is of particular concern to residents of the surrounding Farmington Hills East Club subdivision (formerly East Club Estates).

The subdivision's original, restrictive covenants were promulgated about three decades ago, and have been amended several times. The latest amendment, passed in 1982, states that the Harger House is a place to call home.

Standard Federal Savings of Troy, Standard Federal holds title to the land.

The bank is committed to coming up with an open-space plan, said Durwood Allen, Standard Federal's senior vice president, which probably will exclude the fate of the house proper.

BUT THEN IT'S over and out. The open-space plan will be the bank's last involvement with the property, which is inherited by default. The land was recently sold to Trinity Land Co., a development corporation.

"We intend to develop the site into a park and picnic area, and shape the structure area as a little open space on the way," Allen said. "Proposals for the open space are being developed for consideration by the homeowners."

Allen would not place a monetary value on the house. "It's wide open," he said.

"We don't want to give anything away," Ray Bosjolin, resident representative said.

Although the subdivision association's two homes have been sold, and Kevin Cook, the Harger House's resident and stable caretaker, has moved out, the open space is to be developed according to the wishes of the residents, Bosjolin explained.

THE BANK (Standard Federal Savings) has never wanted to put any money into it," Bosjolin said.

"The residents are concerned about the house being lost to the city. They have to approve any plan that the city

analysis

wanted the house torn down immediately, while two were interested in working with the historic district commission to save and restore it, Bosjolin said.

Bosjolin is one of the two interested in pursuing the matter further. "A lot of residents are going back and forth," he said. "The house is OK, but we don't want to give the property away and have no control over it."

"Finally, we can work something out. There are some who want the city to be involved," said William Costick, Farmington Hills city manager. "We have to approve any plan that the city

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