

Hills helps subdivision acquire parkland

By Joanne Mallazewski
staff writer

For the first time in its 12-year history, Farmington Hills will help a subdivision buy a park for subdivision use.

Farmington Hills City Council voted 7-0 Monday to establish a special assessment district to enable the Meadowbrook Hills and Woods Homeowners Association to buy 7.9 acres — used as a neighborhood park for the past 17 years — for \$70,000 from the Farmington Public Schools.

The association decided to buy the site, no longer needed by the schools

because enrollments are declining, to insure it remains a park.

The acreage is one of the few undeveloped parcels in the subdivision — east of I-75, between Eight and Nine Mile roads — or in the surrounding area.

Council also scheduled a hearing for 7:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 9, in council chambers to inform subdivision residents of proposed assessments.

"The city is not going to have an interest in this land at all," City Attorney Paul Bibace said.

The city will assist the subdivision with financing the purchase (through a

special assessment district). City involvement does not include ownership or payment.

ALTHOUGH SHE has consistently opposed the city's involvement with the project, Councilwoman Joan Dudley supported council's action. But she made it clear she still has concern, particularly about setting a precedent for other neighborhoods.

"I just feel that I would like to make some comments because I have been consistently voting no on this. All I've got is a gut feeling, not about what you (subdivision residents) are doing, but

about what we are considering," Dudley said.

The Meadowbrook Hills and Woods Homeowners Association earlier this year hammered out an agreement with Farmington Public Schools to buy the property on a 7-year land contract. The lot — proposed as a future school site — is one of many that school officials have decided to sell because of declining student enrollment.

Creation of an assessment district was sought because the subdivision association currently does not have authority to levy and collect annual assessments or mandatory dues for the

park's purchase, said Ronald Paler, chairman of the association's park development committee.

UNDER THE special assessment district, owners of the subdivision's 834 lots will be assessed \$36 a year for seven years — raising about \$34,000 — to cover the purchase price, maintenance and continuance of the park's \$300,000 liability insurance. Total cost for each lot totals \$252 over the seven years.

"This amounts to 10 cents a day," Paler said.

The association also has entered into an agreement with the city, holding

Farmington Hills blameless in any legal actions concerning the property. The agreement also holds the association responsible for providing park insurance and maintenance.

As required for a proposed special assessment district, residents presented council with a petition boasting purchase support from 79 percent of the subdivision — or 264 residents.

"We are asking you to join the 80 percent or so who have signed our petition and support us," Paler told council. "We hope you will assist us in getting this done."

Please turn to Page 16

Discrimination charges denied

The manager of a Farmington Hills nightclub denies race and nationality discrimination charges brought by the Michigan attorney general's Department of Civil Rights.

The charges were called "obviously, totally false," by Kim McNamara, manager for the past eight months of Mr. Laff's Nightclub on Orchard Lake Road.

There was correspondence between the persons bringing the charges and nightclub management, she said, but declined further comment.

The charges were filed Nov. 5 following investigation of two 1983-84 complaints by the department of civil rights.

One complaint, alleging race discrimination, was made by a white woman who said she was not allowed to enter the club with a black companion. The second complaint was filed by two men of Arab descent who allege they were denied admittance to the nightclub because of their nationality.

A two-day public hearing before the Michigan Civil Rights Commission in Detroit has been set for Feb. 5-6 to air the matter.

The commission has the authority to order "cease and desist" action, impose fines and penalties. The commission's ruling may be appealed to a state court within 30 days by either party.

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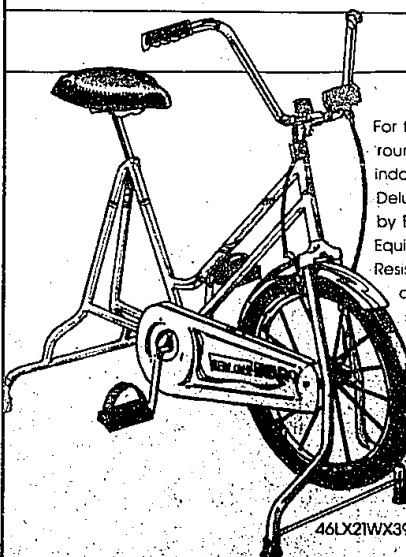
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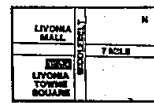
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