

Parks levy passes by a slim margin

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THE SPECIAL millage's passage was greeted with delight by city officials and the Farmington Hills Parks and Recreation Commission.

"I'm tickled to death. One challenge leads to another. Now the challenge is, 'let's deliver the product,'" parks and recreation commission chairman Dennis Fitzgerald said.

Equally happy with the election's results, Costick said, "The parks and recreation commission did a year's job in trying to coordinate this whole effort. Naturally, everybody who has been involved with the master planning effort for the parks... is delighted."

Yet, low turnout at the polls and the slim support voters offered for parks and recreation surprised Costick. Unaware of any organized opposition, city officials expected a greater turnout and greater margin of victory — especially with what appeared to be strong support for youth sports, Costick said.

Of the city's 40,877 registered voters, only 5.2 percent or 2,108 voters cast ballots in Tuesday's special election. Of the 2,108 votes cast, 949 were absentee, according to unofficial tallies.

Fitzgerald said he felt that the millage's passage by 58.4 percent of those voting was "close to the numbers forecast by the (December) survey" results included in the master parks and recreation plan.

CALLING THE millage's passage a "significant step" that will "add desirability to the community," Costick said, that the city's duty is to immediately begin organizing priority projects.

"We will meet with the parks and recreation commission and talk about getting projects lined up and establish an orderly schedule of what has to take place," Costick said.

Concentrated efforts will be immediately directed toward two major priorities — a youth athletic park and Heritage Park.

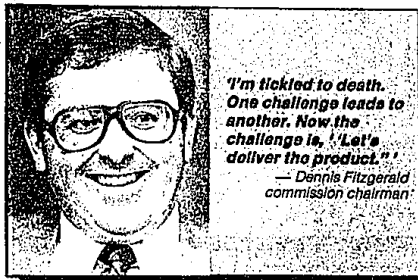
This week, soil borings will be started on the site of the city's future 15-acre sports park on the northwest corner of 13 Mile and Farmington roads. The park's final plan will be presented to residents in neighborhoods close to the planned park. Survey work will begin this week on a road system and entrance for the 212-acre Heritage Park, west of Farmington Road, between 10 and 11 Mile, Costick said.

Costick said he is hoping the sports park can be ready for use by spring 1987. He also has his eye on starting some of the planned trails and parking Heritage Park before this winter.

The parks and recreation commission, Fitzgerald said, will serve as a watchdog, meeting regularly to ensure that work on improvements is completed in a timely fashion.

Nine projects that have been targeted as priorities to be financed with the more than \$3 million in revenue from the special levy are part of a total \$7 million list of improvements included in the city's new master parks and recreation plan.

THE MASTER parks and recre-



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— Dennis Fitzgerald
parks and recreation commission chairman

ation plan offers a comprehensive review of the area's existing recreation services and facilities, as well as an assessment of recreational opportunities and deficiencies. The list of desired improvements completes the plan.

A significant portion of the overall plan is the master land use plan for Heritage Park. It provides a guideline to follow in creating a park that would offer passive and semi-passive recreation for residents, in-

cluding children and the elderly.

Although the five-year action plan includes 21 suggested parks and recreation improvements, the special 0.5-mill levy is expected to finance the top nine priority items.

Improvements that are expected to be accomplished with the five-year period with revenue generated from the special millage include:

• Development of a 15-acre youth athletic park on the northwest corner of 13 Mile and Farmington

roads. The unlighted park would include three soccer fields, two softball/baseball fields, fitness trail, picnic area and parking. Estimated cost, \$310,000.

• Upgrading 16 Farmington Public Schools-owned athletic fields. The fields would be upgraded to standards required for play by Little League and other youth athletic organizations. It's still undetermined which fields would be upgraded. Estimated cost, \$80,000.

• Construction of a storage building for use by youth athletic organizations. The proposed building's site is still undetermined but a centrally located spot is desired. The building would include three bays to provide enough storage for equipments. Estimated cost, \$10,000.

• Development of an entrance, main road, gate, signs and landscaping for Heritage Park. Estimated cost, \$274,700.

• Development of nature, hiking, cross country ski trails and sledding hills in Heritage Park. Estimated cost, \$137,000.

• Development of picnic areas and shelters, and playgrounds in Heritage Park. Estimated cost, \$223,900.

• Development of native species arboretum in Heritage Park for an

estimated \$28,800.

• Renovation of Spicer estate house. Estimated cost, \$396,100. The parks and recreation commission is expected to complete a study determining whether the house should be included in the city's historic district.

• Construction of visitor center in Heritage Park. The center would include meeting rooms, office,

kitchenette, storage, restrooms, small concession and auditorium. Estimated cost, \$1.5 million.

Throughout the five-year period, projects will be reviewed annually with the budget subject to review by the city council and planning commission, Costick said.

Special election precinct-by-precinct breakdown: Page 3A.



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Manager's pay boosted

A \$3,000 per year raise was approved June 16 for Farmington City Manager Robert Deadman by unanimous vote of the city council.

The new salary was included in the recently approved budget. Deadman's annual salary until Jan. 1, 1987, will be \$55,745, when

it will be raised to \$58,745. He retains a city-owned vehicle, budgeted at \$8,500.

The city also will continue to contribute \$5,000 annually for Deadman to the Deferred Compensation Program, managed by the International City Manager's Asso-

ciation Retirement Corp. The annuity benefit was added to Deadman's contract several years ago, according to Mayor William Harris.

The changes were discussed during council budget sessions prior to the June budget adoption.

Empty mailboxes before vacations

An overflowing mailbox is, at best, a way to damage or destroy mail and, at worst, an invitation to burglars, Farmington Postmaster Kenneth Harris warned residents.

"Before you pack up and leave for vacation, contact us and ask us to hold your mail," Harris said, "or arrange with us to have your mail forwarded for a specified time, then held again while you're en route

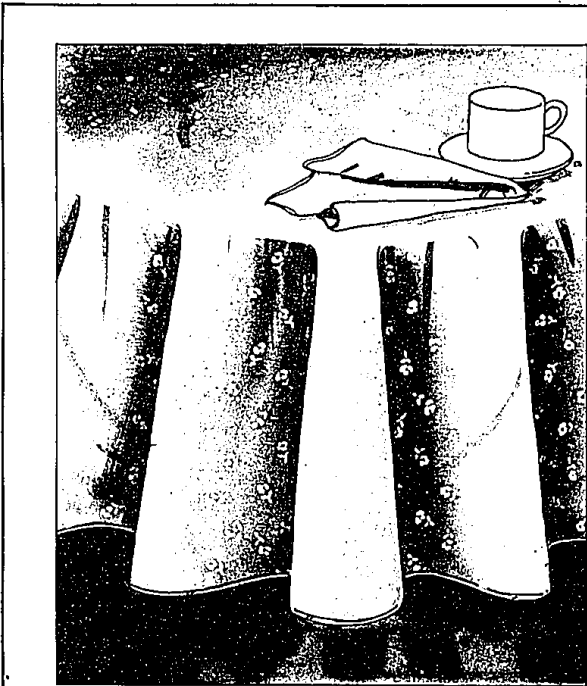
home."

Travelers, he said, can arrange for first-class mail to follow them for up to 18 months, 60 days for second-class publications and 12 months for third- and fourth-class items. Except for fourth-class parcel, there is no charge for forwarding.

The postmaster said such arrangement can be accomplished by filling out a Change of Address Order.

Form 3575, which includes beginning and ending dates. The form is available at the post office.

The alternative may be letting mail overflow from a receptacle, possibly to be damaged by vandals, animals or weather conditions, or to be a clear signal that one is at home.



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