

# 'Dangerous building' owner gets reprieve

**By Casey Hane**  
Staff writer

Roy Miller was given another reprieve — this time for 90 days.

The Birmingham resident is spending money on his 45-year-old industrial building at 33300 Thomas in Farmington, according to officials, but doesn't yet have a comprehensive plan of how he will fix it.

The building was declared dangerous by the city and a public hearing began last month, at which time the city council gave Miller 30 days to clean up 54 code violations in the building.

They also closed the west section of the building because of structural problems with the wall and roof, which Miller hopes to have repaired by Feb. 1.

Miller appeared Monday, without his attorney Robert Sharbaugh, to give an update on building conditions. Electrical and mechanical work is completed and is ready for final city inspection, he said.

Council members warned him

Monday as the public hearing concluded that they expected action, progress and a total plan for the building before the expiration of the 90-day period.

AN ENGINEERING plan for the west side structural wall was delivered to city hall Monday afternoon — not in time for city engineers to evaluate it and make a decision before the hearing.

"We keep hearing about all these things that are going to be done . . . and we haven't really seen anything," Councilwoman Shirley Richardson said. Councilman Arnold Campbell called the tentative plans "very vague."

And Mayor William Hartsock said "At the end of 90 days, there has to be significant construction or plans. The clock is running. I think it's clear to everyone, and I hope to Mr. Miller."

Miller's building was inspected Sept. 8 by the city fire marshal, building inspectors a structural engineer, plumbing inspector, electrical

Inspector and Director of Public Services Earl Billing. A certified letter was sent to Miller Sept. 12, detailing the needed followup work from the inspection.

The group cited 20 structural, three mechanical, five plumbing, 22 electrical and four fire violations throughout the building.

Although some of the work is completed, Hartsock called for a plan detailing how the remainder of the work would be done.

"Instead of a piecemeal approach, he needs a comprehensive timetable. Until we do that, it's going to be difficult to meet and hear . . . reports," he said.

MILLER TOLD the council he is working as quickly as possible, and that he is having trouble getting the proper professionals to do the work. "You must understand," he said, "I've had a really rough time getting as much done as I have. It's difficult to set a timetable."

"You had six months to start thinking about it," Campbell told Miller.

The city warned Miller last May that the violations were apparent and began proceedings for the November public hearing.

"There's a lot of progress being made here," City Manager Robert Deadman told the council, suggesting the 90-day extension for Miller. "You've still got the big stick — you can shut the building down" if he doesn't comply.

Richardson said "90 days is a long period of time." She suggested regular updates on the building repairs, which Deadman said he would provide.

Financing to pay for needed repairs and other possible improvements will take Miller at least 90 days to coordinate, Deadman and administrative assistant Robert Schultz added. As part of the financial package, Miller may apply for the city's first loan through the Commercial Assistance Program — a subsidized loan program coordinated

through Oakland County.

Farmington has enough CAP money to subsidize more than \$230,000 in low-interest loans for local businesses.

"The important thing is that we continue to move making these improvements to insure things are moving ahead," Hartsock added.

The council is expected to formally discuss the Thomas Street building again during a regular meeting March 21.

## Hills buys 5 new cars


Farmington Hills will buy 20 new cars at a cost of \$223,430 as part of Oakland County's cooperative purchasing program.

"This joint project has reduced automobile acquisition cost not only because of the county's leverage and purchasing power, but also because of the greater economies of scale achieved from this consortium of several buyers acting in concert as a single buyer," City Manager William Costick said.

The city council has authorized the city manager to issue the following purchase orders:

- Dick Morris Chevrolet of Walled Lake — 11 Chevrolet Caprice police patrol cars, \$128,189.
- Art Moran Pontiac of Southfield — four unmarked police cars, one finance department car, one fire department car, \$60,943.
- Mike Savole Chevrolet of Troy — two unmarked police cars, one fire department van, \$33,298.

"Although the city will order only 20 units, the project represents an aggregate purchase of over 700 units," Costick said. "The average savings per unit is substantial, being several hundred dollars less per unit than if the city alone had taken bids."



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3rd Annual

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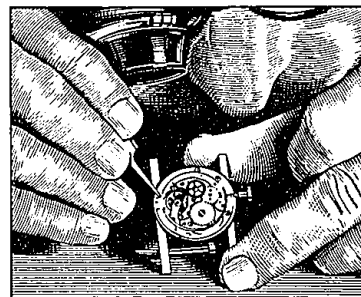
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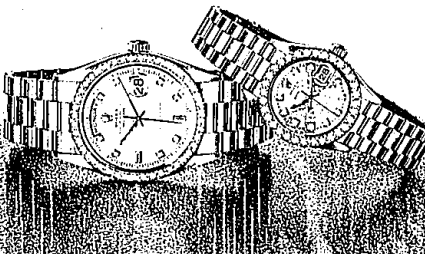
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