

Day care dilemma

Parents ask schools for help transporting kids

By Casey Hans
staff writer

It's a modern day care dilemma. And a group of Farmington Hills parents are asking for a little help from their local school district, which is trying to come up with a solution.

As more and more families face the problem of shuttling children between home, day care centers and schools, situations like those facing parent Don Volpini are likely to occur.

"We need this board's help — there's no other alternative for us," said Volpini, who spoke recently at a Farmington school board meeting. He represented a group of parents concerned because the bus stop for Wood Creek Elementary had been removed from in front of the Children's World day care center at 13 Mile and Halsted.

For the past five years, Volpini said, parents have been able to drop their children off in the morning, where they could be cared for until a

"We need this board's help — there's no other alternative for us," said Don Volpini. He represented a group of parents concerned because a bus stop for Wood Creek Elementary had been removed from in front of the Children's World day care center at 13 Mile and Halsted.

school bus arrived to pick them up.

THAT BUS stop was discontinued this year because school officials said the bus stop was not in the Wood Creek attendance area, where the children attend school, and the added bus run has proved costly for the district. "That was the basic issue," said Beverly Hausman, who coordinates the district's transportation

program.

Trying to get a school crossing guard to help the situation through the city of Farmington Hills was not really the issue, school officials said. Even if it had been, Hills police did not find the parents' request met necessary standards for putting a guard there. "It didn't meet any of the criteria," explained Officer John Crump of the Hills Traffic Bureau,

who trains the guards.

The school district and parents are working together to help the situation for the eight families and 10 children affected by the change. Hausman said the district was already working with the parents before the issue came before the board. Hausman said the district is attempting to find a safe place where children can be picked up and let off after school nearby. "That would be ideal," she said.

"We will not be adding a route," she added. "We'd have to add distance, which adds time and costs more money. It's not fair to burden other taxpayers."

Meanwhile, Farmington school trustees say they must balance safety issues against these new problems facing parents who use day care facilities. "This is a very important issue we're dealing with — the safety of children," trustee James Abernethy told Volpini. "Our staff is trying to work something out with you. We must be very, very conscious of these issues."

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(F13A)

Firms, DDA back downtown plans

By Casey Hans
staff writer

A two-year promotional package for downtown Farmington is taking shape, as local leaders look toward continuing the image enhancement of the city's business area.

Four major downtown landlords and the Downtown Development Authority have given their financial backing to the program, which is expected to cost \$40,000 per year and offer several promotions, a regular newsletter and on-going publicity about Farmington throughout the metro Detroit area.

The landlord support is key, said DDA executive director Wendy Strip Sittman. "That's really important, because we've never attempted a full-fledged promotional program," she said. "I'm really glad we have their support."

Equitable Management Group, which owns the Downtown Farmington center, Center Holding Co. which owns the shopping center housing chain stores; Farmington Holding Co. which owns the Village Mall and Nelson-Ross Properties which owns Village Commons center will all participate.

Another 40 landlords, merchants and other businesses recently attended an informational session about the program to learn how it might impact the area.

FOUR PROMOTIONS, originally slated to start this month, will be planned for September, December, and March and May of next year to ensure there is no major construction work downtown to interfere.

The newsletter will begin soon, as public relations consultant's Hermanoff & Assoc. of Farmington Hills continue planning the upcoming events. In addition to the annual Founders Festival, sponsored by the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce, this will give the downtown area five major promotions.

For 1989-90, these will include:

- Downtown Farmington Streetside Life will be held in September, where one-person acts, including a band, an impersonator and others will come together to entertain and draw people downtown. Pending approval of the city council, the DDA is proposing to hold this event at the new Gazebo/Pergola, to be built on Grand River near Village Commons.

- Downtown Farmington's Christmas Walk, started two years ago, will be expanded to be a large event and is planned for early December.

- Downtown Days, to promote the concept of people coming downtown, are scheduled for next March.

- Launch of a downtown walking course is planned for next May. Originally planned for this month, DDA officials were concerned that sidewalk construction and improvements might not be done in time.

Tying into the promotional effort is a reorganization of the city's Downtown Farmington Business Association. A DFB meeting is scheduled for 8:30 a.m. Wednesday, June 21, at the downtown library, where new officers are expected to be elected.

10 reappointed to city panels; spots open

Ten Farmington-area residents have been reappointed to serve on various boards and commissions for the city, while the city has announced openings on several boards.

Farmington Planning Commission.

- John Washburn was reappointed for a three-year term on the Farmington Board of Zoning Appeals.

- Jacqueline Steuer and Joan Lorenz were reappointed to the city's Beautification Committee for

two-year terms.

- Nellie Young and Geraldine Dielenhelm were reappointed to three-year terms on the Farmington Area Commission on Aging.

- William Ingalls will serve another three-year term on the Farmington Building Authority.
- Ellen Wallis was reappointed

to serve a three-year term on the Farmington Area Arts Commission.

There are currently openings on the city's Board of Zoning Appeals and the Beautification Committee.

The city council is expected to complete appointments to the city's new Traffic and Safety Board in July, following interviews in June.

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