

# At odds

## Petition misrepresentative: Sowerby

By Susan Buck  
staff writer

A recently submitted petition in favor of a sidewalk along Farmington Road, between 12 and 13 Mile, is in dispute.

The city will install a sidewalk along the mile-long stretch of Farmington Road next spring. The tentative route is on the east side to Bayberry, then on the west side to 13 Mile.

Councilman Paul Sowerby, acting on a complaint by Charles Kouba, a Farmington Road resident, said the petition was misrepresentative of residents living nearby.



Paul Sowerby  
city councilman

Kouba is doubly affected because a traffic light also is slated for installation at Bayberry/Hearthstone, near his house.

The petition did not represent 100 residents, as the city manager cited at a Sept. 18 council meeting, but only 68. Further, only about 35 of the petitioners live in the surrounding area, Sowerby said.

Sowerby and councilwoman Jean Fox opposed the sidewalk when it came to a vote Sept. 18. "Of those 68 signatures, only 17 reside in the subdivisions that abut Farmington Road, between 12 and 13 Mile," Sowerby said at Tuesday night's city council meeting.

"The issue is not necessarily sidewalks, although we have a petition with 17 signatures in an area where there are 6,700 residents that allegedly wanted these sidewalks. That's hardly representative of those residents' interest."

"More importantly, the reason why I want to bring this up is that once again, it's an example where this council is being asked to make decisions based on inaccurate, incomplete or in fact misrepresentative information."

ANY COUNCIL member could have asked for a copy of the petition before the Sept. 18 council meeting, Mayor Terry Sever said in support of the city manager.

The petition was circulated during the dedication of Pioneer Park May 21. "I don't recall this issue of 100 (signatures) being said," city manager William Costick said in response to Sowerby. "I've analyzed the petitions and I respectively disagree with your analysis."

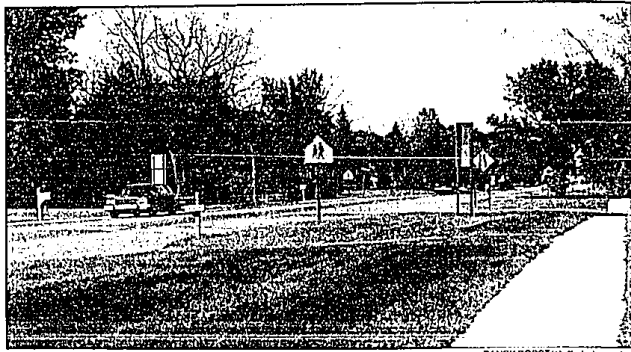
"Looking at the sections involved, people who would logically make use of the sidewalks total 47 of the 68 signatures. In addition to that, six members of the parks and recreation commission, most of whom live in areas that would not utilize this are listed, two school board members, our state representative and a couple members of city council."

Sowerby countered that he received a false impression there was a mandate from residents in the Farmington Road area who wanted sidewalks. "We have a signature on here from people seven miles away," he said.

Costick said it was not the intent to misrepresent. His analysis said that 47 would have direct access to and use the sidewalks. He said the most signatures he ever saw regarding sidewalks was 200 — for installation of a walk on Nine Mile. Even that number couldn't be considered a mandate.

SINCE THE Sept. 18 council meeting, another petition was submitted by Robert Sanderson to stop installation and construction of a sidewalk along the west side of Farmington Road, between 12 Mile and Bayberry. That petition has signatures from 30 Farmington Road residents and three Bayberry residents.

Joyce Regan, a New Bradford resident who circulated the petition at Pioneer Park, "I presented a petition



This is a view of Farmington Road, between 12 and 13 Mile. The photo was taken just a few feet north of New Market, which leads to the Farmington YMCA. The short stretch of side-

walk shown at right ends at Tullipwood. Houses are behind the tree line visible on the other side of Farmington Road.

in June," she said. "I didn't represent that it was from the two sections (of the city), nine and 10. People walk miles and miles."

"I can get more (signatures) if you want. I thought council members always looked at stuff. Everyone who signed it felt that there should be a sidewalk there."

The first petition cited safety. A second petition that Regan circulated at North Farmington High School had 25 signatures from people who could not attend the Sept. 18 meeting but who voiced support of the sidewalk proposal. A "few signatures" were from students, she said.

COUNCILWOMAN JODY Soronen changed her view that sidewalks

were needed along Farmington Road. "This is still one of the most important corridors in which to have a sidewalk," she said.

Councilman Aldo Vagnozzi, who signed the earlier petition, was also unswayed by Sowerby's revelation. "I've walked Farmington Road on both sides, and I tell you, there is a need for a sidewalk. I don't think we need sidewalks on both sides. I did not see misrepresentation."

Councilman Ben Marks said he was not "troubled" by the council's decision in favor of the sidewalk. He said a lot of people use nearby facilities — like the park and the library. "I have no problem with the way staff has handled it. Mr. Sowerby brought up a valid point, but we as a

council have to look at the overview and what it does for the entire community."

Sever said the petition, despite a question about the number of signatures, was not the deciding factor. "We all know that petition drives are not 100 percent reliable."

Sowerby questioned the integrity of the information.

Fox said validity also should be placed on the most recent petition to stop a sidewalk on the west side of Farmington Road, between 12 Mile and Bayberry. "I have a problem with the total petition thing."

She suggested that copies of future petitions be provided to council for review 10 days before a scheduled vote.

## Faxon quits Boys Republic's governing board

Citing scheduling conflicts, state Sen. Jack Faxon, D-Farmington Hills, resigned Thursday from the

Boys Republic board of directors.

The city issued the stop-work order to give police and staff time to review the renovations and the new program.

ON AUG. 29, Circuit Judge Jessica Cooper lifted the stop-work order. She said the city violated its own charter by waiving BZA review of the renovations and the new program.

A building permit was issued in error last December because the city was not told then about details of the new program, said John Donohue, special legal counsel for the city.

In the assessment program, the Department of Social Services as-

signed wards of the state to Boys Republic for a four-week evaluation before they are placed in a long-term treatment program.

Boys Republic doesn't plan to extend the assessment program beyond the one-year contract it has with the state, board president James Granon has told the city.

IN EXCHANGE for improving campus security, the DSS, strapped for beds for juvenile offenders, not only will continue sending boys to Boys Republic, but will do so at a higher daily rate to help pay off a \$1

million mortgage taken for the improvements.

The 40 boys in the assessment program have committed the same types of crimes and are no more dangerous than the 22 boys in the "open campus" treatment program, Boys Republic officials say.

Improved security and increased staff are meant only to decrease truancies and make the neighborhood safer, campus officials say. But some neighbors fear the new program will bring hard-core criminals and create a mini prison.

ADDRESSING THE Farmington Hills City Council at a public discussion on Aug. 28, Faxon supported the assessment program.

"Putting this in an extensive legal operation is not good use of tax money. Boys Republic wants to be a good neighbor," he said.

Campus security improvements "will make this a better community," he said.

He said it appears that some people just want Boys Republic shut down — something, he said, the city has no power to do.

**Farmington Observer**  
(USPS 187-940)

Published every Monday and Thursday by Observer & Electronic Newspapers, 825 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009. Second-class postage paid at Birmingham, MI 48009. Address all mail (subscription, change of address, Form 3569) to P.O. Box 2428, Livonia, MI 48151. Telephone 561-0500.

**SUBSCRIPTION RATES**  
(in Oakland County)

|                         |               |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| One year                | \$30.40       |
| (Elsewhere in Michigan) |               |
| Newstand                | per copy, 50¢ |
| One year                | \$55.00       |
| (Elsewhere in U.S.A.)   |               |
| One year                | \$80.00       |

All advertising published in the Farmington Observer is subject to the conditions stated in the applicable rate card, copies of which are available from the advertising department, Farmington 33203 Grand River, Farmington, MI (313) 477-5450. The Farmington Observer reserves the right not to accept an advertiser's order. Observer & Electronic ad-takers have no authority to bind this newspaper and only publication of an advertisement shall constitute final acceptance of the advertiser's order.

Reg. \$40.00  
Introductory Offer  
\$19.95  
with ad

**Professional Sculptured Nails**

- No Polish Chipping
- No Lifting
- Natural Looking

**Elegant Nails**  
Village Mall  
Downtown Farmington  
Call Nancy  
or Jill at **478-7170**

**DICK'S UPHOLSTERY SHOP**

**10% DISCOUNT ON ALL FABRICS**

- FINE FABRICS
- LIFETIME WORKMANSHIP WARRANTY

28235 Five Mile Road  
(next to Zimms) • LIVONIA  
**525-5625**

Complete line of calendars and address books.

**bookpeople**  
Orchard Mall  
28235 Five Mile Road  
Livonia, MI 48150  
851-9150

**FALL FUN FESTIVAL**

Arts • Crafts • Games  
Clowns • Food • Booths  
Tours of the Historic Church

**SATURDAY, OCT. 14**  
11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

**UNIVERSALIST-UNITARIAN CHURCH OF FARMINGTON**  
23101 Haledale • N. of Grand River  
Farmington Hills

**MATERNITY SHOW**

☐ **Saturday, October 21**

**Breakfast, 9:45**

**Restaurant, Livonia**

See fall and holiday maternity fashions and lingerie formally modeled.

Then meet pediatrician Dr. Marshall Blundy who will discuss the life of a newborn.

**Breakfast, \$3.50. To reserve, please call 581-7696, ext. 242.**

**Jacobson's**

We welcome Jacobson's Charge, MasterCard, VISA and American Express!  
Shop until 9 p.m. on Thursday and Friday. Until 6 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday.

**Fall Fashion Event**

High step it over for the sale that will set you apart from the rest.

- All Pepe jeans 30% off
- All Et Vous & NOI 30% off
- Large selection of mens & womens sweaters, shirts & tops 30% off
- Selected womens outfits 30-50% off

**30-50% OFF**  
selected outerwear & sportswear

**Diane's Place REAR ENDS**

357-1340 Applegate Square • Northwestern Hwy. 353-4353