

# Candidates debate

## They give flood control high priority

**By Noreen Flack**  
staff writer

Improvements to Farmington Hills' drainage system must be a priority for the new city council that convenes following the Nov. 7 election, council candidates agree.

Damage from the June 21 flood caused a health, safety and welfare threat to the community, the candidates said.

The 13 hopefuls appeared at a League of Women Voters of the Farmington-West

Bloomfield Area candidates night Oct. 11 in the city council chambers.

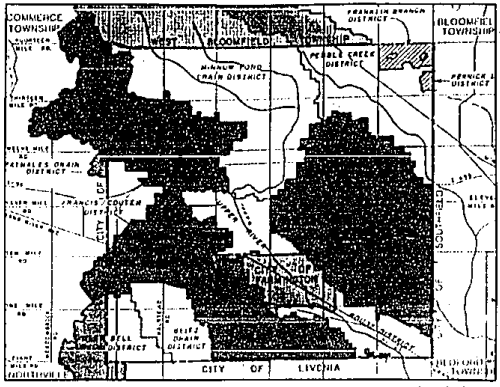
Ten are seeking four regular council terms and three are vying to fill the remaining two years of former councilman Joe Alkateeb's four-year term.

ON OCT. 10, the city council voted to ask the Oakland County Drain Commission that petitions be prepared to establish storm drain improvement projects for the Minnow Pond, Pebble Creek and Upper Rouge drainage districts.

Residents in the Kendallwood-Westbrooke Manor area, near 13 Mile and Farmington Road, were angered after experiencing severe flood damage from the June 21 downpour. Damage could have been avoided if the city had maintained a proper drainage system, they said.

Damage included walls covered with water residue, furniture and carpeting soaked, and floor tiles lifted.

Many residents said the downpour caused sewer water to back up and enter their homes through basement drains, bringing in leeches, algae and water insects.



This is the Farmington Hills Master Storm Drainage Plan major drainage district map.

## Hills to spread drain costs over entire city

**Continued from Page 1**

"To this day, many of the people in our area live in what can best be described as utter terror whenever the skies cloud over, whenever we have a day like today," Simon said. "You must do something immediately about this flooding problem."

Previously, the Farmington Hills area suffered through major storms on Sept. 30, 1981, and June 25, 1988.

Farmington Hills homeowners with a home with a market value of \$120,000 will pay \$30 to \$40 a year for debt service. "Since most of the improvements are in Farmington Hills, a substantial majority of the costs will be borne by Farmington Hills," Costick said.

The exact amount of apportionment will be known in six weeks to two months, he said.

**CANDIDATES FOR** the four regular council terms had this to say about flood control:

- Incumbent Phillip Arnold — "Every resident's health and safety deserves equal protection, a basic governmental responsibility. We must find a way to finance these improvements."
- Incumbent Ben Marks — "I absolutely support the plan. Unfortunately, it took too long to get to this stage, but we have made a commitment to the city of Farmington Hills and to the areas affected by the flood. Those people have suffered enough."
- Incumbent Aldo Vagnozzi — "I was for the program immediately. I am in favor of the bonding proposal as being the fairest and quickest way. But let's not kid anybody. It's not going to solve all of our problems. We have to look to the future growth and try to slow it down so we don't run into the same problems."
- Challenger Jonathan Grant — "I fully support the resolution the city adopted last night (Oct. 10) and support their decision to address this as a community-wide problem."
- Challenger Lawrence Litchman (a Kendallwood resident) — "I think the city council has made a commitment to the community's problem of the storm sewer system. I think the plan is a good start, but we need to continue to make sure imple-

mentation of the program is made in a timely and effective manner."

- Challenger Albert Rosen — "The sewer problem strikes the core of commonly health and welfare. We have no choice but to make sure the problem is taken care of and I think we should call on our senators and representatives in terms of financing for the plan."
- Challenger George Sarkisian — "The residents of this city should not have to worry about flooding problems resulting from inadequate city services. It is almost catastrophic to get your home flooded by sewage."
- Challenger Betty Stines — "When we implement improvements, we have to look to the future and city growth, and adjust for the long term instead of the short term."
- Challenger Vernon Klepinski — "Our city officials have had eight years to deal with the problem. Now comes 1989, another flood problem. It isn't just flood water, but it is ugly sewage in the basements. I think

the city has a lot more explaining to do."

- Challenger Ronald Oliverio had no comment on the flood issue at the candidate's night, but he said in a LWV voters guide — "I will support the necessary improvements to the flooding problem. I believe in taking existing resources and using them the most effectively."

**CANDIDATES FOR** the special two-year term had this to say:

- Incumbent Paul Swerby — "We, as a loving community, have to be responsible for all of our residents."
- Challenger Herbert Limer — "The flooding situation in Farmington Hills has to be catered to immediately and at no cost to the homeowners. Full expense should be on the part of the city no matter what other programs have to suffer."
- Challenger Nancy Bates — Raw sewage in resident's homes cannot be tolerated by the community. "A drainage district must be formed and funding grants sought."

**COUNTY DRAINS** will be established through provisions of the state drain code. This allows bonds to be sold by the drain commissioner and costs apportioned to benefiting jurisdictions. This is the way improvements were made at the Caddell Drain at Grand River and 10 Mile.

A bond issue is usually for 20 years and will show up as a debt service cost in future budgets.

"We're looking at a levy of one-half (.5 mill) to .65 mill and it would be levied for the first time in July 1990. It would raise between \$1.2 million to \$1.4 million. The important thing to realize is that we are moving forward to solve this flood problem," Costick said.

### Senior discounts

Farmington-area residents at least 60 years of age can take advantage of the Oakland Livingston Human Service Agency senior citizen discount program.

Photos to be laminated into plastic identification cards will be taken 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday, Nov. 17, at the Farmington Hills Senior Center in Mercy Center, 28660 11 Mile.

Card holders receive discounts from merchants around the nation on such items as auto parts, rust-proofing, hair care, dry cleaning, prescription drugs and eyeglasses.

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