

County defends plowing efforts

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Traffic and more plowing churned up the bottom icy-snow layers.

Costick said the problem seems to be that one of the road commission's district offices is responsible for Orchard Lake Road, north of 14 Mile, and the Southfield district office is responsible for the southern portion. Perhaps the road commission should restrict its offices and accompanying responsibilities throughout the county, Costick said.

THE CITY MANAGER was quick to compliment the road commission, however, on plowing the streets after Sunday's flurries. "A quick response was given," Joy said he takes exception to Costick's complaints. "We just can't match the expectation level of local officials and local residents with the kind of funding we've got and the miles of roads."

Instead of complaining, Joy said, Farmington Hills crews could have helped on the county roads — if the job there proved unsatisfactory to local officials — when they finished with the local roads.

"You ought not to complain about what others are doing until you've finished your job," Joy said.

"I don't think you can compare a municipality with any service with a county-wide force. It's apples and oranges."

Both the city and Oakland County Road Commission get money for roads from the state's gas and weight taxes. But, Joy said, the city can add funds from its property tax revenues if it wants to. That's not a possibility for the road commission.

"We have an imbalance over which we have no control. Money is an answer," Joy said.

The road commission, he contin-

ued, also has more miles under its maintenance than does the city and has fewer trucks per mile than does the city. "In a normal snowstorm it wouldn't be a problem. This was a very unusual snowstorm. It's a matter of time. It's a question of putting more money on the road. It's a matter of money."

Snowstorm statistics pile up

Here's some Farmington Hills statistics from Tom Blasell, public services director, on the big snowstorm that began late Monday, Jan. 13:

- Total snow accumulation since Tuesday, Jan. 14: 17 inches.
- The city has a total 288 miles of roads. That includes 56 major and 232 local roads.
- To clear the snowy mess, the city had 41 pieces of equipment out on the roads. The public works department used nine 5-yard dump trucks, five 10-yard dump trucks, two 3-yard dump trucks, two graders and 13 pickups and 4X4's.
- The city's special services department used two 3-yard dump trucks and three pickups and 4X4's. The engineering department used three 4X4's. Contractors used two graders.
- Forty-one city employees operated plows. The average public works shift was 16 hours on the job, eight hours off.

When snow began to accumulate about midnight Jan. 14, the public works supervisor called the first crews in

about 12:30 a.m. and were assigned to the city's five major road routes and school bus routes.

At 5 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 14, the decision was made to plow the city's road network. And by dawn, every piece of equipment at the city's disposal was out on the roads. Crews continued a round-the-clock operation throughout Jan. 14 and into the morning of Wednesday, Jan. 15. By rush hour Jan. 15, 85 percent of the subdivisions had been plowed and by 11 a.m., all streets had been plowed.

When the second storm hit the afternoon of Wednesday, Jan. 15, the trucks continued plowing the major roads. At 4 p.m., the decision was made to again plow the subdivisions.

With the snow continuing, crews were not released and the 24-hour operation continued into the evening, with the help of engineering and special services staffs.

Plowing continued throughout Thursday, Jan. 16, and was completed by 6 p.m. when the crews were released. In response to more snow, six trucks were out to cover major roads and school bus routes by 1 a.m., Friday, Jan. 17.

Muirwood rezoning request postponed

Betak Building Co.'s request to rezone property at Muirwood Square for proposed expansion will not be heard tonight, Jan. 22, by the Farmington Hills Planning Commission as originally scheduled.

The public hearing, during which the request will be explained and public comments received, has been postponed until 7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 19. Betak requested additional time to prepare for the hearing, according to a planning department spokeswoman.

The Betak proposal is slightly different from one brought unsuccessfully to the city in 1989. Muirwood Square is at the northwest corner of Drake and Grand River.

The company is offering to give up some commercial zoning to the north, and is proposing that multi-family zoning be used as an open space. Betak also wants the option to use that land for a future clubhouse or day care center for the nearby Muirwood Apartments.

The proposal would reportedly in-

clude demolishing 30,000 square feet of retail to the west and adding 80,000 square feet of new business space, making a new center of 105,000 total square feet.

Plans include space for a 40,000-square-foot anchor, which would likely be a grocery store. Betak told the city they had no firm commitments from any grocers.

According to city planning officials, Betak wants to:

- Rezone 2.4 acres on the north edge of the complex from B-2, community business district, to RC-2, which is a multi-family zoning. The parcel fronts Drake Road.
- Rezone about half, or 6.15 acres of a 12.35-acre parcel west of Muirwood Square from multi-family residential to B-2, community business district. That parcel fronts Grand River.
- Rezone one acre of P-1, parking district, on the center's western border to B-2, community business district.

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New restaurant targets late spring for opening

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chester, Adele Alexander of Royal Oak and Robert Jackier of Bloomfield Hills.

An investigation by the Farmington Department of Public Safety shows some liquor violations at either Mr. B's, but "the department believes the incidents of violations are low and the management of the

corporation has been very cooperative in resolving whatever problems have occurred." The city turned down a request for an entertainment permit, saying that Mr. B's can have musicians and singers entertain occasionally at the restaurant without it.

According to the site plan filed with the city, the Farmington restaurant will seat 298 people in the

summer, while outdoor seating is available, and 198 people in the winter months.

IT WILL have 22 employees and boast a video game room, pool tables, central bar area and new awnings over the outdoor cafe. An exterior Mexican court area will front the Grand River side of the building, and a portion of the interior dining area will be elevated.

Republicans host dinner meeting

Farmington Area Republican Club hosts its annual dinner meeting and election of officers beginning with a social hour at 6:30 p.m. and dinner at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 23, in the Farmington Community Center.

Patrick M. Nowak, director of the

Michigan Department of Transportation is the keynote speaker. Dues are \$8, dinner is \$12.50 at the door. For membership and dinner reservations, call Janet Larson 474-7611 or Richard Poehlman at 851-6111/661-5169.

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