Gas fumes pose no danger to residents

Continued from Page 1

way the drains are set up," said Farmington Hills Fire Chief Richard Marinucci, who was at the scene Monday night."There was a strong smell, especially in front of McLaren."

Repairs were under way Tuesday to an underground gasoline line which apparently ruptured at the site, causing the problem. The leak of about 7,000 gallons of gasoline from a line feeding an underground storage tank sent dangerous vapors into the air and caused a massive spill of flammable gasoline into the surrounding ground and sewer system, said Livonia fire marshal Arnold Klinger.

"It was a dangerous situation. Vapors were coming out of the sewer system," Klinger said.

The Wayne County Hazardous Materials Team, which includes 23 participating communities, including Farmington Hills, as well as firefighters, police and public works officials from the border cities were called to the scene to monitor the clean-up.

No one is sure just how long the gasoline had been leaking into the sewer system, but a Consumer's Power employee working in a nearby Farmington Meadows subdivision reported smelling gasoline odors on Feb. 14. No gasoline was found in the system at that time, and the storm sewer system was flushed out to get rid of the smell, said Farmington public services director Earl Billing. It is unknown if that incident is related, officials said.

BILLING SAID he and another public services employee aided in monitoring gasoline fume levels throughout the Farmington Meadows subdivision, and were particularly concerned because Flanders Elementary School is in the area. Luckily, school is not in session this week because of winter break.

Billing said it is fortunate the city has separated sewers in the area of the leak, so that the fumes had no chance of getting into the sanitary sewer system and into peoples' homes.

Farmington public safety officials said they were told the Livonia company became concerned after filling an underground tank with 10,000 gallons of gasoline last week, and noticing Monday that only 800 gallons remained.

Officials from the state fire marshal's office and the Department of Natural Resources were supervising clean-up operations this week *because the state regulates underground storage tanks.*

"It will take a long time to get the saturation of gasoline out of the ground," Klinger said.

Calling the spill an accident, he said the company was not cited for any violation. Company officials could not be reached for comment.

Staff writer Marie Chesney contributed to this report

No challenge

Rezoning request faces little opposition

Continued from Page 1

Kaftan's request and the small group of residents it drew was a turnaround from the last couple years when the developer's unsuccessful rezoning request from office to IRO on 14.5 acres east of Drake, west of Grand River, repeatedly filled the council chambers.

The developer's latest request to rezone 10.6 acres immediately east of his consent agreement property from single-family to multiple-family won an initial approval from the council and no resounding opposition from residents.

IF THE COUNCIL finally approves Kaftan's request next week, the additional acreage would provide the developer with a total 25 acres for multiple family housing.

"The association has not taken this matter under consideration," said Jerry Kennedy, president of the Hillside Estates Condominium Association. The condominiums are northwest of the 10.6 acres. Some condominium residents opposed Kaftan's original IRO request on his other 14.5 acres.

"We're concerned about a few matters that's about all. We wonder if it has any future impact on our area," Kennedy said.

Kennedy asked whether the future would bring a request to put some type of access drive from the condominiums to Kaftan's property, particularly the landlocked 10.6 acres Kaftan is asking to rezone.

Kennedy also questioned whether an environmental study of the land, which is owned by the Farmington YMCA and on which Kaftan holds a purchase option. The acreage includes meadows, a pond and rolling woods.

Though the city's tree protection ordinance would apply to the acreage, there's no need for an environmental study of the land, said Claude Coates, city planning consultant.

Coates called Kaftan's multiple-family rezoning request "a reasonable alternative. We think that is a good use for that site," particularly when combined with Kaftan's abutting property.

On the 10.6 acres, Coates continued, it's possible to build 110 multiple-family units. But because of the land's topography — a 50-feet change in elevation — it's not likely that many could be built, Coates said. "It's a very rugged site."

Heritage Park sits on the north and east of the 10.6 acres, which is listed as single-family and part of the park on the city's master land use plan. "The present zoning (single-family) would be logical and reasonable if the subject parcel were (to be) part of the park," Coates said.

'The association has not taken this matter under consideration.'

— Jerry Kennedy
president, Hillside Estates Condominium Association

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