

Arena from page 1A

na, as "errogant."
The city council and parks and recreation commission met to discuss, among other issues, whether they should ask voters to approve an ice arena bond issue on its own, or whether an early renewal of the parks and recreation millage would be a better direction.

But Lichtman's memo and Fitzgerald's comments didn't serve the discussion, said councilwoman Nancy Bates, who called them "abrasive and personal."

Lichtman defended the memo as a "succinct" statement of his views, not meant to be personal. In the memo, Lichtman said he was not in favor of an early parks and recreation millage renewal as the way to protect against a shortfall for the arena.

It would damage the city's credibility "to suggest that it took a year and a half to properly analyze the possible construction of an ice arena and yet, through some inexplicable sleight of hand, we are able to perform a similar analysis of equally significant capital projects, like a community swimming pool, in a few months," he said.

Lichtman also called the pro-

posal "disingenuous," adding that the city would still have to issue bonds for the arena. Oliverio and Councilman Terry Sever were implying that the arena would need the protection against a budget shortfall because it would lose money, he said.

Thus, while it is fair enough to inform the voters of how they might be affected by a doomsday scenario of the arena losing perhaps \$100,000 a year, at least in the first couple of start-up years, it is inaccurate and inappropriate to tell voters that they will be taxed for an ice arena," the memo concluded.

Fitzgerald, who was a member of the ice arena study committee, called the proposal to renew the parks and recreation millage early "a con job" and "a major piece of smoke."

Lichtman and Councilwoman Joanne Smith said they see problems with the confusion the millage renewal would cause. But Bates, Councilman Jon Grant, Councilman Aldo Vagnozzi, Sever and Oliverio all thought it was worth further study.

Parks and Recreation Commission chairman Jerry Ellia said he

was concerned that there wouldn't be time enough to sell the renewal to voters even if the commission agreed it was the best plan. And commission member Paul Jacques, who is former chairman of the Year 2000 committee, said he doubted other groups affected would be willing to hitch their star to an early renewal.

"I don't think they're willing to let the parks and rec millage ride on that (ice arena) issue," Jacques said, adding that it took a strong selling job by commissioners of over a year to convince voters to approve it. If the renewal failed because voters did not want to guarantee ice arena funding, it could also cripple other recreation programs, he said.

The proposal is designed not only to pay for a new swimming pool and more baseball and soccer fields, but also to make the recreation program, including the ice arena, self-sustaining by the time its 15-year term ends.

Commissioners would study the proposal and report back to the council by the May 16 regular council meeting, Ellia said.

Parade swings into baseball season

About 500 players and coaches will march into the South Farmington baseball season during a parade through downtown Farmington on Saturday, May 7.

The parade will start at 10 a.m. at the Farmington City Hall on Grand River west of Farmington Road. The route will be Farmington Road to Shiawassee and then to City Park, where the games will be played.

Some 1,600 boys and girls play on South Farmington teams. "We're excited about this season," said Ed Cleland, a league official. "It's our 25th anniversary."

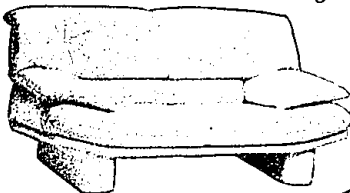
The organization will hold a benefit golf tournament Sunday, May 22, at Catalina Golf Club in South Lyon. Cleland said he hopes \$20,000 can be raised. Price is \$100 per golfer (\$35 for

the food only), with many prizes planned. A golf hole may be sponsored for \$160. Individuals or companies also may provide gift certificates and other prizes.

Some of the other prizes are baseballs autographed by Detroit Tigers and broken or cracked Tiger bats.

For more information about the league or the golf outing, call Cleland or Nick Satowich at 427-2288.

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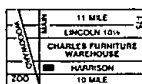


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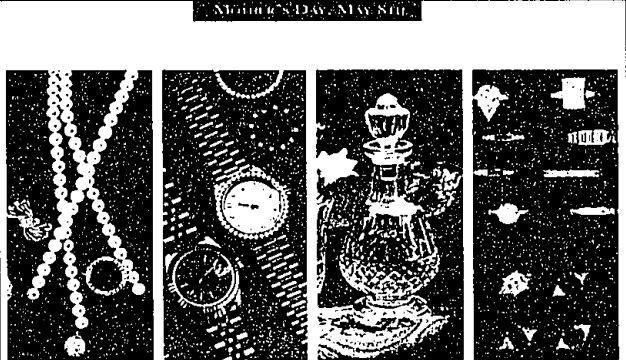
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