

Man wins Century 21 quality award

Century 21's Quality Service Award was presented to William J. Law, broker/owner of Century 21 Hartford, during the organization's recent regional Super Rally, at Laurel Manor in Livonia.

The awards were presented by Bill McCullen, regional director of Century 21's Metro One Region.

"We are extremely proud to recognize Century 21 Hartford and their sales associates for their outstanding commitment

to meeting each and every client's needs," said McCullen. "These accomplishments are a result of Century 21 sales associates providing a level of service to clients that goes beyond all expectations."

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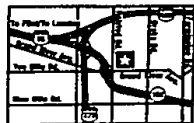
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Arena backers: Educate public, they'll vote for it

By BILL COULTANT
STAFF WRITER

A group pushing a proposed multi-purpose ice arena for Farmington Hills believes an educated public will support a project that will provide recreation and likely make money for the city in the long run.

"The odds are much greater that over time it will make money for the city," said Dennis Fitzgerald, former parks and recreation commission chairman. "We will be where people are. We have less than two months to sell this."

Fitzgerald, who is chairing a committee of some 20 volunteers called "The Say Yes to the Ice Arena Committee," was skeptical that an arena would be practical as a city-owned facility 18 months ago. But after being a part of the committee that studied the issue, he has become one of the biggest proponents of the \$6 million facility that would be built at Founders Sports Park on Eight Mile.

Voters will decide whether the city should sell up to \$6 million in bonds to pay for the arena on the Aug. 2 primary ballot.

The group is trying to raise money for a campaign to "educate" voters on the issue and will meet for the third time June 22. Committee members, who realize that voters are in an anti-tax mood, say voters have supported other projects that cost tax dollars if they see results.

"The Mercy Center (Farmington Activities Center) cost \$4 mil-

lion," Fitzgerald said. "The city is on the hook for big-time dollars."

Mayor Larry Lichtman, who chaired the ice arena study committee, said as people learn more about the project, through fliers, newsletters and personal contact with people who have studied the issue, they will see it as a benefit for the city, not a liability for taxpayers.

"The key issue is education," Lichtman said. "I don't believe voters should be overly concerned about financial exposure."

Even if the arena lost \$100,000-\$200,000 in the first couple of years, "it would be nominal exposure at best," Lichtman said. "In the worst case it would cost less than \$3 a year in additional taxes for a house valued at \$100,000."

Demand for such a facility hasn't been overstated and would ensure that the facility can rent ice time and make money, Lichtman said.

Current parks and recreation chairman Jerry Ellis said he doesn't see the ice arena issue in the same light as a failed proposal of last August to build a new library.

"We already have a library," he said. "There were a lot of questions about the need for space and the location they were proposing. This (proposed arena) is in a great location at a city park."

Critics have said that if the project were attractive, a private developer would have stepped in. But Lichtman said few private

developers could leverage \$6 million without a quick and substantial return. The city cannot only just break even, but it has a site on city land (an additional cost for a private developer). A private developer would also have to pay taxes. The city does not.

Robert Picard, a former professional hockey player and committee member, said ice hockey will not suffer the fate of tennis, a boom and bust sport. The sporting goods businessman said the demand for ice time has steadily increased and area arenas are finding they have to turn away people.

"It's awfully tough when you have to tell an 8-year-old he can't play," he said. "And that's what is happening."

Susan McKendrick said she saw money as the issue that would determine whether voters would approve the arena.

"There are a lot of things in the city that all people don't use that we still provide," she said, adding that in addition to non-ice skating activities, the arena would have other recreational facilities as well as banquet facilities for baseball, soccer and other groups. "It will provide concessions and restrooms right at Founders Sports Park," she said.

McKendrick added that she has met many seniors who enjoy skating, including a 72-year-old Hills man.

"He skates and competes," she said. "And he started in his 60s."

Mark meets with surgeon general

Florine Mark of the Farmington Hills-based Weight Watchers recently met with Surgeon General Dr. M. Joycelyn Elders at Elders' office outside Washington, D.C.

The women talked about how Weight Watchers could help to bring better nutrition into schools through education. Both agreed education is essential for a

healthier America.

Mark said Elders wants her to get involved with school menus to make them more healthful and also to work with inner-city children. Weight Watchers, which encourages the community to make good food choices and exercise regularly, already has a teen program.

After Mark's meeting with Elders,

Weight Watchers International received a call from the special assistant to the president for public liaison requesting lists of Weight Watchers' large center locations nationwide.

Florine Mark is president and CEO of The W W Group, the largest franchise of Weight Watchers International.

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