Proposed swap at interchange gets close look

BY BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills will study a proposed land swap that would improve the M-5/Halsted/Grand River interchange and maintain enough retention area to prevent flooding.

The Hills city council directed City Manager Bill Costick to come back with a report on the plan that would give the city a right of way on Grand River and Halsted to allow construction of a bridge to ease traffic at the congested intersection. In late September, the city learned that thanks in part to the efforts of Congressmen Joe Knollenberg and Bob Carr, the federal government would award $1.3 million to begin work on the troublesome intersection.

The swap would also help Arkan Jonna (who is not affiliated with Jonna Realty Ventures). Jonna would give up property on Grand River and would attempt to buy the Amoco gas station on the corner of Grand River and Halsted and give that property to the city. He would then move the gas station to the north.

Jonna would also agree to dredge land owned by the Oakland County Drain Commission to the north bordered by M-5 (formerly M-102) and fill in part of the existing retention basin.

The net effect would be to have at least as much storm retention area, give Jonna a better location for easier access, and give the city right-of-way for the $10 million interchange that will ultimately ease traffic.

"We've been working for a couple of years so that we could do something like this," Jonna said. "The traffic is so bad it's hard for people to get in and out (of Jonna's Fine Wines)."

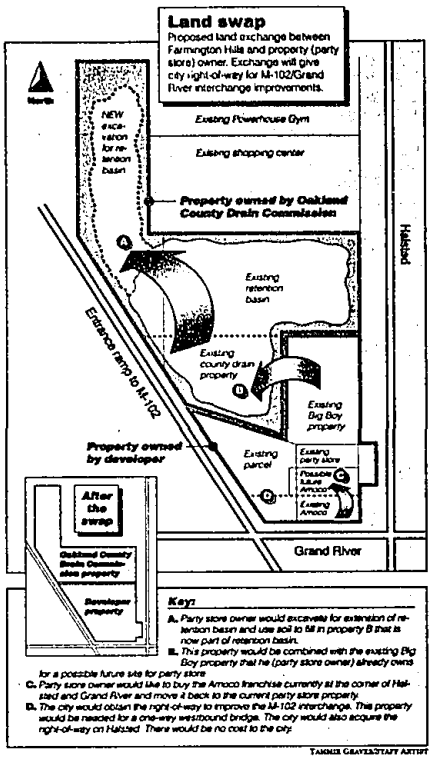
Costick said the swap would give the city needed right of way at no cost.

At the Oct. 24 meeting where the idea was proposed, resident *Judy Jacobson reminded Costick* and the city council of the threat of floods, most notably the flood of August 1991 that hit the area, especially at the Red Roof Inn, Knights Inn and TRW property.

Costick said that retention basins for those properties had not been full and there have been improvements in grade since the 1989 and 1991 floods. He added that if the land swap is approved, the city will try to include even more retention area than the plan calls for.

"We had a very localized rain," Costick said of the 1991 flood. "One mile away there was very little rain. But we're going to see if we can't get more retention area along M-5."

Costick said he will bring more details of the proposal back to the council.



TAMMIE GRAYZA/STAFF ARTIST

David Moffitt

David Fernquist

CLARIFICATION

The captions under the photos on Page 3A of the Oct. 31 Farmington Observer incorrectly identified the candidates running for the Oakland County Commission's 18th District.

Here are the right names under the correct photos.

Observer from page 1A

server (it merged with the Enterprise in 1969) has had several homes.

Longtime residents will remember the Enterprise office on Farmington Road south of Grand River. That building — still called the Enterprise building by old-timers — now houses a mortgage company.

For about five years, the paper was located in Southfield after the merger of the Observer and Eccentric newspapers.

In February of 1979, the paper returned to downtown Farmington, maintaining an storefront office on Farmington Road. A photo studio now occupies that space.

In November of 1984, the office was moved to the rear of the Metro Bank Building, which has since been torn down. After five years there, the office was relocated about a mile south to the Farmington-Nine Mile site.

Residents to spruce up Hills

Volunteers from several Farmington Hills subdivisions will help beautify the city by planting trees beginning at 9 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 5, from 12 Mile to 13 Mile on Drake.

Volunteers from Dunbar Oaks, Farmington Green, Farmington Green West, Barrington Oaks and others will take part.

Assistant City Manager Steve Brock said 10 trees will be planted out of a total of 65 through the Global ReLeaf program. The program, a public/private group, is contributing $1,000; the subdivision associations are contributing $5,000; and the city is using $5,000 in grant money for the project.

League offers government info

Looking for information about state government? The League of Women Voters has a toll-free telephone service (1-800-292-5823) that may be helpful.

The league's Citizen Information Center in Lansing offers to help people find out about such things as pending legislation, the state constitution, election laws, voting regulations or tax information.

The telephone is answered from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. weekdays.

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