

Farmington nabs video award

The city of Farmington recently won a first place Philo T. Farnsworth Award for a video produced by SWOCC Production Specialist Paul Muczynski and Farmington Public Safety Commander Maria Pitt.

The video, called "Intro to the AED," was created to inform residents that Automatic External Defibrillators are available in the community. The video also explains what AEDs are, and how valuable they are to the residents of Farmington.

An AED can restore a normal heart rhythm in victims of cardiac arrest. The portable devices enable more people to respond to a medical emergency that requires defibrillation. AEDs are vital in the chain of survival for heart attack victims because the chance of survival decreases 7-10 percent for each minute without defibrillation. AEDs save lives. The Philo T. Farnsworth awards are given out each fall by the Central States Region of the Alliance for Community Media.

Rezone from page A1

she'll "do everything I can so that I'm not looking at a building."

A rezoning to C2 commercial is required in order for Suburban Family Catholic Credit Union to expand, said Farmington City Manager Frank Lauthoff.

"Any time these kinds of projects start," said Lauthoff, "they (residents) have concerns, and we appreciate that. It's concern of the unknown."

But, Lauthoff emphasized, it is crucial to the future of Farmington that existing corridor businesses redevelop in accordance to the city's retooled master

SUBURBAN FAMILY CREDIT UNION

plan. "Either you help your community move into the future, or your community is going to live in the past."

But the past is something residents apparently didn't mind.

"It (the demolition) is a shame because it was such a gorgeous

home," said Helen Stuloch. "It was like a historical home" with porches and leaded glass.

Lauthoff said the two-story wood frame house was built in the 1930s or 1940s.

In addition to "hating to see another piece of Farmington go," a reference to demolition of the house, resident Mike Smith said residential property values probably would be reduced by such a project.

"If they expand it would have an impact," said Smith, an 11-year city resident who is leading the petition drive effort. "It would put commercial closer to the subdivision and cause more traffic down the street."

Concurring was Stuloch, who lives two doors north of where the demolished house stood.

"We just want to make sure that we don't just have a parking lot," Stuloch said. "It's going to take away from the value of our homes. And that's (going to be) infringing on our residential life."

The house stood vacant since Suburban Family Catholic Credit Union purchased it from the family of the deceased former owner in 1997.

Lauthoff said credit union owners had the option of tearing down the house or renting it. The city's blight ordinance prohibits vacant structures.

Before any rezoning is decided, Lauthoff said residents will have the chance to be heard at a planning commission public hearing. It likely won't be until spring, after a site plan is submitted.

"The master plan says that, 'yes there's going to be redevelopment,'" the city manager continued. "When it happens, the planning commission needs to give special attention to maintaining green spaces and buffers between (commercial) and residential areas."

Lauthoff also mentioned that the planning commission would examine the surrounding area and decide "what makes sense" in terms of establishing a uniform dividing line between commercial and residential property.

Vacant land on the west side of Lakeway, which belongs to National City Bank, is slated to be turned into additional bank parking.

Woods said her sons wanted to buy the house after it went up for sale in 1997 and were ready to make a substantial offer. "But the credit union came in and outbid everyone."

Compounding the situation for the neighbors is the fact that, according to Smith and Stuloch, bids of up to \$230,000 to purchase and preserve the house were made in recent months.

Although understanding of the residents' disappointment, Lauthoff said the city must do what it can to enable corridor businesses (along Grand River and Orchard Lake, for example) to make improvements and stay in town whenever possible.

"If this type of business problem is not addressed ... residents could be left with an abandoned, old, outdated building sitting on a corner," Lauthoff said. "The planning commission will have to balance the needs of commercial and residential (property owners). These are issues an older community has to face."

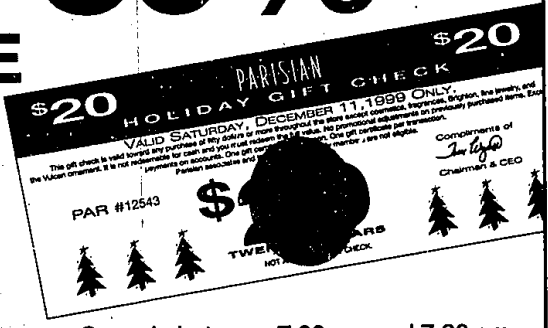
The credit union's Dave Russell could not be reached for comment.

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- SAVE 30%** Famous-maker handbags. Reg. 59.00-110.00, sale 41.30-77.00.
- MEN SALE 199.99** Camel hair sport coats from Bill Elias. Reg. 350.00. SELECTION VARIES BY STORE.
- SALE 14.99** Preswick & Moore flannel shirts. Reg. 25.00.
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- SAVE 40%** Men's fine-gauge and chenille sweaters from Preswick & Moore. Reg. 48.00-60.00, sale 28.80-36.00.
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- SAVE 40%** Select Preswick & Moore dress shirts. Reg. 45.00-55.00, sale 27.00-33.00.
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