

# New Flood Plain Lines To Help Area

By TIM RICHARD

Local officials are in a better position to enforce flood plain and anti-filling ordinances now that they're armed with a new report by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The \$71,000 report covers 28 miles of the Upper Rouge, Minnow Pond Drain, Bell Branch and Tarabusi Creek in Farmington Township, the City of Livonia and Redford Township, along with a small portion of Detroit.

The flood plain report was unveiled last week in a public meeting in Livonia city hall by Maurice Rapkin, chief of flood plain management services for the Detroit office of the Army Engineers.

Highly technical, the report offered no recommendations, leaving some Redford Township officials (in particular) a little frustrated.

LIVONIA OFFICIALS, however, were pleased at the support the Army Engineers' report gave to city ordinances.

Said Mayor Edward McNamara: "This puts the City of Livonia in a good position to enforce our ordinances. We've had an anti-filling ordinance some time," to which Coun-

cilman Jerry Raymond added: "You try to fill in a flood plain in Livonia and ya get shot."

City Engineer Ed Siemert said: "Their flood plain boundaries are very close to what we had defined. But their study is much more sophisticated. They've calculated river flows with a computer."

"Our flood plain study was done in 1965, working with records of the 1947 flood. At first we didn't define flood plains, and our ordinance wasn't too enforceable," said Siemert, recalling a case the city had to compromise in court.

A later city ordinance did define flood plains, and both Mayor McNamara and Siemert suggested the ordinance should be amended to include the newest flood plain definitions from the engineers.

COUNCILMAN Robert Bennett, however, was critical of what he called a failure to recognize that an urbanized area can now have "a 70-year flood with a 50-year rain." He said major floods may continue to occur more frequently because of the rapid runoff of rainwater.

The meeting was attended by 52 persons - most Livonia councilmen, some Redford Township Trustees,

representatives of the Redford and Farmington beautification commissions, a City of Farmington engineer, road commission staffers from Oakland and Wayne Counties, environmentalists from Detroit, private engineers and builders.

They were told of two state laws by James Bolton, the bureau of water management of the State Water Resources Commission.

One is the subdivision control act, in which preliminary plats go to the WRC for review of their effect in flood plain limits.

The flood plain control law requires a person to get a WRC permit before altering or filling any part of a flood plain.

BOLTON SAID the WRC encourages communities to use Army Engineers flood plain information in their zoning, subdivision and building ordinances. He also said they could adopt even tougher standards than in the state law. (Both Livonia and

Southfield extend their controls to three feet beyond the flood plain limit.)

Speakers discouraged the idea of creating dams to impound water as a method of flood control. Such ponds take up valuable land and aren't popular with the public, they advised.

They also talked down the idea of a flood control project on the Upper Rouge - for example, deepening, clearing, straightening or rip-rapping the channel - because these can upset the balance of nature and are opposed by environmentalists.

The meeting was chaired by Paul Reid, director of the planning division of the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments. Reid said local units of government are responsible for applying flood plain information to their local ordinances and enforcing them.

To the question of whether municipalities should "reserve" or buy up flood plain land, Reid said "there is no way to 'reserve' privately-owned land. It can only be regulated by law."

## Regional Affairs



SANDING A BLOCK of wood is good therapy for a person who needs to use the muscles in his back and arm as Carol Second or Redford Township discovers in her training for an occupational therapy assistant position.

BEFORE THE YARN can be threaded through the loom, it must be carefully prepared as Roberta Bergman of Livonia discovers. Each of the occupational therapy students may practice what he learns in class while working in the field under registered occupational therapists.

## They're In Training To Train The Disabled

By KATHY MORAN

At midpoint in his career, a man stricken by a heart attack can suddenly become disabled and unable to support this growing family.

If a woman with a young child has a stroke and loses the use of an arm, every movement around the home becomes a labor.

Fortunately, these cases are not as disastrous as they might be because of the skills of occupational therapist assistants.

The tool and die maker who finds himself unable to do the detail work can salvage some of his skills and return to a job and support his family.

And the mother can learn how to set up her work area in the kitchen to use her time efficiently to complete her household and child care with one good arm.

A ONE-YEAR training program at Schoolcraft College prepares assistants to work with those persons who have been disabled in some way or persons who have never had complete use of certain muscles.

At first glance, the training rooms look like arts and crafts rooms.

One room features a wall lined with saws, hammers, chisels and various tools while the other room contains several looms.

Mrs. Masline Horton, the only full-time therapy instructor at Schoolcraft, teaches her 18 students weaving, woodworking, knitting, ceramics, block printing, silk screening, and leather work.

Each skill can be utilized in some way to make a handicapped person use different muscles.

A person who doesn't have full use of one arm can exercise the arm by pushing a saw or sanding a piece of wood.

THE STUDENTS, half of whom are married women returning to work after raising families, learn which type of activity relates to what type of problem. They have the opportunity to actually practice what they learn in the clinic required experience.

Under direct supervision by registered occupational therapists, each Schoolcraft student works at five different locations with various patients.

Mrs. Horton said students develop skills and learn to write up their observations through practical experience. "Most of these gals have never been in a hospital setting before, and most have some fears. They begin to feel comfortable around the handicapped through this experience," she said.

"We almost get more than they (the patients) do out of



WEAVING IS MORE difficult than some students anticipated. Instructor Masline Horton (left) and student Helen Collins of Southfield comb over Mrs. Collins' work to find a mistake that will take hours to fix. Besides learning the tools of the trade, the women students learn how to cope with frustration through their own experiences.

it," said Carol Second of Redford Township. "How could you do anything without it (practical experience) - pull out your textbook?" Martha McLeon of Detroit asked.

SEVERAL WOMEN in the program said practical experience gives them an opportunity to decide which area they will pursue when they finish the intensive 11-month training.

They work with physically disabled patients, retarded children, mentally ill adults, and elderly persons and through the experience can determine which areas they enjoy most.

They may work at Sinai Hospital one semester, Plymouth State Home the next, and Ypsilanti State Hospital or Mount Carmel Hospital in the final stretch of the course.

It is structured so that students work one afternoon a week during the first two semesters, then spend two intensive six-week sessions at different hospitals during the spring and summer sessions.

"We almost get more than they (the patients) do out of

which are now located at Northville State Hospital for lack of room at Schoolcraft, the women learn how to use tools "safely and correctly" and learn techniques to use with perceptually handicapped patients, visually handicapped as well as efficient homemaking skills.

They learn to test for and assess the skills that a handicapped person has and prepare him for entry into vocational rehabilitation.

Currently the entire class is planning a party for 50 retarded children at Plymouth State Home.

Problems that the average person wouldn't consider have to be planned for by the students.

They want to serve refreshments, but have to be ready to cope with the child who can't swallow properly or the one who can't hold a cup. Candy has to be the type that melts in the child's mouth. Popcorn is a "no no" because a child could choke on it.

Games, decorations and prizes all have to be geared for the retarded children. When it is over, the women will know how to plan such activities for their own patients.

And as one frustrated student said while laboring over her weaving, "By the time we are done, we will have learned fairly well how to handle the patient's frustrations."

OF 25 STUDENTS who started the program, 18 are still in, and a waiting list of more than 100 students is growing for the 1972 program starting in August.

Because of the limited number of places where students can get their practical experience, the course must be limited to 25 and must be taken in sequence.

When graduates receive certificates of completion, they will have the distinction of being in one of the few occupations that is still actively seeking personnel.

A beginner can make between \$5,900 and \$9,300 in the first year.

"I'm quite pleased with our graduates," Mrs. Horton said. "They have made quite an impression on the market to the point where employers call to get more of our graduates."

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