

Franklin objects

Draft reveals impact, cost of Pernick Drain

By ELSPETH BEIER
FRANKLIN — The controversial Pernick Drain plans have been running underground for years, with varying cost figures and involvement of communities neighboring Southfield.

The draft Environmental

Impact Statement surfaced Wednesday however and the cost figures have more than doubled in three years — to about \$2,254,000 for the recommended route.

When the Pernick Drain, to be built exclusively in Southfield, was first discussed with any figures in 1971, the cost was estimated at about \$2.5 million.

Franklin was informed that although the drain would not be located within its boundaries, it contributes to the storm drain problems of Southfield by its runoff water, and its share of the cost would be 15 percent.

The 1971 figure proposed to the village was less than \$400,000.

According to the draft environmental statement drawn up by Hubbell, Roth and Clark dated June 17 and submitted to the Pernick Drainage Board and Oakland County Commissioners July 24, the Franklin share is approximately \$938,000.

According to Trustee Peter Bertleson, who has council responsibility for this proposal, "It is incredible. They claim they have the right to force us to pay for their commercial development."

The Pernick Drainage Board includes G.W. Kuhn, County Drain Commissioner, as chairman with D.T. Murphy, chairman of the County Board of Auditors, and R.R. Wilcox, chairman of the County Board of Commissioners, as two members.

Bertleson and his council predecessor, Robert Anderson, have long resisted any involvement, financial or otherwise, in the Pernick Drain, stating repeatedly that it will not benefit Franklin in any way.

The council has frequently stated publicly that it lacks engineering proof from Southfield that the village runoff waters contribute in any appreciable way to Southfield's problems.

Only 60 acres of Farmington Hills, on the Franklin Hills Country Club golf course (bordering the village), will be assessed for partial cost sharing.

The proposed Pernick drain will discharge its flow of storm water into the Rouge River south of the I-696 interchange.

According to Bertleson, among many of the alternatives

considered include placing a single retention pond (basin) north of Twelve Mile within the I-696 interchange area at a cost of \$6,658,000 (Franklin's proposed share \$999,000).

Another alternative was in the Eleven Mile-Pebble Creek area at a cost of \$10,109,100 (Franklin cost, \$1,515,000).

The least expensive alternative, according to Bertleson, is a multiple retention basin concept costing about \$4,875,000 with the proposed Franklin share running \$791,000. All plans start at Franklin's south border.

All of these figures, he said, are exclusive of the costs of rights of way and easements.

The Franklin councilman quoted the report offering the alternative of "taking no action" which he said would be beneficial.

"It would create no disturbance and be the most helpful alternative to existing biological systems."

He also quoted the study, "(If the drain is not constructed), planned development would be impeded and land use would not be developed to its fullest extent."

"If development were to continue, flooding would be aggravated during periods of storm runoff. This could only increase environmental and social problems brought about by periods of high water," he quoted.

Franklin's officials have long felt that pressure to participate in the drain cost was "blackmail" for the village's eventual capacity agreement involving Southfield.

Bertleson said, "I consulted with our village engineer, Frank Webster, the minute I got the report and we are organizing a defense."

"There will be no firm action taken for two or three months and before public hearings take place we, as a council, will take every step to avoid paying any part of Southfield's commercialization problems," he said.

Straus tells campaign financing

Kathleen Straus, candidate for the Democratic nomination in the 17th Congressional District, disclosed her campaign finances saying release of the information was in keeping with her pledge to pursue election campaign reform.

Straus said that as of July 15, the Kathleen Straus Election Committee had received \$5,284 and Citizens for Straus \$1,490. Expenditures totaled \$4,483 for administration, advertising and printing materials. She said her contributions were primarily from individuals with the highest single donation amounting to \$500.

"It is to be hoped that all the candidates in the 17th District race will follow my lead and reveal the amounts of all their campaign gifts and loans to date," she said. "Governatorial candidates, U.S. senators and most of our Congressmen have already done so. Congressional contestants should follow suit, so that the 17th District electorate has a clear picture of the sources of support for each of us before the August primary."

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