

Gardening is therapy to Farmington students

"If you are sad, plant something, it will make you happy. If you are happy, plant something, it will make you happier. If you have nothing to do, plant something, it will give you an interest. If you are too busy, plant something, it will help you relax."

This motto by Dr. T. L. Semm is used by the National Council of State Garden Clubs, Inc., in their manual on garden therapy. Semm is developer of the horticulture program at Clemson University.

The aim of garden therapy is rehabilitation and recovery of the handicapped. Garden clubs throughout the country, including Farmington's Hill and Dale, participate in such programs.

HILL AND DALE members visit the school district's special education classes twice a month, teaching the students how to care for plants. Therapists say benefits accrue in other areas, too. Projects, they say, can help teach language by introducing new words. Counting seeds and plants can strengthen math skills and decorative use of plants and products can encourage artistic expression and development.

Growing plants may lead to a better understanding of nutrition and their care requirements will foster a sense of responsibility, they say. Advice on projects and programming for interested clubs is included in a booklet the national organization publishes.

The booklet warns therapists to make adjustments in projects for children because of variations in fatigue, emotions, exercise, allergies, illness, interest and aptitude.

Those working with the emotionally ill face the initial problem of generating interest. After that, it's mostly downhill with encouragement to the patient to participate in group activity.

The blind may also participate in growing plants, making flower arrangements, and learning about birds, they say.

Wheelchair patients can garden, arrange flowers, and make corsages. Garden therapy may be used for treatment purposes, vocational interest, prevention of emotional disturbances and vocational possibilities, the booklet says.

THE BOOKLET is careful in both its claims and admonitions. "It is no cure-all, but it has been proven one of the successful non-medical therapies for some," it says. It also stresses the therapeutic value of allowing the patients to "do" rather than "receive."

Activity projects are those conducted with the handicapped, in which they participate actively. The therapeutic value lies in the doing. You work with people instead of doing for or giving to them.

The most important factor to consider is that the handicapped person should be actively involved. Much pleasure stems from person to person sharing of activity, and from the individual's joy in accomplishment and personal achievement. Perfection is not a goal," it says.

Programs in garden therapy include ornithology (study of birds), native plants, natural resources conservation and environmental protection.

Southfield residents petition against controversial drain

By JACKIE KLEIN

Some 600 residents have signed a petition of protest against the Southfield City Council for initiating the proposed Pernick Drain project.

The petition was submitted to the city council Monday. It states that the project, to serve the Twelve Mile Road-Northwestern Highway-Telegraph Road area, isn't in the interest of the community at large.

"The necessity for the project was never demonstrated except to facilitate intense future development of properties in the northwest section of Southfield," the petition says.

"Benefits of this project serve land developers in the Silver Triangle area, but costs are borne by all Southfield residents," it continues.

The petition maintains there is great risk of detrimental side effects that will extend to downstream residents when drainage from the 13-foot-diameter drain is unleashed into the main branch of the Rouge River.

THE PETITION further claims detrimental effects will extend to the river itself, and particularly to the flood plains, as the Pernick discharges into recently acquired Southfield parklands.

Council President Steve Hurtt said city officials have reviewed reports and environmental impact statements concerning the Pernick, have attended hearings and met with representatives of the Oakland County Drain Commission.

"We held an informational meeting to provide answers to questions about the project," Hurtt said. "Modifications have been made on other drains in the city. The drain commission will complete its review in 90 days and we will continue to study and monitor the project."

A group called "Citizens Concerned About the Pernick Drain" has been formed. It includes Verona Morse of Southfield, president of the Rouge Basin Coalition; Walter Fysh, vice president of the Oakland Village Civic Association in Southfield; and Diane Hoppel, chairman of the board of directors of the Blackwoods Forest Glens Home Improvement Association in the city.

OTHER MEMBERS are Richard Lamb, vice president of the Rougewood, Rougemont and Riverdale Homeowner Association in Southfield; Donna Lebow, liaison on the Pernick Drain to the Franklin Village City Council; and Jody Soronen, president of the Council of Homeowner Associations of Farmington Hills.

In a letter to George Kuhn, Oakland County Drain Commission, the members said they requested a realistic retention system alternative when they attended the June 12 informational meeting in Southfield.

"An alternative using the open waterway and natural wet lands in the project isn't included in the environmental impact statement on the Pernick Drain," the letter says.

"It wouldn't be necessary to repeat the studies already done by Hubbell, Roth and Clark. A retention study could be done for a few thousand dollars. The cost is minor compared to the \$4.2 million cost of the proposed project."

The letter states a low cost study could be prepared by Dr. Clifford Humphreys of the department of natural resource development at Michigan State University.

MEMBERS SUGGESTED that

Kuhn and others involved in the project see a retention system in Ingham County which just received a national award.

"There is a great deal of concern among downstream residents that the recommended project will increase flooding," the letter says. "Upstream communities are concerned they will lose their small streams and have too little water as a result of the proposed project."

"We are convinced you owe it to

yourself and to the citizens to consider a drainage system that would allay these fears. The economics of the retention systems are often very favorable as well," the letter concludes.

Mrs. Morse said Monday the group hadn't received a response to the letter. She said residents have done everything short of initiating court action to try to halt the project.

"We intend to keep fighting," she said.

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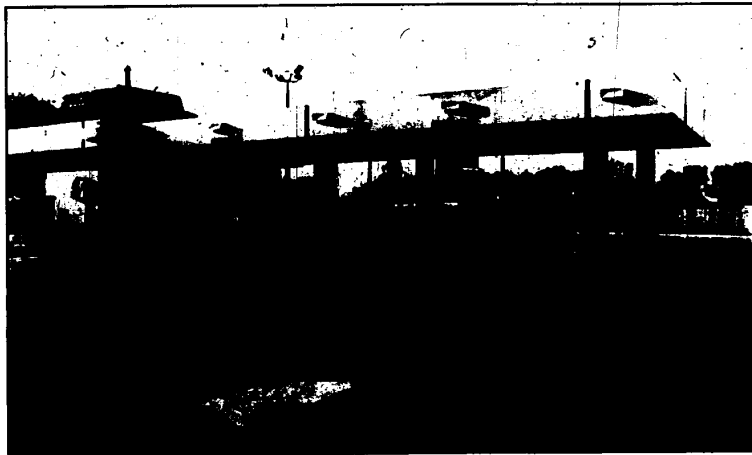
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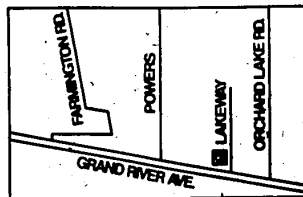
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