

# City of Farmington candidates face issues

## Albert Holm

Albert Holm and his wife, Betty, used to open their home to runaways. Now they would like to open it to the community.

That's figuratively speaking, of course. What it really means is that Holm has decided he would like to serve Farmington on a broader basis: as a city councilman.

Married for 29 years, Holm has worked and lived in Farmington for the past 10.

He sees no great issue riling the city government but says that the rejuvenation of Farmington's business district is important and may be effected by more parking.

"The business people are saying market trends today require more parking facilities. It is their position that we don't have adequate parking. You only have to be downtown in Farmington on Saturday morning to realize there is a shortage of parking," he said.

Others have suggested using the south side Oakland street for the extra facilities, but Holm isn't sure the idea will work.

"I SERIOUSLY question if anyone parking there will walk all the way down to Fashion Shoes. The benefit would be mostly theirs (the merchants in the immediate vicinity), with little fallout to other sections. The buying habits of people are such that the Kroger Store was vacated. I wonder if some of the stores

trying to survive on the north side of Grand River are having the same problem. Customers are changing attitudes on how far they are willing to walk," he said.

"I don't know if people of Farmington would go for it, but we shouldn't destroy those homes, we should move them. Perhaps we could put them adjacent to Farmington Junior High School and have a miniature Greenfield Village.

"I don't say destroy them. If the answer lies with additional parking facilities, an alternative to destruction is to move them.

In the future, "the problems are going to come in the area of building modification and replacement. We'll have growing pains in terms of old age.

"City council can make the business climate more profitable for merchants," and better snow removal would be one way, he said.

"I think we should have a better snow removal program rather than plowing it. Now we push it to the side and let the merchant take care of it. During the Christmas season, good access to stores and parking areas is often filled up with snow."

IF ELECTED, HOLM said his work would not interfere with his duty to the city.

"My position in business and life would allow me to become totally involved. I don't have a business which would require me to be out of town



ALBERT HOLM

for extended periods of time. I will have time to become familiar with individual requests that have to be made.

"The guy that comes down to city hall with a variance — more than likely, he's not very articulate. I think the councilmen have the obligation to listen to what he's thinking and ferret out the real merits of what is being asked or suggested. Help those people to analyze what they want.

"If their request should be denied, I think it must be done with dignity and without ridicule."

He said he has attended many council meetings as president of his subdivision, helping those who had questions, requests or complaints. He made a point of it.

"One year," I had a better attendance record than some of the councilmen."



ALTON BENNETT

"The former pool store is a building which is not terribly useful. Maybe we need to look for the smaller service shops which would serve the public.

"Whether it's Oakland Street or whether it's other areas, I feel that we're going to have to provide parking. People just don't walk a great distance. I think unfortunately selected homes, are probably going to have to be sacrificed to serve other businesses. I don't see Farmington as a shopping mall arrangement.

"Maybe the answer is buying Farmington Junior High School and creating parking.

"We're going to have to get advice and then we're going to have to weigh that with the community sentiment. You have to give and take. You have to make some balances somewhere."

Bennett has no complaint about the city's police protection, which, some citizens have criticized at recent candidates' nights.

"I HAVE NO HARD evidence that this is an issue. In a particular case there might be a complaint. I think the basic public service is rather good."

Consolidation, he said, "would certainly water down what the city is able to do. The present enforcement numbers (between the two cities) are considerably different.

"I do not think the issue of consolidation is a viable issue at the moment." It won't happen, he said, until the tax bases of the two cities are equalized, or until tax pressures from outside or federal government forces force the two together for survival.

"I wouldn't say it's inevitable, but I think the issue in time would become inevitable. That would be several years down the road, but I think it will come up.

think the issue in time would become inevitable. That would be several years down the road, but I think it will come up.

"With the present circumstances—without a mandate—we've passed the time when it would be an advantageous thing to do. At this time I would not be in favor of it (consolidation)."

During the next five years, Bennett said, the Farmington City Council will have to continue to address itself to "downtown Farmington versus residential areas. I think that will be a continuing discussion issue."

"It's going to become a matter of the population as to what kinds of people and what kinds of services we should have to meet those needs."

Another of Farmington's future problems may be a struggle to stay independent of encroaching state and federal regulations, he said.



WILLIAM HARTSOCK

"I could probably say that for the other councilmen too," he added.

"Two years is too short to make any effect on the City of Farmington," he said. "It's good to have turnover—guys who stay on for years and years get stale."

Hartsock said he would be against destroying homes on the south side of Oakland Street to make room for parking to revitalize the downtown area.

"I'd be definitely against that. We could move those homes to a historical area set aside somewhere. Of course, if the city doesn't have anymore land to develop like that, it could be an argument for consolidation.

"A parking structure, business or condominiums would be out of place there. It would be too small a plot of land to put that large a building on it."

Nor does he think consolidation of Farmington and Farmington Hills police forces would be a good idea.

"There are some services in the Hills that will go for days without seeing a patrolcar."

THE RATIO OF police to city size is much more comfortable in Farmington, he said.

We have little over 25 square miles to patrol in three marked cars and one detective car. The Hills has more than 40 officers and four or five cars to patrol almost 38 square miles.

Additionally, he said, "the morale of our policemen is a lot better, even though they're getting lower pay." As with the other candidates, Hart-

## Ralph Yoder

Of those running for Farmington City Council, only Ralph Yoder and William Hartsock have graduated from Farmington high schools.

Yoder lived in what was once Farmington Township, now Farmington Hills, since 1940. He moved to Farmington when he was married in 1962 and has been on the city council since 1963.

Having lived in both cities, Yoder said he has mixed emotions about consolidation.

"The timing isn't right. It would be harmful to our city residents to consolidate. The only time it would be right is when 'their city services have reached a level similar to ours'."

Besides, he said, Farmington Hills city government operates under a different philosophy from that which moves Farmington.

"They want suburban living and a minimum amount of service so they can retain a rural atmosphere.

"We're a small, compact city and provide a heck of a lot of services: police, fire, snow removal and rubbish removal, lighting, the basic services most cities provide."

AS FOR CONSOLIDATION between two cities, he's not sure there has ever been a precedent.

"Two cities have never merged. I think there's a possibility." But if the question were put to a vote in the next year, he would vote no, he said.

When some irate citizens criticized police protection in the city at an earlier Farmington Democratic Club candidates' night, Yoder was quick to invite them to a private conference with Public Safety Director Daniel Byrnes.

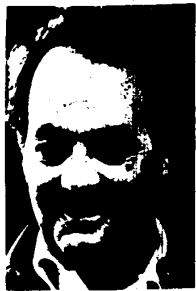
"I don't think we have a problem (with police protection)," he said later. "Police don't like to pick up stray dogs."

Because the fire department and the police department in Farmington are integrated into one public safety department, the city is saving its residents money.

"One of the reasons our taxes are so low is that we have an integrated police and fire department. I think the police services would be diluted if we consolidated."

Yoder said there aren't any issues which will make or break candidates in this election.

"There really haven't been any issues. It's a popularity contest, it's



RALPH YODER

who you know."

"The city's been wrestling with it for the past 10 years," he said of the downtown parking problem.

There needs to be additional parking. Possibly some of the buildings should go. I'm opposed to condemnation (of the houses on Oakland Street).

YODER IS GENERAL manager and secretary of Tri-County Trucking Co. and the Tri-County Enterprises, Inc.

## James Moore

James A. Moore is no stranger to city government. He is a member of the Farmington Planning Commission, now into his second appointment.

Nevertheless, he has never campaigned for a position and his candidacy for a city council post may be viewed as putting his toe in to test the water.

"This is my first venture into politics, although I've been on the Planning Commission," he said.

Why is he running for the Farmington City Council?

"It was thrown out at one of the meetings I was at, at city hall, about people running for city elections. At the time Mayor Yoder had decided not to run and so did John Allen."

It seemed like a good time to make a bid for public office. And it was nurtured by his closely-held belief in involvement.

"I stick to the word involvement; that has been one of the key things I do. When I start something, I get deeply involved in it."

HIS CANDIDACY, he insists, should

not be construed as a non-confidence vote in the present city council. It's the key word involvement again.

"I have really no axe to grind with the present members of the council whatever. But I'm interested in getting involved and want to help them carry out their efforts." These, he says, are keeping government economical and looking after the retired, the elderly and those on fixed incomes.

"There's a great need for somebody to look out after these people."

Moore is familiar with police work and is a member of the Southeastern Michigan Police Chiefs, Michigan and International Police Chiefs Associations and the International Association of Arson Investigators.

When asked whether he thought there was a police protection problem in Farmington, he said, "Some good news recently have happened to Capt. (Dan) Byrnes. There is a little cloud nine floating around him yet. When he gets around to separating the wheat from the chaff, I think that we will have a very fine law enforcement agency in the City of Farmington."

Byrnes was recently married.



JAMES MOORE

The 58-year-old manager of safety, security and fire protection for American Natural Gas Systems said he would vote against consolidation with Farmington Hills, if the issue were to come up within the year.

"I think the standards of Farmington Hills have to be brought up greatly before we can even consider consolidation," he said.

IN CITY GOVERNMENT we have (Continued on page 4A)

## Alton Bennett

Alton Bennett is an ordained Methodist minister who became a junior high school principal to better serve today's youth.

"I'm an ordained minister and was State Youth director for seven years. It's the kind of thing where I've had a lot of experience making decisions for the welfare of the group, rather than for the welfare of the individual," Bennett said.

As principal of Warner Junior High School, Bennett says he has a unique view of Farmington and its problems.

"I think I'm at a different level of viewpoint which involves the youth as well as the adult population of the community," he said.

"You must be aware of the people. Their mean age is on the constant rise." What this means is that the city should take a close look at the services it offers and find out whether they are serving the greatest number of people with the best efficiency.

The same, he said, needs to be done if the downtown business district is to be revitalized.

"TWO KINDS of things need to be done. Many of the older buildings do not have modern, useable, up-to-date facilities. You're going to have to have parking too, but there's more involved than that.

"You have to ask what kind of business services are you going to provide for the population? What are their needs?"

Farmington Junior High School and the former pool store near it might also be factors in the solution of the parking and revitalization problems.

## William Hartsock

"The first two times I ran for city council, I had a different approach. I had a lot of promises. This time, I'm going to run on what I plan for the City of Farmington and what I've done," said incumbent candidate William Hartsock.

At 25, Hartsock is the youngest member of the Farmington City Council. He is a graduate of Our Lady of Sorrows High School and now works as an accountant for Touche Ross and Co., CPAs.

When Hartsock made his successful bid for the council two years ago he promised to work for a data-ride system in the city.

Progress was limited, but Hartsock said it was partially realized when the senior citizen car service was instituted.

His second promise was efficiency in city government, which Hartsock said was accomplished with the purchase of a mini-computer.

"Where it used to take two people two weeks to do the billing, it now takes one person one day. We saved a month of work and effort. We will put the city payroll on the computer—that was several thousand dollars spent in a year."

USING THE COMPUTER for invoices and payables gave them an accurate, referable record and a financial statement was only several days in preparation instead of one to three months," he said.

He ran last time with the statement that he was free of conflicts of interest. That's still true.

### SAM FIELD'S ARTS & CRAFTS SHOW

AT LIVONIA MALL

**MORE CRAFT EXHIBITS THAN EVER BEFORE!**  
Hundreds of original paintings in oils, watercolors and acrylics

**NOW thru NOVEMBER 2**

Artists range from the amateur housewife to the polished professional with some exciting new concepts in paintings and crafts

*Featured will be such crafts as*

- papier tole
- woodcarving
- quilting
- patchwork
- macrame
- clay and driftwood
- spoon jewelry
- leather craft
- stained glass

- furniture making
- vu di ophone
- metal sculpture
- ceramics
- fabric-craft
- lapidary
- decoupage
- piecings wall sculptures

**PONY RIDES**  
Bring the kids to the other side of the world  
(Crowley-Coney Island Court) **50¢** a ride  
Through Nov. 2

**LIVONIA MALL**

7 Mile Road at Middlebelt

**LIVONIA MALL**

7 MILE AND MIDDLEBELT

OPEN DAILY TILL 9 P.M. SUN. NOON TO 5 P.M.