

C'ville may make Homart bid

Hill door shut, but villages could open it

By STEVE McCRAV

The Village of Carpentersville appears ready to make a bid for the entire D. Hill Nursery project.

Trustee Paul Folster said Tuesday he will introduce a resolution at next week's village board meeting inviting Homart Development Co. to develop the recently revised project totally within Carpentersville.

"I'd like to fight for it," Folster said, adding it appears the village board majority would support the resolution.

Homart officials said this week they will listen to village proposals on the approximately 270-acre project at routes 31 and 72 despite withdrawing their plans at the end of a meeting last week.

"The next move is not to come from us, but from the villages," a spokesman said. "We have not closed the door to any negotiations if they want to reopen discussion of anything that's been put on the table."

Promptness, however, "is urgent," he emphasized.

In the meantime, the company is assessing other sites in the area for the regional shopping center. Homart is planning, "We definitely feel it's a viable market," he said.

Homart officials abruptly ended the meeting last week when West Dundee Village President Kenneth Aniballi said his village board would demand a \$45,000 Homart-financed traffic study before deciding whether to begin annexation and rezoning hearings. The village boards of Carpentersville and Sleepy Hollow, however, accepted the company offer of an engineering appraisal of a consultant's traffic study and agreed to begin the hearings.

So far, Carpentersville officials appear the only ones preparing to contact the company. Mayor Aniballi said Monday he has no intention of initiating talks "at this time," but he said he would be "very willing" to attend a meeting of the villages on the matter.

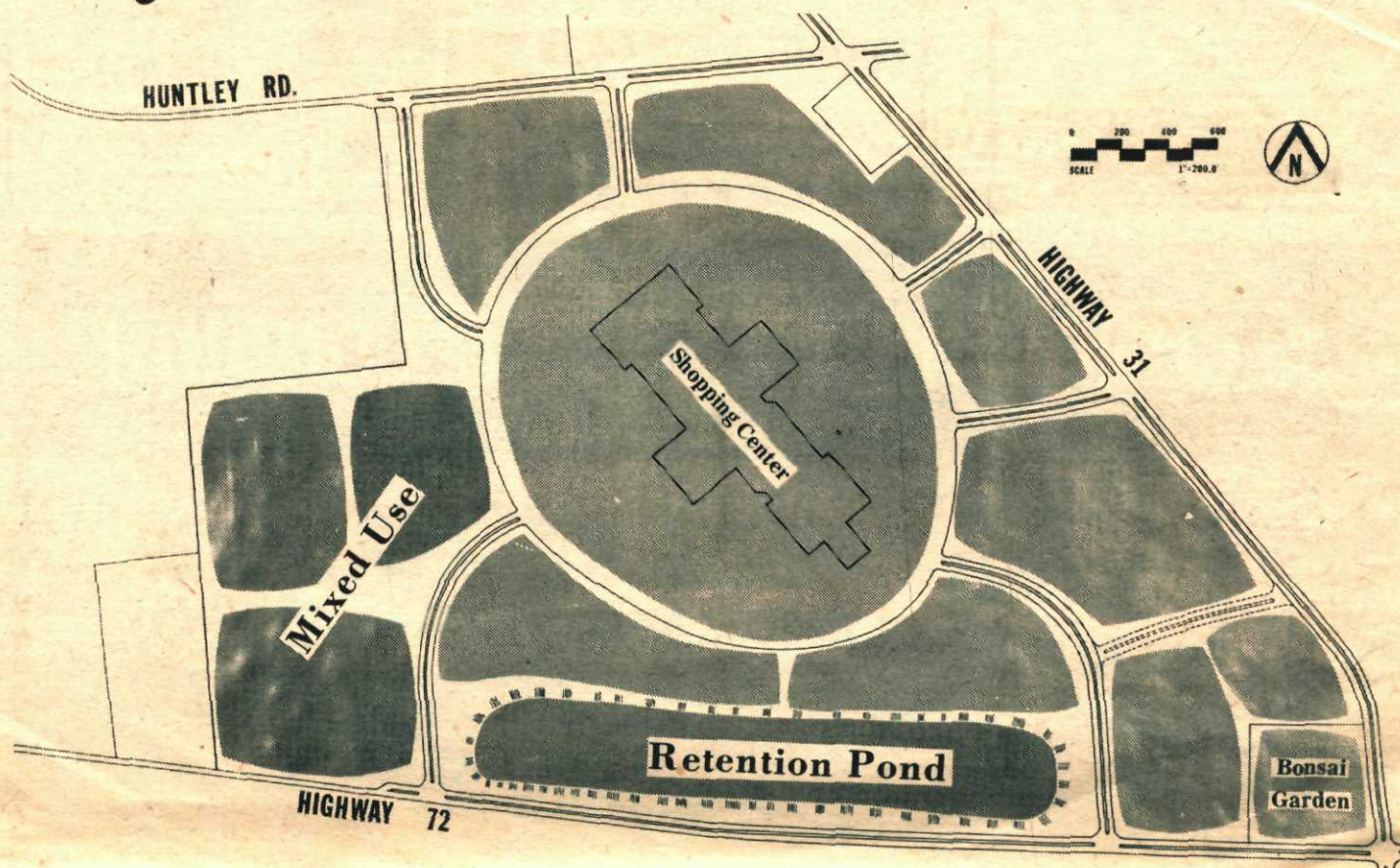
Sleepy Hollow Village President Carol Schoengart said her village has no immediate Homart plans either. "The problem is that Sleepy Hollow doesn't have any clout, and the new plan doesn't include us whatsoever," she said.

The revised plan presented at last week's meeting eliminated about 300 acres originally planned for residential development primarily in Sleepy Hollow and West Dundee. The commercial area of about 250 acres including the shopping center remained, however.

Folster said he will introduce the resolution because "I'd hate to lose the center." He said tax revenue from the project would benefit all the township's taxing bodies, especially District 300, and that a shopping center is good use of the property. "It would help the whole community."

Folster emphasized traffic is a key problem, but one that could be solved

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Here is the revised site plan presented by the Homart Development Co. last week for the D. Hill Nursery property. The revision eliminates about 300 acres originally planned for residential development and leaves about 270 acres including a regional shopping center. Also remaining is the D. Hill Bonsai garden at routes 31 and 72. About 40 acres at the southwest of the property was proposed as mixed use for transistion and could be either residential or commercial. Other than a retention pond, the remainder of the parcel was proposed for commercial development.

School architect woes persist

The District 300 school board's dissatisfaction with the architectural firm of Bradley and Bradley continues.

At Monday night's meeting the board refused to pay a bill from the Rockford firm for work on Harry J. Jacobs High School and also voted unanimously to eliminate the company as an alternate choice for work on the new middle school.

The bill, for about \$12,000, included \$5,630 for project supervision that administrators recommended not be paid.

According to the contract with the architect, the district would not be billed directly for the supervisor's time, and for the first five months it was not. But in a May 19 letter, the company informed the district a direct supervisor cost would be added in future bills; the board had not discussed or approved this change.

What the situation amounts to is that the district feels it is being charged twice for the same work.

Board Member Philip Whitehouse suggested the district pay the full bill and then sever all contracts with the firm, writing the state Capital Development Board (CDB) and school districts contemplating hiring the firm of District 300's dissatisfaction.

It had been assumed Bradley and Bradley was to be the architect on all District 300 projects in the \$16.9 million building program when it received the work on initial projects like Jacobs and the Crown and Dundee high school athletic facilities. But problems in areas such as supervision and billing procedures mounted, and administrators complained

the firm was becoming increasingly difficult to work with.

Last month the school board approved hiring a new architect for work on the middle school on Route 72 west of Randall Road even though Bradley had been paid about \$37,000 for work on the project. The board recommended Scheidemantel and Treidler, Park Ridge, although Bradley was listed as the second alternate. Monday members voted to eliminate the firm even as an alternate choice.

The board directed the administration to inform Bradley the latest bill would not be paid in full until the problem is solved.

In other matters Monday, the board voted to add North Harrison Street in Algonquin as a hazardous area after parents protested its elimination from this year's list.

About eight families and 15 students are involved.

The parents maintained the route to Eastview Elementary School is extremely hazardous, especially for younger students, and they urged that busing continue as in the last three years.

The parents said traffic in the area is so hazardous to smaller children that they would have to transport them by car if buses are not provided.

The district provides busing to students living less than 1.5 miles from a school if the area is designated hazardous. A fee is charged for the service.

The board also voted 4-2 to reject a \$24,000 bid from Kohler and Sons, Arlington Heights, to cover the fascia and soffit area of the administration building

in West Dundee. The administration was directed to search for ways the project could be handled economically while preserving the architectural style of the historic Sixth Street building.

The board accepted a bid of \$2,944 from Heatmaster for ventilation work at Algonquin Middle School and also approved Automatic Caterers for vending machine service at the high schools.

Superintendent Kenneth Neubert also told board members the CDB had approved a petition from 11 Barrington Hills families who want their approximately 350 acres detached from District 300 and attached to District 220. The CDB ruling was based on the belief detachment would not impair the district's ability to repay state loans, Neubert said.

The district is worried successful detachment would set a precedent for other detachments which could strain the district's finances significantly, however, and administrative review procedures now are underway in Kane County Circuit Court.

Our Cover . . .

School opens Tuesday, and the District 300 bus fleet is gased, greased and ready to roll from the lot behind Dundee High School. (Staff photo by Mike Chritton)

C'ville Homart bid

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during Carpentersville hearings.

The project initially was proposed for development totally within Carpentersville more than two years ago, but both West Dundee and Sleepy Hollow officials strenuously objected, claiming they would get all the problems while Carpentersville reaped all the benefits.

Homart later revised its proposal and agreed to develop the project within the three villages which would share sales tax revenue. Some officials said the reason Homart agreed to the three-village plan was because of West Dundee's importance in traffic flow to the center. They said village opposition could delay and even block Homart plans for Route 72 through West Dundee, and company officials have indicated they want the village in on the project.

Folster noted, however, Route 72 is a state highway and that West Dundee eventually could be made to bow to traffic demands.

"Maybe the answer is another bridge and another route across the river," he suggested. "If so, this would require another traffic study, which should be paid for by Homart."

Carpentersville Village President Glen Gifford was hospitalized last weekend and was unavailable for comment on Folster's resolution, but it drew quick support from Trustee Mary Srajer, who has urged throughout negotiations that Carpentersville go for the whole project.

She said, however, she was surprised at the "ultimatum" the company issued at last week's meeting and felt at the meeting's conclusion the negotiation door had been locked for good. "Now it's open again, and I don't like these cat-and-mouse games," she said. "I took them at their word."

Mrs. Srajer claimed West Dundee "knifed the other villages in the back" by refusing to compromise on the traffic study. "I lay the whole thing in West Dundee's lap."

She said it was ironic West Dundee would hold out for the traffic study after "it caused a lot of the existing traffic problems itself" by approving new businesses along Route 31. "They haven't shown any regard for their residents or residents of the area before," she said.

Mayor Aniballi strongly defended his board's decision to hold out for the study.

"Who has the most to lose on account of the traffic?" he asked. "We have a problem here now we can't contend with."

The mayor said his board is "solidly behind" the decision. "We're not saying no to development, but the traffic study is a must," he said.

Aniballi questioned why the company adamantly refused to pay for the study, originally demanded by all three villages, especially when Homart officials said it was not a matter of money. "I think they're afraid of what the study will bring out: millions of dollars are needed for roads, bridges and highways," he said. "I think we'd find out a lot more improvements are needed than the three or four million Homart is talking about."

Aniballi also noted Homart would not agree to pay 50 per cent of all initial road improvement costs but demanded a limit of 50 per cent up to \$3.8 million. Improvements above that would be paid totally by the villages.

The mayor said he was "very disappointed" with the revised Homart plan. "I thought they would bring down the size of the center," he said. "If they don't develop the residential land, someone else will."

He emphasized Homart builds "high-class developments" but he wished the company would propose "something more local than regional."

Aniballi also expressed concern the recent actions will split the villages, pitting them against each other and perhaps eroding the work accomplished during the first year of the Dundee Area Intermunicipal Planning Committee.

Mrs. Schoengart said, however, the possible loss of the Homart project clearly shows the need for cooperative planning efforts. "We should be making areawide studies now," she said. "The growth is already here, and Homart is just the last straw."

She noted the township is directly in the line of growth, "and maybe we should form some type of Chamber of Commerce to invite attractive development" to the Hill property. "The question is who's going to buy the property if Homart doesn't and what are they going to put up?"

Of vital importance, she said, is areawide pressure in Springfield to improve the traffic situation.

Rockford Dean's List

Robert Guttke, Carpentersville, was named to the Dean's List at Rockford College during the spring semester.