

US Auto scene - Southeast MI September 18, 2006



**DRIVERS OF HYBRIDS** and other vehicles that average 30 miles-per-gallon or better are getting a break on parking at city meters in Ferndale, like this one just off 9 Mile Road. — photo: Nicole Beattie

***Ferndale Offers Deal on Parking Meters***

**City Welcomes Hybrids**

By Nicole Beattie  
Staff Reporter

Drivers of hybrid vehicles and automobiles that get 30 miles-per-gallon or better, will no longer have to search for change to feed parking meters in the city of Ferndale.

An ordinance, which went into effect Sept. 1, is allowing drivers of the fuel-efficient vehicles to park at Ferndale's city parking meters for free — well, sort of.

To qualify, motorists must register at City Hall and pay an annual fee of \$8 for residents and \$25 for nonresidents in order to receive a permit.

The program was designed to encourage environmentally friendly consumer behavior but is receiving a mixed reaction from residents, according to Scott Galloway, Ferndale city council member.

"The idea was to encourage people to think about the cars they are driving and the effect they have on the world around them," Galloway said.

"It would be nice not to carry around a pocket full of quarters," he added.

Many in the community feel the program is unfair, however, as it provides a break only for those who can afford hybrid ve-

hicles. Some residence also complained that the ordinance encouraged drivers to purchase foreign automobiles, Galloway said, adding that both arguments were false because there are a variety of American-made hybrid and fuel-saving vehicles on the market.

Galloway expects that up to 100 vehicles could register for the permit.

"We are telling people that this is important and people need to take a look at it," he said. "Ferndale is taking the lead on environmental issues."

One week before the Dream Cruise, Ferndale held its own 'Green Cruise' in which approximately 250 to 500 people paraded through the city pulling their children in wagons or riding bikes and skateboards to raise awareness about energy conservation.

Galloway said the city of Ferndale is a leader in promoting energy conservation. City council has plans to add more bike paths and bike racks around town and also has plans to install vending machines that turn on only when a person stands in front of it.

"Ferndale is a recognized welcoming community where everyone can feel comfortable working and living," he said.