

# Special Efforts Required

## Blighted Township Neighborhoods Need Study

A few weeks ago, this column spoke of the need for adequate low-income housing in the Farmington Area.

The crux was that Farmington is becoming a community for middle-aged, white-collar workers who move into new subdivisions and pay \$10-\$70,000 for their homes.

But the sons and daughters, and parents, of this generation look outside of Farmington for housing because there is not enough adequate low-income homes here. Returning veterans, college graduates, young married couples, and senior citizens just cannot afford to live in Farmington.

IT WAS NOTED in that column that this is a Farmington problem because many of these are offspring and parents of Farmington residents.

It is unfortunate that youth must move elsewhere and then wait until they are 35-40 before making an entry into their hometown.

One response that column drew was that low-income housing will result in a large influx of school-age children and overburden the school district. The extra load would result in greater expense and higher taxes.

But there is low-income housing already existing in Farmington. The challenge is to

### Daniels Den

By EMORY DANIELS

make those areas adequate living neighborhoods. Improvement of these areas would not result in any great addition of school age children since a large number of children already live there.

The point is: These areas should be improved. There is little excuse for the existence of substandard neighborhoods in Farmington Township.

SUBSTANDARD HOUSING exists because government has ignored the southeast sections. The township reacts when a crisis exists and then settles back and ignores the area after making token contributions.

No special efforts are made to improve roads in the south end. Southenders are invited to participate in special assessment programs for paving with the

same split of sharing expenses as is applied in the northern part of the township.

And here lies the rub. Residents of the south end just cannot afford the special assessments for road construction, sewer and water, or drainage work. Although their incomes may be only half of their northern neighbors, they are still expected to pay the same share to get a road paved. Thus, roads aren't getting paved and the township's road funds are being spent for improvements in the north.

The present township policy for road improvements has not accomplished much in the south end. It seems about time for that policy to be changed. This is one special effort which could be made.

ANOTHER COULD BE to create a zoning ordinance establishing a low-income housing district. The district could be identical with present low-income areas.

But the ordinance could set standards on building materials, roofing, plumbing and electrical codes. With enough teeth, the ordinance might force absentee landlords to improve their

dwellings instead of milking rent from ancient buildings.

The ordinance could specify that fuel stoves be located in the utility room and not in the living room. It could insist on proper insulation and electrical wiring. Lot sizes could remain small.

When a structure is condemned and torn down, or remodeled, an adequate home ought to be the result. The resident ought to be able to navigate the road his home is located on. And he shouldn't have raw sewage collecting in the ditch in front of his home.

THE TOWNSHIP Beautification Committee has worked with some homeowners in the area and managed to obtain some improvements. But the absentee landlord has escaped. And muddy roads and raw sewage in ditches still remain.

Yes, some progress has been made. But inadequate living conditions remain and will continue unless government decides that special efforts are needed.

The sad thing is there is not even a study committee formed to see if anything can be done. Apparently, the township assumes its blighted areas are there to stay and are perfectly content not to take action.

## How Young People View Law

FARMINGTON

Last semester, a traveling law seminar was conducted for government classes at North Farmington High School.

### Ellsworth Criticizes State's 'Nitpicking'

FARMINGTON

State Boundary Commissioners and staff members were given a lecture Wednesday by Gerald Ellsworth, who described their actions as "nitpicking" and "frustrating to Farmington residents."

Ellsworth made his criticisms after it became apparent the commission was ready to reject the substitute petition filed by Robert McConnell.

ELLSWORTH, a Quaker-town resident, was among the leaders of Citizens For A Better Farmington which led the campaign last fall to consolidate the city, township and both villages into a single city.

"If nothing else, what you are doing may be legally necessary to establish procedure and define your authority," Ellsworth told the commission.

### JCs Thankful For Honor

EDITOR

The Farmington Area Jaycees were honored by your complimentary editorial recognizing the Jaycees as the "Club of the Decade" during the 60s. We would be remiss however, if we did not recognize that our accomplishments were a measure of the splendid cooperation we have received over the years from the community.

We want to share our recognition with the Farmington Area merchants, public officials, professional people, organizations and residents who made the past 10 years' accomplishments possible.

Founded in 1946, the Jaycees have always enjoyed a close tie with the development of Farmington and its people. Until just recently the chapter's members were almost entirely business professionals, servicemen and tradesmen in the community. This gave us a vested interest in Farmington's future.

### GM Executive Helps Direct Campaign

BLOOMFIELD HILLS Martin D. Walker was named chairman of the Auto Suppliers Division of the 1970 Development Campaign for the Traffic Improvement Association of Oakland County recently.

Walker, purchasing director of GMC Truck and Coach, is spearheading his campaign toward a goal of \$20,000 in contributions from Oakland County suppliers of the automotive industry.

The campaign is scheduled to run until March. The funds will be used to advance the accident prevention program of TIA so as to

Lady of Sorrows and Our Lady of Mercy.

The word seminar is used loosely for want of a more apt description. It was actually a round-table discussion session

designed to obtain student attitudes about the law and education.

The sessions were

THE SESSIONS WERE

Boundary Commission is tangled up in legal verbiage, the intent of the community is being frustrated," Ellsworth continued.

"If this is to be the pattern of the Boundary Commission, heaven forbid for the citizen who tries to face the issues of his community and tries to make decisions."

When questioned for consolidation, there was no personal cost involved. Since then, this has become a legal snafu, and citizens are throwing up their hands in complete frustration.

"I realize the Boundary Commission did not create the law," Ellsworth concluded, "but the intent of the law seems to be subjugated now to legal procedures."

ELLSWORTH'S COMMENTS brought an immediate reaction from Gus Francke, chairman of the Boundary Commission.

"All of the actions are coming from Farmington," Francke said. "I can understand your frustration, but all of this legal business emanates from citizens of Farmington not from this commission."

Commissioner Irving Rozan said he sympathized with Ellsworth's views. But whichever decision the commission made would be appealed to the courts. Rejection of the substitute or a request for a declaratory judgment seemed the quickest means of resolving the conflict, said Rozan.

Chuck Hackney, assistant attorney general, commented that Ellsworth's remarks were "symptomatic of an era when our children will live in the environment that is created today. We recognize to retain the status quo is a luxury that we cannot afford."

"Your comments are indicative of other comments heard from Farmington persons that the Boundary Commission is generating litigation," Hackney continued. "But this subject matter generates litigation, not the Boundary Commission."

As the community sets out to forge a new decade we ask the community to pledge, as we do, to share the task of meeting the human and environmental needs of the 1970s.

NOEL KURTH, President Farmington Area Jaycees

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sponsored by Oakland County Bar Association. Leading discussions at Farmington schools was Robert Nelson, an attorney with offices in Farmington Township and a former township justice of the peace.

The discussions are scheduled after the students have learned about the three branches of government and the system of checks and balances.

Purpose of the visits, as defined by Nelson in a letter to government teachers, was to discuss "the difficulties of human beings administering justice among human beings and removing some of the mystery of the law, exposing foolishness as well as necessity and even some nobility."

The approach was "Tell it like it is" and a flexible atmosphere was sought to allow students to discuss any facet of the law which bothered or concerned them.

DURING LAST semester, Nelson visited 19 government classes at the three schools. When asked why the program was attempted, he answered:

"Perhaps as never before, the American system is being challenged and tested in many sectors of our society, including high school students. It is my opinion that many of the challenges are well founded, some are not, and some are ambivalent and inconsistent. Better understanding is needed so that both concurrence and challenge are realistic."

"It could well be that the judicial branch is more challenged than the legislative or executive because it is not as well understood by the bulk of the population."

"This lower level of understanding may exist because the judicial branch concerns itself with the administration

of not only justice but also law. While just about everybody feels he is an expert on justice, many consider the law to be mysterious.

"While most people are pretty familiar with the functions of chief executives, bureaucrats, political parties, legislators and lobbyists, they're a little fuzzy about judges and lawyers and what the police are a part of the executive and hence which branch has responsibility for their action."

"Providing the younger generation with an understanding of the judicial branch of government is the responsibility of many people. High school teachers of civics or American government are probably on the front lines in carrying out this job."

CHAIRMAN OF THE county bar's school program is James Retniew. Next semester, Harold Larsen has volunteered to help Nelson with the discussion meetings in Farmington.

When Nelson arrived in a classroom, the desks were arranged in a semi-circle to foster relaxed and free discussion.

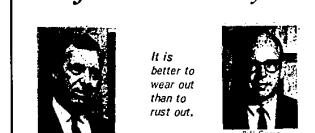
The seniors were very idealistic, says Nelson, and very quickly the discussion led to the "why" of the law. Why is there no perfect solution to problems of law?

Why should the guilty be allowed to plead the fifth amendment? Why do lawyers defend clients they know to be guilty? Why is the law so complex and why does it move so slowly?

Is the law hooked on the past? Does the law favor the criminal and the rich? Do the courts tie the policeman's hands?

NELSON DISCOVERED

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Attends School

FARMINGTON

PFC DAVID P. JOHNSTON, 21, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Johnston of 31630 Lonnie, Westland, has completed a strategic microwave systems repairman course at the U. S. Army Signal Center and School, Ft. Monmouth, N. J.

His wife, Nina, lives at 30187 S. Stockton, Farmington.

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