

All City Taxable Properties Being Reappraised At 50%

By EMORY DANIELS

By the end of February, the City of Farmington expects to complete a reassessment of all taxable properties in the city—the first total reassessment since 1958.

When the complete reappraisal of properties is finished this month, the city expects to raise its total assessed valuation by about five percent.

The goal is to appraise all taxable properties at 50 per cent of true market value so the city can receive a state equalized value (SEV) factor of 1.00 from the Oakland County Equalization Board.

The SEV factor is a multiplier applied to local total assessments to insure that taxable properties in a given municipality are being assessed at 50 per cent of mar-

ket value, the price the property could be sold for.

IN 1969, for example, the City of Farmington's SEV factor was 1.15 which meant the valuation of all properties were raised by 15 per cent.

The 1969 factor was set because the county had established that the city's total evaluation was 15 per cent below its true value as determined by real estate samplings of properties sold.

In 1970, the city's SEV factor was 1.28 and in 1971 the city's proposed factor would be 1.52 if local assessments are not adjusted.

All properties in the city are being re-appraised, says City Manager John Dinan, so the total valuation can be raised by about five per cent to obtain a 1.00 SEV factor.

IF THE GOAL is reached, he adds, assessments of individual properties will not go for 1971 after March 1 but will remain as re-appraised in February.

The city-wide assessment program in progress is an attempt to eliminate the SEV factor so that the local assessed value and the SEV will be the same, explains City Assessor Dorothy Poston.

The SEV factor is determined from sales data by Oakland County, and local communities must either revise local assessments or have the factor applied to the entire community, adds Keith Palmer who is the appraiser for the city.

"Since the last complete reappraisal in 1958," says Dinan, "inequities have developed within our commu-

ity. Elimination of the SEV factor will reduce the inequities and thus result in everyone being assessed for their fair share."

Mrs. Poston explains that the 1963 State Constitution requires that all property be assessed at 50 per cent of its true market value.

The city's market value is determined by the county, she adds, which gathers information on real estate sales made in the city during 1968, 1969 and 1970 and uses the average of sales in those three years to determine what the 1971 assessed valuation should be.

STATE LAW requires that the sales price of a home be recorded on the deed, Dinan adds, and this information is easily accessible to be fed into the county's computers

to arrive at what the city's assessed valuation should be. Mrs. Poston gave an example of the type of inequity which can occur without the complete re-appraisal being completed.

"A new home may be built and sold for \$30,000 and appraised by our department at \$15,000, or half of its market value. If the city gets an SEV factor of 1.3, the factor is applied across the board and this new house has its assessment raised an additional 30 per cent."

"The same can be true to an older home which does not experience a rise in value. If a 1.3 factor is applied, the assessment is raised by the same 30 per cent."

Once all property is appraised at its true value, Mrs. Poston continues, each home will be assessed ac-

ording to its true market value and will not have the county multiplier applied against it to raise the assessment.

AS A SPECIAL service to taxpayers, the city this year is establishing "Assessor Review Week" from Feb. 15-19 to give all property-owners an opportunity to review their assessments.

During this week, the city assessor will be available to review assessments prior to the meeting of the Board of Review.

The assessor will be available from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day during Assessor Review Week to furnish residents with an informal review of their assessments.

If not satisfied after meet-

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Abuse Action

The Farmington School Board Monday night took action it expects will lead to a substance abuse program for the local schools beginning the fall semester of the 1971-72 school year. A report on that action and a deadline given is inside.

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Shopping Center

The second public hearing on the proposed shopping center in Farmington Township will be held March 8 in larger quarters—the auditorium in North Farmington High School. A report on the proposed regional mall is given inside.

Page 9B

Outstanding Scholars

The Farmington Soroptimists have announced winners of Youth Citizenship awards. Names of the winners are included in a report on the judging, plans of the winners, and details on the upcoming awards banquet.

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For Self-Starters

If you're a home-maker thinking about employment or volunteer work, there's a close-to-home program designed just for you. You can find details in the Women's Section.

Page 1B

Like Happy Endings?

We have a real Valentine story, tied up with hearts and flowers. Read it in our Women's Section.

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SAME TO YOU, FELLA!



This is just about what your hometown newspaper will say to winter in a special Observer "Beat the Blahs!" section. Look for it February 20-21



LIBRARY GIFT — The Rotary Club of Farmington last week presented a \$400 check to the Farmington Library District as first payment of the \$3,000 it will raise to furnish and equip the "quiet room" in the new library being built on 12 Mile in Farmington Township. From left: Joe Nicita, Rotary vice-president; Mrs. Mary Allison, Library Board secretary; Dave Comfort, Rotary president; and Earl Lough, Rotary treasurer. (Evert photo)

Library Board Tells Need For Donations

The Farmington Library District has formed a gift committee and is ready to accept donations for the new library well under construction on 12 Mile in Farmington Township.

Appointed chairman of the gift committee was Mrs. May Allison, secretary of the Farmington Library Board and a long-time supporter of the local library system.

MRS. ALLISON says the committee members are actively interested in the development of good library services and is looking forward to equally active citizen participation.

The gift committee is necessary, she explains, because the library board did not receive the federal grant which was counted upon in the original plans for the new library.

The gift committee hopes local funds and gifts can replace, at least partially, the \$300,000 gap created by lack of federal funds.

Local tax contributions from city and township residents have provided adequate finances to construct the new library. But about \$300,000 is still needed for furnishings and books.

THE BOARD has already acknowledged its first gift from the Farmington Jaycee auxiliary which has agreed to furnish the children's room in the new library.

Another early contributor is the newly formed Rotary Club of Farmington which last October approached the library board with its desire to make a commemorative gift of \$3,000 to furnish the Quiet Room in the new library.

Other contributions were made before the formation of the gift committee, says Mrs. Allison, and it appears other community organizations will soon be joining in with their contributions.

A third early contributor is the Farmington Democratic Club which, as previously

announced, will donate a memorial book collection.

"Many local organizations have long been regular annual contributors to the book collections at the library," explains Mrs. Allison, with the most prominent being the American Assn. of University Women which annually donates a portion of the proceeds from its book sale to the Farmington Library.

Generous amounts have also been contributed in the past by the Questors, Farmington Town Club, Farmington Garden Club and Dale Garden Club, she adds.

"We hope these contributions will be increased due to the present need."

DAVID COMFORT, president of the Farmington Rotary Club, presented the Library District with a check for \$400 last week as a first payment to help furnish the Quiet Room.

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Township Police Planning Appeal

By EMORY DANIELS

A request by two police officers' appeal a grievance resulted in the appointment of three members to the police department appeal board by the Farmington Township Board Monday night.

The new appeal board was created by ordinance last fall but membership had never been appointed.

The appeal of the two unnamed police officers prompted township trustees Monday to appoint members to the appeal board.

NAMED were Treasurer Thomas Nolan and trustees Earl Oppertbauer and Fred Lichtman. The ordinance creating the appeals board specifically excluded the supervisor from being a member.

Oppertbauer explained that the two officers wrote a letter to the township's police and fire committee asking for a hearing.

The police and fire committee is a standing committee created by the board in January 1971 to recommend policy changes to the township board.

Oppertbauer stated the police and fire committee was formed to study policy matters and not to hear appeals from disgruntled employees.

The two officers claim they are being harassed by being transferred to different shifts and feel their job security is threatened, he said.

The supervisor was excluded from the appeals board, Oppertbauer explained, because he directs the police department and most grievances are appeals of action taken by either the chief of police or supervisor.

OPPERTBAUSER said the ordinance calls for three trustees to form the appeals board and suggested the two trustees on the police and fire committee be appointed.

Oppertbauer, Lichtman and Supervisor Earl Teeplees are members of the police and fire committee.

Teeplees suggested that the officers be served on the police and fire committee should not serve on the police appeal board.

Teeplees also suggested that the officers follow the chain of command and not circumvent the police chief by first

communicating with a trustee.

Nolan objected saying the persons on the police policy committee have the most experience in police matters and would be valuable members on the appeal board.

Trustee David Stader commented that the appeals board is a vehicle to be used when an officer has reason to appeal action taken by his leadership, either the chief or supervisor.

TEEPLEES countered that the policy committee, by recommending policy, also plays a leadership role.

"The purpose of the committee structure was to allow each of us to specialize and give attention to one particular area of concern," Oppertbauer answered. "I don't see how it's consistent to say a policy committee member would be ineligible to serve on the appeal board."

Nolan said he would be "highly dissatisfied" if Lichtman and Oppertbauer did not serve on the appeal board.

Stader interjected that the board sets policy and the standing committees only recommend.

LICHTMAN commented that Teeplees' argument sounded logical only because of its redundant illogic.

An officer cannot appeal policy matters, Lichtman said, but only what he believes are personal wrongs done against him by either the supervisor or police chief.

The officers are entitled to a hearing before members of the township board. It would not be out of line to have members of the police committee on the appeals board.

By substituting other members of the board, Lichtman added, the other members would have to direct questions to the policy committee members on policy or procedures recommended.

Lichtman added he took it as a personal insult that Teeplees so vehemently insisted that he would be prejudiced as an appeals board member because he served on the policy committee.

Lichtman then seconded Oppertbauer's motion and quickly called for a vote. Teeplees asked for a roll call vote.

Teeplees voted no and Stader added the second dissenting vote because he objected to discussion being cut off. Nolan, Oppertbauer, Lichtman, Trustee Mrs. Margaret Schaffer and Clerk Floyd Cairns voted yes.

In previous years, an aggrieved police officer appealed to the township board and the entire board acted as the appeals board with the supervisor excusing himself.

During the 1970 contract negotiations with the Farmington Township Police Officers Association, agreement was reached that a separate police appeals board would be established.

Lichtman, at the time, objected that the separate board might infringe upon the right of the township board to have the final say on grievances. By the time the ordinance was adopted creating the appeals board, however, Lichtman appeared satisfied the board's rights were protected.

Man Killed In Accident On 13 Mile

Farmington Township experienced its fourth traffic fatality of 1971 Friday when two trucks collided on 13 Mile Road west of Middle Belt.

Dead is Raymond E. Roberts, 25, of Detroit, who was a passenger in the van driven by Roy L. Kittinger, 38, of Detroit.

Roberts was driving west on 13 Mile, according to Farmington Township Police, when he lost control of his vehicle on the slippery pavement and collided with a semi-truck driven by Norman A. Sokoll, 39, of Taylor.

Kittinger, who lived with Roberts at 4805 Lakepointe, Detroit, was injured but is reported in satisfactory condition at Botsford General Hospital.

Sokoll was treated and released from Botsford the day after the accident, Feb. 5. Roberts was driving a van owned by the Essex Lamp & Repair Co., of Warren, and Sokoll was driving a semi owned by Allied Supermarkets, of Detroit.