

### FACTS and OPINIONS

by Paul Chandler



There is a thrill for all who participate in the building of a new community (such as Farmington Township) and for the most part, citizens use patience, good sense, and foresight during the complicated process.

Nonetheless, almost anywhere a fast growth pattern occurs, there are to be found groups who obstruct. They generally fall into one of three categories:

- Little league politicians who would fan out prejudice, doubt and suspicion among the voters—merely in hopes of some short-range ballot advantage.
- Persons who live near the brink of hysteria and who find some kind of psychological satisfaction in arm-waving and demonstrating before their neighbors in public places.
- Those who simply aren't well informed on the subject, and who are used cruelly by neighbors and acquaintances.

Anyhow, the Farmington Township Hall had a fair gathering of "protesters" at a zoning hearing last week, and they were taking a position against one project.

They couldn't have been more wrong.

Involved is a fabulous plan which has been conceived for an open piece of land in the area of Grand River, Halstead, Eleven Mile and Drake roads.

Here, exactly where it belongs, a developer proposes to build a multi-million dollar complex of housing, golf course, pool, lake, tennis courts, motel, shopping center, restaurant—a "private community" in a Colonial mood.

It would yield more than \$400,000 a year in taxes for this community, of which \$350,000 would go to the Farmington School District alone. It would provide a land use which would, among other things, not bring in hordes of school youngsters, all of whom must be educated when they do come to subdivision housing.

The "Village Green" would add an aesthetic value—a change of pace—to Farmington Township's growth. It would be up-graded, pleasant—and it would be the greatest shot in the arm to the Township tax picture it's ever had.

Maybe some citizens have forgotten. A normal house with a normal family in it, is a NET LOSS on the tax balance sheet. The cost of providing the school and government services is larger than any tax revenue derived from the ordinary single residence.

The balance must come from Commercial and Business Property, if home taxes aren't to soar out of sight. . . the balance comes from such things as "Village Green" where the tax revenues exceed the costs heaped upon schools and government.

For all of these, there they were last Thursday night . . . "residents" crying "conspiracy" . . . Township office seekers crying about "too many apartments" . . . "neighbors" who really want to try to insist that the land shouldn't be used for anything—just remain vacant.

It was all lunacy and Facts and Opinions can only hope nobody takes the performance seriously. Farmington is incredibly lucky to have an investor willing to put this kind of money into so wholesome a development.

To get back to this thrilling participation in building a new, balanced community with air and elegance, on open raw land; well, there's a book which contains ideas which Farmington Township residents might ponder.

This volume is written by an angry architect (Peter Blake) and called "God's Own Junkyard." He blasts away at the design of suburbs, at the mixing of the beautiful and the ugly in the inner cities, at billboards; at the lack of imagination in residential living areas; and at the failure of public officials to recognize the need for Symbolic Buildings in a balanced, interesting community; and at planning commissions and politicians.

Excerpts from "God's Own Junkyard":

"No people has inherited a more naturally beautiful land than we . . . the only trouble is that we are about to turn this beautiful inheritance into the biggest slum on the face of the earth . . . the mess that is man-made America.

" . . . our suburbs are interminable wastelands dotted with millions of monotonous little houses on monotonous little lots and criss-crossed by highways lined with billboards, jazzed-up diners, used-car lots, drive-in movies, beflagged gas stations and garish motels . . .

" . . . in our land we have just about empowered a branch of government (FHA) to specify the size and shape of the typical American suburban master bedroom (in which all Americans are thus created equal) to specify the size and shape of the typical family room (in which all American tots crawl around equal); to specify the size, shape and style of every suburban house; and we have empowered the FHA to specify the width, length, curvature or straightness, surface, presence-or-absence of trees, sidewalks, poles, of every single suburban street (on which all American teenagers play equal—a considerable peril).

**MORE ON SUBURBIA**

" . . . suburbia has more space, more greenery, more modern kitchens, more gadgets, than Urbia. But at this, and much more, could have been achieved in infinitely better ways." (The author urges some high-rise apartments on narrow lots, attached together, with small, private patios, easy to maintain . . . the surplus land then could be pooled for great common playgrounds, parks or gardens.)

"Studies in Philadelphia and Connecticut showed that taxes levied on apartments produced an annual surplus of close to \$35 per unit which applied just to the cost of maintaining public schools . . . the reason is obvious: High-rise apartments tend to attract young families without children."

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# Village Green' Gets Boos, Praise at Zoning Hearing

By MARGE PIAZZA

With some objectors in the background, the Farmington Township Zoning Board heard the facts on a proposed new "Village Green" development at Grand River and Halstead, and decided to make final ruling on the zoning on Sept. 24.

The proposed "country club community" would consist of 160 acres northwest of Farmington proper, bordering Grand River, 11 Mile, Halstead, and Drake Rds.

Here, on rolling, wooded land, developer Thomas A. Duke hopes to construct a private community, self-contained, consisting of among other things, 2000 Williams-

burg-style, one- and two-floor apartment units (of one- and two-bedrooms) to be constructed over a period of ten years, plus a giant motor inn to be completed in the Fall of 1965.

Included in the drawings are a shopping center, village green, complete recreational facilities (swimming pool, lake, golf course, tennis courts, etc.) and private periphery drives offering seclusion for its tenants.

Duke, owner of River Glen and Brookdale Club Apartments in Farmington, heard some caustic remarks from the audience.

Duke said he felt he would have little difficulty filling to capacity his community and cited various studies on apartment buildings in Farmington Township's new southwest industrial park would demand this

type of housing for professional people and would add an excellent tax base, which the district sorely needs.

He claims his project would also be a scenic attraction.

Democratic Supervisor candidate Aldo Vagnozzi presented a University of Michigan study to the Board in which it indicated the trend for single homes is back once more. Vagnozzi opposed the project.

Twenty-five or more residents were then given the floor to present their views for an "equitable adjustment." Most expressed "fear of extreme congestion" and the lack of preservation of the character of the area. They asked the area be confined to half-acre lots set aside for large, residential homes. They said that Farmington Township has reached the saturation point in multiple working.

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### Observer Office Open At G. River Address

Observer Newspapers has opened a new office in Farmington at 33425 Grand River, which is on the south side, a couple of doors east of the City Hall across the street from the Masonic Temple.

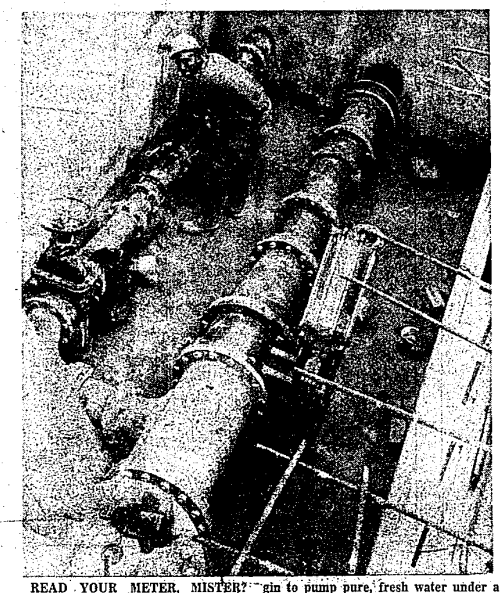
Courteous employees are there to provide service on Report Classified Want Ads; on wedding invitations and stationery; on circulation problems.

Observer Newspaper Farmington phones are GA 5-0908 for Want Ads and 476-2705 for Circulation.

### Bus Route For Sorrows Published

READ YOUR METER, MISTER? Workman Ed Craig doesn't care if you do, but this is a very special meter, in a concrete box at Orchard Lake and Eight-Mile roads. It will record the flow of water in the new lines from Detroit which—in less than two weeks—will begin to pump pure, fresh water under a good head of pressure to areas of Farmington Township where the only source heretofore has been undependable wells.

Supervisor Curt Hall expects to turn the valves for the first area to receive the new water by Sept. 15.



### Man, Woman Charged With Taking \$1,800 From Bra of 'Friend'

Livonia Police arrested a Farmington man and woman on charges of unprovoked robbery and recovered \$1,048 of \$1,800 allegedly stolen from Mrs. Mary Ann Mullins of Marietta, Ga. after a drinking spree at bars and lounges.

Arrested and released on bond are: Francis Drysdale, Little Valley Trailer Court, Farmington, and Joyce Heller, 20832 Tuck Road, Farmington, according to police reports.

Drysdale was arrested at his home and Miss Heller at the Fisher Body Plant in Livonia.

Mrs. Mullins told investigators officers she had gone to the Detroit Race Course from her Georgia farm to collect cash for a horse which had been claimed from her earlier.

She received \$1,800 in cash, according to the police reports, and then met the woman, who identified herself as "Helen" but actually was Miss Heller, at the track.

They had several drinks at various bars and then met a friend of "Helen" who joined them in the spree.

After traveling around and drinking in the car, the couple (Continued on Page 2)

# Tighten Those Gaskets, Detroit Water Is Near

Pure, soft water, under a high head of pressure, will rush through mains and into some Farmington Township homes for the first time in history within a week—give or take a day or two.

Supervisor Curt Hall confirmed the imminence of the long-awaited valve twisting and said the first to benefit would be those in the long-

# Plans Approved For New School On Ten Mile Road

By JOY STINSON

Preliminary plans, with a few slight alterations, for the proposed Larkshire Elementary School were approved last Monday evening at a special meeting of the Farmington Public School District Board of Education.

The proposed \$500,000 school is scheduled to be a 41,500-square-foot structure in an "H" shape. A site already has been purchased in the 10 Mile Road area between Orchard Lake and Middlebelt roads. Hopefully it will open in the fall of 1965.

Other expansion plans on the school board's agenda include the passing of a budget estimate of \$208,000 for an addition to the Bond Elementary School and alterations to the present structure.

To provide a basis for expanding play and parking facilities at the Shiawassee School, the Board was authorized to purchase two lots adjacent to the school for a total of \$3,886, subject to verification of an unpaid balance on a water and sewerage assessment. This price includes \$1,000 for each of the one-quarter acre lots and \$943 assessment per lot.

Also to allow for future construction of schools, the Board voted to instruct their attorney to draw up an agreement for concerned parties to sign giving the Farmington School District a walking easement in the Franklin Forest Subdivision.

Other Monday night business included the reconsideration and again a refusal to provide transportation for 65 students who live in the district and attend St. Paul's Lutheran School which is located in another school district.

The Board refused for the second time to set a precedent by bussing these 65 students to one location within the Farmington School District where a St. (Continued on Page 2)

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# Swedish Guitarist is New Exchange Student

Dressed in an Ivy-league suit and strumming a guitar, the 17-year-old North Farmington High School senior looks like he's been around here all his life.

But the blue-eyed, blond young man who's caught on to American ways so quickly is actually North Farmington's new foreign exchange student.

Lars Egnell—who will be here for a year under the American Field Service program—is living with Mr. and Mrs. Shlon Watson, 22746 Ravenscroft, Farmington Township, and, according to his host family, fits in like a charm.

The Watson's 17-year-old son, Ron, will be a co-senior with Lars, Sheldon, Jr., 14, Sally, 11, and Steve, 8, are the other members of the Watson family.

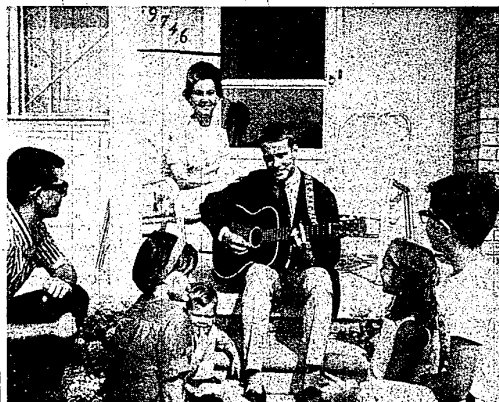
"I hope to learn a lot about the United States, meet many people, and learn how Americans live," the guest student told The Observer. "And I want to tell Americans about how we live in Sweden."

Lars said America is much as he expected it—"big cars, modern buildings, huge shops and many people." He got his first glimpse of the U.S. when the AFS student ship, Seven Seas, docked in New York Harbor late last month.

In Sweden, Lars is the son of a chemical engineer who works in the food industry. He has a five-year old sister. With two

years of study remaining, he hopes to attend a university when he returns. Impeccable English is based on six years of language study. At Farmington, he'll continue his English, adding math, government, physics and music to his schedule.

Lars enjoys most sports as well as being an avid guitarist. Describing Sweden, he says, "We have few poor people, a good social system and a democratic government."



SWEDISH exchange student at North Farmington High School is Lars Egnell (center, with guitar). Avid listeners are members of his American "family"—Mrs. Sheldon Watson; Don, 17; Sheldon, Jr., 14; Sally, 11; and Steve, 8.