

OBSERVATION POINT

It's Onward And Upward For Suburbs

By Philip H. Power

Sometimes it seems hopeless that these suburban communities will achieve a mesh of all their talents and finally move toward the future. Compelling problems and their solutions often appear to be drowned out by the babel of many critical voices.

That's the way it seems more often than not.

And that is also why in these grim times it is refreshing to see signs that all the wheel-spinning was not in vain, that there is at least hope. The signs are everywhere.

LIVONIA'S promising to pave and widen part of Five Mile Road late this year and finish it up in 1970, perhaps with a mall feature to set off the center of the city at Five Mile and Farmington Roads. There are new industries moving into Livonia, creating jobs and—as a welcome byproduct—easing the property tax burden on already overburdened residents. We take no delight in the movement out of Detroit, but we welcome the inevitable movement of business and industry into the suburbs.

Livonia, whose voters twice have knocked off a wholesale revision of the city charter, now is working on a piecemeal revision to bring government up-to-date. It sounds a bit odd that a city only 19 years old must work constantly to stay modern.

FARMINGTON, TOO, is reaching onward and upward.

After agonizing months of study and political pushing and pulling, Farmington is tackling the long-overdue consolidation of the city and township.

The voters will make that decision at the polls Nov. 4. Sometimes study and controversy trail off into boredom and inconclusion. Whichever way the vote goes Nov. 4, we congratulate Farmington for carrying a central public issue to a decision.

Plymouth is in much the same boat.

There have been studies on consolidating Plymouth and Plymouth township. The city, of course, is landlocked by the township. The breakthrough for both was the series of community seminars which resulted in a study by Citizens Research Council of Michigan.

Again the end is not immediately visible, but the signs point to a greater community awareness of the needs and a positive approach to their solution.

As an aside, Plymouth star-

ted the Beautification Council of Southeastern Michigan the other day. The group's delegates arrived to preach beautification. The city showed it was ahead of the game and was carrying out a program without prodding by anybody.

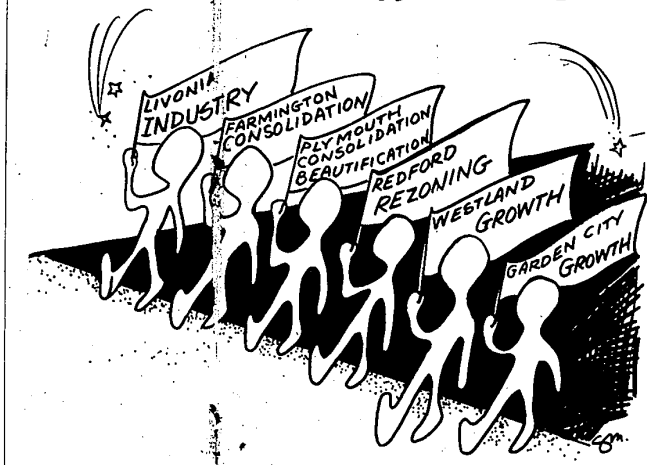
REDFORD TOWNSHIP has been engaged in a furious fight over the rezoning of Glenhurst Golf Course for commercial enterprises. The commercial enterprises won, this time. The healthy thing is that the decision came out of community involvement, which included some shouting matches.

Westland and Garden City, on the southern edge of the area, are booming along. Garden City is building a new school administration building, for example. An industrial park is growing. An urban renewal project is bogged down for the moment, but work is being done.

Perhaps this sometimes irritating controversy and friction is good for a community. Everybody gets his say and the decision makers take off from that point.

As we sit contemplating the coming Fourth of July weekend, it's nice to see progress in so many places.

OBSERVERLAND PROGRESS ON PARADE



Leonard Poger writes

'This Is The Week That ...'

A Real Crash Program

By Don Hoenshell

To all you guys who scoff because you've never been pulled by George Gallup or Elmo Roper and have never savored the bliss of a winning Irish Sweepstakes ticket or had your car recalled, relax and enjoy your luck.

After 27,563 miles, my station wagon was recalled as a lethal weapon on the highway at any speed.

It's like your wife has run off with your best friend (you'll miss him) and the bank has finally admitted a mistake (you owe it \$4 million) and July 4 is sunny, but you've got asthma.

The car has seen you through high speed trips almost daily and when the traffic gets sticky you have developed a confidence that the Green Ghost will get you out of anything.

THE LETTER arrives and gets mixed up with the junk mail. Somebody notices the name and address are typed rather than sloppily mimeographed and everything seems to be spelled right. Certainly, with all these conditions, something must be up.

"Chevrolet has determined..." and there follows the jargon about the overloaded framstrut which is connected to the axle and how about coming in for an electrocardiogram.

Oh! However, it is also possible that a piece of the cam may become lodged in the throttle linkage which could prevent the throttle from closing. If this should occur while the vehicle is in motion, the vehicle will not slow down when the driver removes his foot from the accelerator pedal."

Now try to bring up the vision of a guy in traction in the intensive care unit somewhere and somebody is reading his mail to him since the bandages obscure his vision.

"Oh, I see, now," he mumbles because it is difficult to enunciate without his teeth. "That's why I hit the truck. The throttle did not close when I removed my foot from the accelerator."

"GEE, I FEEL better knowing that. And it was I who was stupid, rolling along at 80 on the freeway and not thinking linkage. It's all my fault. Forgive me, General Motors."

The letter plainly stated that should this happen "the driver should shift the transmission into neutral, apply the brakes and bring the vehicle to a complete stop."

"That's what I tried to do,

Officer, but it was dark under the truck and I couldn't see the shift dial. And also, I was trying to duck this other guy's transmission at the time. Can I cop a plea, General?"

The letter says to drop in at your friendly dealer's and have a new type fast idle cam on the carburetor.

"OK, as soon as I become ambulatory, I'll bring the car over in a shoe box and let you look for the carburetor. And good luck, General."

But even in the darkest of hours, there is a 10-watt bulb, a glimmer, a prayer.

"Mr. Hoenshell. In checking on the attached recall campaign, we find there may be an error in the serial number on your title. At your convenience, would you please stop in and we can check this for you."

How about that, sports fans? Maybe I don't even own it!

Tim Richard writes

Unrest 'Far Deeper, More Urgent'

Editorial & Opinion

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Don Hoenshell, Editor

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For those who hold to the conventional view that the overwhelming majority of college students are good boys and girls and only two per cent are commie-style radicals, a report by 22 relatively young Republican congressmen must be highly disturbing.

The conventional view—at

least as uttered by an FBI spokesman and applauded by a local chamber of commerce audience—focuses on the lunatic core of college demonstrators and seeks to tie them to doctrinaire line of Moscow or Peking.

The congressmen, in a report to President Nixon, paid only scant attention to this approach. Not, after touring many of the nation's campuses and talking to students and academicians, did they return with a Kennedyish injunction of mobilizing the young.

Their findings are especially interesting to Observerland suburbanites because two of the 22 congressmen represent these communities—Marvin Esh, a former University of Michigan instructor, the 2nd District (including Plymouth); and Jack McDonald, who once studied for a year at Wayne State University and now represents the 19th District (Redford, Livonia and Farmington included).

Altogether, five of the 22 are from Michigan, and all five were in the "Class of '68" that then Gov. Romney helped to elect. The other three are Donald Riegle of Flint, Guy Vander Jagt of Cadillac and Philip Ruppe of the Upper Peninsula.

THEIR SHOCKER is this:

"We were alarmed to discover that this problem (campus unrest) is far deeper and far more urgent than most realize, and that it goes far beyond the efforts of organized revolutionaries."

Two of the group go so far as to say the unrest affects a majority of near-majority of students, even where Students for a Democratic Society has enlisted only a few per cent on a campus.

While the Vietnam war is commonly blamed as the source of student radicalism, the congressmen "repeatedly" found that an end to the war "would not mean an end to campus unrest—or even a major, long-range reduction of tensions."

A SECOND KEY point that the congressmen spotted is that students have "a new awareness of potential student power."

In the middle '60s, when this writer plodded through a state university, there was an effort to sell students on the idea that they were a distinct social class, but at that time the effort failed. Students of that era identified either with their parents' social status or with the professional group they intended to join after graduation.

Since then, however, students have begun to buy the idea that they are a separate class. In the

History has an uncanny knack of repeating itself. This is not only true of national and international events but also of local events in neighboring communities.

This was the case last week when the Redford Township Board of Trustees approved the rezoning of the Glenhurst Golf Course for development of apartments, single family homes, business and office facilities.

The rezoning request, as expected, stirred major opposition among Redford residents.

BUT THE TOWNSHIP board shouldn't feel alone in this predicament. The Westland City Council was in the same position two years on an identical issue.

The final council vote was also 4-3, although the council rejected

the rezoning of the Birch Hill Golf Course after more than a year of controversy.

But the planning commission in Westland, as did the Redford commission, approved a favorable rezoning recommendation.

The developer's plans were virtually identical in both communities and the reasons for opposition were the same.

The two communities even hired the same private planning consultants, Vilcan-Leman and Associates, to make a study of the issue and make a recommendation.

Vilcan-Leman was fortunate in being consistent and recommended that the golf courses in Redford and Westland not be developed.

THE POLITICAL circum-

stances follow closely in both Westland and Redford.

The township board saw its 4-3 vote for approving the rezoning split along party lines with the Republicans in the majority.

In Westland two years ago, there was a primary election just two months off and the major citizens' opposition may have been a factor in swinging a vote or two.

Westland councilwoman Mrs. Justine Barnes, who was most vocal in her opposition to both the planning and council levels to the rezoning issue, was the top vote-getter in the primary and general election.

One of the Westland councilmen who favored the rezoning failed to make it through the Democratic primary and another councilman who favored the Birch Hill development was re-elected in the general election but came in third for the race for four council seats.

BOTH REDFORD and Westland heard suggestions that the township board and city council, respectively, should get federal funds to buy the golf courses in their communities.

Township and city officials both replied that the federal government does not give money to local communities for the purchase of existing golf courses.

In addition, since the grants would represent only half of the cost of the land, the two communities would not have enough funds on hand to put up the other half of the cost.

Westland, for various and sundry reasons, rejected the development of a golf course in its city while its neighbor to the northeast took the opposite course.

ONE OF THE threats made by the developer who wanted to build apartments, office and a shopping center in Westland is also being raised in the recent Redford case.

That suggestion is that the developer, if the rezoning is denied by the community, can still build single family homes on the land since the property is already zoned for that purpose.

In Westland, the Birch Hill golf course is still the Birch Hill golf course, not a mass of residential subdivisions.

It will be interesting to watch just how the golf course in Redford will be developed and if the promises of the developer will be kept when the buildings are eventually built.