

editorial opinion

Put parochialism aside in parks and rec plan

As the old song says, "Growing up is hard to do." And that seems to be the fix in which Farmington Hills finds itself as it slowly matures and breaks its ties with the City of Farmington.

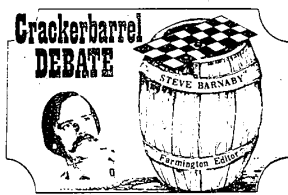
The latest example is the informal decision by Farmington Hills council to establish its own division of parks and recreation. Presently, the Hills works in cooperation with the City of Farmington, Farmington School District and Clarenceville School District through the Farmington Area Recreation Commission (FARC).

Much of the debate at this week's council session revolved around the reaction of the other three governmental bodies, especially the City of Farmington, to the establishment of separate parks division.

While all the council members agree a separate parks and recreation division is the right way to go, some believe cooperation should be sought with the City of Farmington in establishing the division.

Unfortunately, the animosity between the two cities has grown since Farmington Hills shed its township designation. Indications, along with experience, are that the City of Farmington officials are going to balk at the idea.

BUT THAT SHOULDN'T stop Farmington Hills from going ahead with its plan.



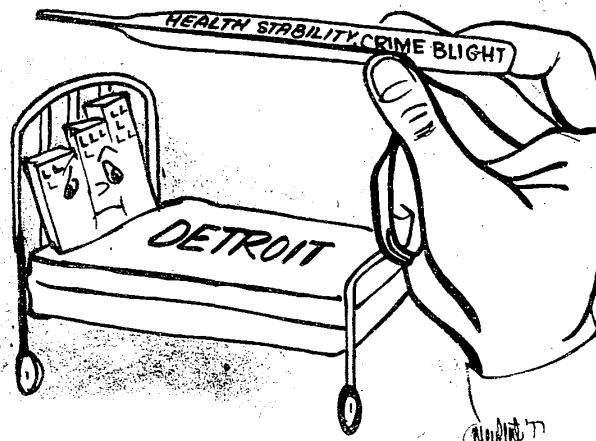
Basically, what the plan would do is emasculate the FARC, leaving the City of Farmington dependent on Farmington Hills for its recreational needs through contracted services. When the division is implemented, Farmington Hills would end up with all the professional staff now serving FARC.

If FARC remained, it only would be an advisory board, bereft of any economic punch.

But City of Farmington officials should put away their parochial hats and give the system a chance.

Farmington Hills is getting to the point where it must go out on its own. In doing so, it can aid neighboring Farmington in providing a well-rounded recreation program for all residents of the two communities.

NEARING NORMAL



If Detroit goes under, we've no place to hide

Detroit Mayor Coleman Young's state of the city speech last week deserves more attention than the cynical view which treats it as the opening of his campaign for re-election.

Young claimed that "we have seen—and beaten—the worst. Detroit, I believe, is on the threshold of a physical and moral recovery." I think he's more right than wrong.

There are still enormous problems in Detroit—crime, unemployment, lack of investment, population flight—but a lot has happened in the city over the past few years:

- After nearly ruining the city single-handedly, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development is actually working to clear out the thousands of abandoned houses that have contributed no end to neighborhood blight.

- Despite the low ebb of the Cobo Hall incident last summer, crime has started to drop in the city. Of the seven classifications used by the FBI to report crime, five decreased last month in Detroit.

- A federal grant of \$600 million for an area-wide mass transit plan is committed. Even though there will be squabbling between the city and the suburbs over its final design and control, the first transit system to serve the needs of people in this entire area is well within reach.

OF GREATER importance in the overall picture has been Mayor Young's focus in priorities: To set into place the basis for an economically healthy city.

Observation Point

by PHILIP H. POWER



It takes a long time to renew the economy of a devastated city, but there are some signs that this is coming.

The Renaissance Center, obviously, increased convention activity. A people mover scheduled for downtown.

More important than these specific instances is the battery of economic development tools that have been assembled to help the city over the past three years: the Plant Rehabilitation Act, special powers for an Economic Development Corporation and a Downtown Development Authority, and tax incentives for residential construction.

As a result, several hundred million dollars have been committed to modernize plants in Detroit owned by Chrysler, Allied Chemical, Massey-Ferguson and Inland Tool.

MANY OF the mayor's critics in the suburbs—and he has them by the thousands—have charged that he is operating in competition with the suburbs.

To the degree that any attempt by various city governments to acquire scarce resources entails competition, I suppose the charge is correct.

But it is false to say the mayor of Detroit has not tried to reach out to the suburban communities around the core city, in the hope that he could convince them that the interests of the city and the suburbs are in fact very similar.

Two weeks ago, Mayor Young entertained 40-50 suburban mayors and their spouses at the Manogian Mansion. The tone was informal and the agenda casual, but in his brief remarks Young urged his guests to "talk about what unites us rather than what divides us." A couple of months ago, Young met with 17 south Oakland County mayors to pitch for area-wide support for the mass transit program in Lansing.

Indeed, what is interesting about the relations between the city and the suburbs over the past several months is that virtually no suburban mayor has tried to reciprocate the gestures offered by Mayor Young.

AFTER YEARS of stagnation, I believe that real movement can be seen in Detroit, and I happen to believe that Coleman Young has had a very significant role in making it happen.

And if Detroit can be reborn, made strong and stable, healthy and dynamic, then we all will benefit—suburbanites and city-dwellers.

For there is no more important axiom in the social fabric of southeastern Michigan than the fact that if the core city dies, so too will the suburbs. To the degree that Detroit is healthy, so too will be the suburbs.

We must all remember—those of us who like Coleman Young and those of us who dislike him—that rot in a city is like cancer. Unless cured, it spreads. And we who live and work in the suburbs must realize that ultimately there's no place left to run and hide.

He's in last place

A senior citizen, often vocal in one of suburbia's city council meetings, lamented that the senior citizens' group always had to use old buildings and never got anything new.

"I feel," he said, "like the little boy who always got hand-me-downs. I asked him what's wrong with hand-me-downs, and he told me: 'Plenty, mister, when you've got five older sisters.'"

From a lifetime of failures came the noblest success

Our new president has described himself as a populist, saying he will represent the people and not special interests.

Our nation has been wallowing during the last several years because the people have been questioning whether the federal government does indeed represent them.

This is not the first time our government has had to meet this crisis.

Eight score and eight years ago this coming Saturday, a man was born who faced many odds.

He failed in business in '31.

He ran and was defeated for the state legislature in '32.

He failed again in business in '33.

He was finally elected to the state legislature in '34.

His sweetheart died in '35.

He had a nervous breakdown in '36.

He was defeated for the speakership of the state house in '38.

He was defeated for presidential elector in '40.

He was defeated for Congress in '43.

His successor in his own party was defeated in '48.

He ran and was defeated for the U.S. Senate in '55.

He was proposed but not chosen for vice-president at the first Republican convention in '56.

HE AGAIN was defeated for the U.S. Senate in '58.

And he was elected the 16th president of the United States in 1860.

This repeated failure was none other than Abraham Lincoln.

His record should be an inspiration to those who feel they are always facing an uphill battle with few tangible results.

Lincoln, in his own time, was not considered a great man. He was accused of splitting the Republic with his meddling in what we now call civil rights.

Why we groan

You want to know why newspaper people sneer at television entertainers who purport to be new persons? We'll tell you why newspaper people sneer at TV types.

SEMTA General Manager Larry Salci and Chairman Tom Turner were holding an important and technical news conference the other day about public transportation, an immensely complicated subject.

Channel 7's entertainer waltzed in midway through the session and chirped: "I came in late. Would you repeat a summary for film?"

The real reporters, who had done their homework and listened carefully, groaned at the television entertainer's gall. But do you know what? The SEMTA folks took eight or 10 minutes and repeated themselves for film.



by HENRY M. HOGAN, JR.

EVEN THE SPEECH he made at Gettysburg was considered trite by the press of his time.

Yet it has survived long after its critics were buried.

And it is still appropriate today with a new man in the White House.

"... That this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth."

There is still hope for our nation.

SBT's failure

It's not spurring jobs

(Second of four editorials)

Michigan needs more jobs. One of the hardest hit states in the recession, the Wolverine State still has an unemployment rate in the eight to nine per cent range.

In part, it's tied to the usual pneumonia suffered by heavy manufacturing when the rest of the nation has a cold. In part, it's caused by an influx of new persons, mainly women, into the labor force.

It takes capital investment to create jobs. Increasing capital investment, according to Gov. William Milliken, was one of the laudable goals of the single business tax. SBT was supposed to pave the way for new investment.

Well, as far as we can see, it hasn't worked. It looked good on paper, but it hasn't worked.

"HAS THE SINGLE business tax made you more likely to invest in plant and equipment in Michigan, less likely to invest or has it had no effect on your investment intentions?"

That was a question asked 4,000 firms in a survey by the governor's SBT task force, headed by Lt. Gov. James J. Damman.

Only 3.2 per cent answered "more likely." "No effect" was checked by 44.7 per cent, "less likely" by 48.4—a total of 53.1 per cent. Only 3.7 per cent had no response.

We listened to businessmen in Damman's public hearings and heard no one there say SBT had prompted his firm to expand its capital plant in Michigan.

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