

# Farmington Enterprise & Observer

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YOUR HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

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today's  
hot line

what's inside

## 2 Men Hunted In Bank Robbery

Two men described as "fairly well-dressed" used tear gas to rob a branch of the National Bank of Detroit at 31605 Grand River in Farmington about 10 a.m. Tuesday.

Robert Deadman, director of the City's Department of Public Safety, said about \$6,500 in a combination of change and bills were taken from the bank's teller cages.

Deadman said the holdup took place at 9:45 a.m. Some chemical having the effect of tear gas was used by the men, Deadman said. Bank officials said two tellers, two customers and an assistant manager were in the bank at the time. No one was injured.

The bank manager saw a get-away car leaving the bank and followed it a short distance before losing it in traffic. The license number was being checked, Deadman said, but bank sources said the vehicle was stolen.

Witnesses described one of the robbers as about 30 years of age, 5-foot-9, and wearing a dark felt hat, a dark topcoat and a dark suit. He carried a black steel revolver.

The other was described as about six feet tall, medium build, black curly hair. He was wearing dark-rimmed glasses and a suit covered by a dark topcoat. He carried an aerosol can. Both men were white.

Deadman said photographs of the robbery taken by bank cameras were being processed.

## Township Views

The first township hearing on consolidation sponsored by the Joint Study Committee was held last week. Reporter Wylie Gerdes was there and reports on the debate and questions asked by Farmington Township residents.

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## More Challenges

As the consolidation election draws nearer, opponents and proponents are finding more to disagree about. This week, John Allen tells why he feels the proponents are wrong, and John Richardson says why he feels Allen is wrong.

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## How To Clean Up

Farmington Township has adopted an ordinance which it hopes will aid in cleaning up shopping centers. How the township hopes to accomplish this beautification effort is reported inside.

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# Township Wins Race With Its Incorporation Petitions

By EMORY DANIELS

The historic "race to the courthouse" was made Monday morning with annexation and incorporation petitions.

Footed it with petitions were Richard Tupper and Robert McConnell. McConnell's petition was to incorporate as a city the township including both villages. Tupper's petition was to annex much of the southern half of the township to the City of Farmington.

BOTH LEFT Farmington early Monday morning with Tupper headed toward Pontiac and McConnell toward Lansing. A check at the finish line showed McConnell won the race.

The exact time the petition was filed is vital since the petition which is filed first is processed and voted upon first. But in this case, it is not sure that the spoils will go to the victor. (See analysis on this page.)

McConnell's petition to incorporate the entire township was filed with the State Boundary Commission at 7:45 a.m. Monday.

Tupper's annexation petitions reached the Oakland County clerk at 8:28 a.m. Monday, 43 minutes later.

However, neither petition can be acted upon until at least Nov. 5. The Farmington Area boundaries are frozen during consolidation proceedings.

IF CONSOLIDATION is defeated Nov. 4, the Boundary Commission could then act on the township incorporation petition.

If consolidation passes the first time around, the incorporation petition would rest in limbo until a vote is taken on the single city charter.

Should the charter be defeated on a second vote, or within two years of this Nov. 4, then the Boundary Commission could act on the incorporation petition.

The annexation petitions will also rest in limbo while consolidation proceeds. Incorporation would have first precedence, but should the incorporation petitions be rejected the Oakland County clerk's office conceivably could call for an annexation vote.

McCONNELL, who is president of the Council of Homeowners Associations in the township, submitted the incorporation petitions with about 650 signatures.

Tupper, a candidate for the consolidation charter commission from the City of Farmington, gathered about 300 signatures on his petition.

Tupper's petition calls for the annexation of the southern portion of the township.

The Enterprise & Observer learned that both the people behind the annexation and incorporation drives are in favor of consolidation.

The annexation people wanted to add to the present city's tax base should consolidation fail. Incorporation workers simply wanted to defend the township's boundaries should consolidation fail.

The move has no effect on the Nov. 4 vote because the only question before voters is consolidation. The other two moves resulted only in filing of petitions which cannot be accepted until consolidation proceedings end.

(For background information on the annexation and incorporation moves, and statements from community leaders involved, see the story inside on Page 3-A.)

## Single City Means

## Better Planning

(On Nov. 4, Farmington Area residents will be asked to choose whether a nine-man charter commission shall write a charter to combine the four governmental units into a single, new city. A reason why a charter commission should be given the chance to explore the benefits of consolidation is given below in the sixth in a series of articles on what a single city means.)

A single city can have a single plan for the future rather than four separate — and possible clashing — schemes to meet the demands of the modern era.

Regional planners tell us the population center of the future in this metropolitan area will be in Novi. This means the Farmington Area must compete with its western neighbor for the consumer's dollar, for industrial firms, and even for new residents.

The Farmington Area cannot put the brakes on this natural growth, but it can prepare itself for the inevitable.

Money and people do not flow naturally to a community but must be attracted. The township, even if it incorporated, would have trouble attracting developers if the proposed property abutting city property which had a conflicting use, and vice versa.

A single city could provide an overall planning commission to design progressive and suitable growth for the entire community without the handicap of conflicts and confusion arising only because of meandering governmental boundaries.

Not only do the city and township have no hired planning staff, but each relies on a different planning consultant. We need a single planning commission, single zoning board of appeals, single city planner or planning consultant, and a single plan.

If the community is to have a single plan for efficient development, it must have a single government. And that's what consolidation means.

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SOAKED — The crowds were soaked by a downpour of rain Friday night while viewing the bon fire at the pep rally preceding North Farmington High School's homecoming game the next day. Photos of the queen and winning float may be found on Page 3-A.

(Warren Bopp photo)

## The Die's Cast

# What'll Happen If Consolidation Fails?

By EMORY DANIELS

The filing of annexation and incorporation petitions Monday morning accomplishes one thing, if nothing else. It provides insight for area residents on what the alternatives are should consolidation fail Nov. 4.

More explicitly, it points out what a snarled, legal mess would result if any alternative other than consolidation is attempted.

WHILE ANNEXATION and incorporation petitions were circulating, the Enterprise & Observer contacted James Hyde, who is executive secretary of the State Boundary Commission.

Hyde was asked: "What happens if consolidation is defeated Nov. 4 and petitions are filed asking for the incorporation of the entire township including both villages?" On Friday, the question was strictly academic, but by Monday morning the question assumed stark reality.

The answer involves a complicated mesh of legal maneuverings which could well end up in the State Supreme Court for solution.

State law provides that consolidation and incorporation petitions are filed with and elections set by the State Boundary Commission. Annexation petitions, however, are filed with and acted upon by the county, which sets those elections.

BECAUSE incorporation petitions were filed first, the Boundary Commission will be the decision-making body should consolidation fail. The commission cannot take any action while the consolidation question is alive.

If consolidation passes and

a charter is approved, that will be the end to any further boundary problems for the Farmington Area.

If consolidation fails Nov. 4, or a charter cannot be approved, the Boundary Commission will have Goliath on its lap with David leading his sling.

THE PROBLEM is that the Boundary Commission cannot accept the incorporation petition as presented.

## analysis

Hyde explains it is not possible to combine two corporate entities (the villages) with an non-corporate entity (the township) through incorporation.

The only way to combine two corporate entities with a non-incorporated entity is through consolidation, says Hyde. But if consolidation fails Nov. 4, the law specifies there cannot be another consolidation proceeding for two years.

The Boundary Commission has authority to alter a request for incorporation. Thus, the petition could be accepted by deleting one of the villages — probably Wood Creek Farms — since it is not completely surrounded by township territory.

But deletion of Wood Creek would leave that village in an impossible situation. Under restrictions of the Home Rule Act, villages do not have authority to conduct general, special or school elections or to assess property for taxation.

If the township incorporates with Wood Creek left out, villagers would not be able to vote for President, governor or for school taxes. At present, these tasks are handled by the township. But if the township became a city, there would not

be any machinery available to elect to any further boundary problems for the Farmington Area.

The Boundary Commission most likely would not make a decision which would deprive villagers of their right to vote. And even if it did, the decision would likely be thrown out by the State Supreme Court.

IF THE Commission accepted the incorporation petition but

deleted Wood Creek Farms, Wood Creek would have three choices.

One would be to file petitions with Oakland County asking to be annexed to Franklin, Southfield or what is now Farmington Township. Franklin has already indicated it does not want Wood Creek, which leaves the township (a new city) or Southfield.

Another alternative would be for the village council to ask villagers to change the village's status to that of a fifth class city.

This second alternative would allow villagers to vote in general, special and school elections and assess property. But it would also, according to studies made by consultant Donald Oakes, result in a tax rate in the first year of 12-14 mills for minimum services.

Or the villagers could file a petition to abandon village status and become a township in themselves. As a township, villagers could vote in general, special and school elections and could assess property. The taxes presumably would be higher than if the village became a fifth class city since the "new township" would not

have the same share in state revenues.

THE BOUNDARY Commission could reject the incorporation petition since it is not legal as written.

But the commission is aware that annexation petitions have been filed.

The commission knows that if it rejects the incorporation request, the county would be obligated to begin annexation proceedings. The annexation would see the rich industrial areas of the township going to the City of Farmington, which means the present township would be robbed of its resources if any alternative other than total consolidation is completed in the future.

Consolidation could be accomplished by a favorable vote from the city and from those residents living in the area to be annexed. Even if the proposed annexation were accomplished, the problem would still remain of what to do with the northern part of the township.

IT WOULD take two years before another consolidation attempt could be made. An incorporation petition cannot be accepted which includes the township and both villages. One of the villages cannot be removed without depriving residents of that village with their constitutional right to vote.

Continuation of the status quo would leave the present township boundaries wide open for annexation. What would happen if consolidation fails Nov. 4 is anybody's guess.

A "yes" vote on consolidation Nov. 4 would solve the problems which otherwise would face the villages and township. A "no" vote would release Goliath from his cage and leave an entanglement very difficult to unravel.