

Most agree with new Festival date

This week's Oral Quarrel asked Farmington and Farmington Hills residents: How do you feel about the festival committee changing the date of the event and restricting the downtown concessions to local groups?

Following are the responses.

I think it should go back to the week of July 4 which is the real festival days anyway.

I think they should have cancelled the stupid thing totally. It is nothing but an overpriced flea market and you can't even get downtown to do grocery shopping.

I say yes to those questions. I am tired of walking around in the rain. I think it is great.

It is fine with me that they changed the date. Now I know when to avoid the whole downtown area for the festival. I also hope that if they are still going to have the festival, which I do think they should cancel permanently, they should do something about upgrading the arts and crafts area and work on keeping everything clean.

I think the entire week change is good. I think making it local is fine because it preserves the historical emphasis in our small city. The city is too small to try to take on the whole world. They should restrict it so that it will preserve the historical aspect.

I feel the date change is terrific as long as it doesn't affect the same day that Farmington was founded. I think it is good because people go on vacation. But the thing about local groups, I guess it is good if we didn't have enough groups to compete with. It is really hard to get good groups to have people down there all the time unless maybe they are big

and local groups would not be big enough to control their booths.

I am glad to see they are restricting it to local groups because they are the businessmen of the community that this festival will benefit and the community as well. They also mentioned moving it up a week but unfortunately the article didn't even give the date of the festival.

I think the committee waited too long to change the date. There are approximately 700 artists and craftsmen that go to this show every year and now it has thrown their whole schedule off because they have waited so long to announce the change of the date. According to the Michigan Artist Council, the date was set for the 25th to the 28th.

For 17 years we have planned our vacations so that we would be home and not miss Farmington Founder Festival. We have enjoyed everything about them. The last two years, my husband and son had been to scout camp during that week. They all wanted to change the date so they would be home and this year it was changed. Now last week we found out that the festival date was changed also. My son is very upset.

I feel that it will be good because there won't be so many concessions and there won't be as many people there and the date change won't be any problem.

I think it is a good idea that they changed the date. It gives more people time to go on vacation. Not only that, the concessions were designed originally to be for local merchants and to bring more businesses into the local area anyway so it is better to keep the business in this area.

Opinion

Steve Barnaby, editor/477-5450

Monday, April 16, 1984

(F7A)

Grim days for public transit

THE TIMING couldn't have been worse. Just as the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce was unveiling a consultant's report which was extremely bullish on public transportation, it developed that the Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority was in trouble with cost overruns on its downtown people-mover project.



Tim Richard

Tim Richard, SEMTA General Manager Gary Krause announced he would resign as of July 31. Meanwhile, there is vague talk of firmer state control over the seven-county public transit agency.

Just a few years ago, public transit ranked with the courts and community colleges as the only growth portions of the public sector.

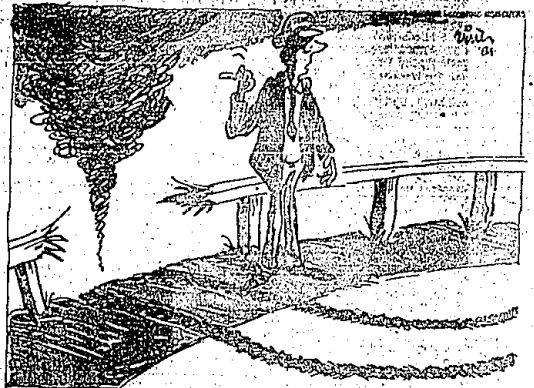
But the Reagan Administration's decision to phase out operations funding for public transit — through not capital funding — knocked SEMTA in the head. Larry Said, SEMTA's very successful general manager until about three years ago, saw the handwriting on the wall and bailed out to take a job in private industry.

The SEMTA board deadlocked on a successor. Gary Krause never wanted the job. Even when asked to apply, he declined. He was supposedly happy as planning director.

Finally, the job was thrust on poor Krause. It was his unhappy lot to have to supervise a series of budget and staff cuts which practically cut the agency's legs off at the knees.

THE CHAMBER hired an outfit in Lansing called Public Sector Consultants, Inc. to tell it what it wanted to hear: Light rail rapid transit in the Woodward and Gratiot corridors would enhance the region's image among prospective investors and generate much economic activity.

There are two very funny things about



the debate over the underground portion of the Woodward rail line (alias "subway").

It is widely recognized that freeways generate much economic development at interchanges. Yet the bitter enemies of rapid transit refuse to concede that the rail mode could do the same.

All the arguments used against light rail rapid transit also were used against construction of the Mackinac Straits Bridge prior to 1957. The Big Mac's critics said the soil was wrong, the engineering was impossible, the cost would be too high, the upper peninsula was a dying region that no one wanted to get to, etc., etc., ad nauseum.

Well, Big Mac has been so successful that bridge tolls have been lowered, not raised, even in a generation of inflation.

POLITICALLY, the timing of the Public Sector Consultants' report is bad,

though that's not the fault of the consultant.

It will take a new tax to provide the kind of operating money and capital SEMTA needs. The tax issue is so volatile that the 1983 temporary income tax increase resulted in an upheaval that changed control of the Michigan Senate.

So the chamber's consultant recommends raising the 4 percent sales tax to 5 percent, earmarking the extra penny for transportation. Voters would have to approve a constitutional amendment.

The consultant suggests that although the sales tax is our least unpopular tax, 1984 is not the year to put it on the ballot. A 1985 special election is also viewed dimly because special elections tend to attract more conservative voters.

That leaves the 1988 general election as the earliest feasible time that a transportation tax proposal could be placed before voters. I would vote for it. I would bet a British ha'penny that it will pass.

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