

Editorial Page

X-Ways A Blessing?

Expressways have been praised and cursed, and there is always a great deal of different opinion as to just how they affect a community. We suspect there are as many answers as there are communities.

State highway officials know that every time they plan a new limited access expressway, they will most certainly get a storm of protest from many businesses and people in affected areas.

There have been studies in the past about expressway effects on nearby communities. We remember reading about some California studies, where few good effects were found.

Now comes another study with a little different slant. The Institute of Public Affairs of the University of Texas recently completed a study on the economic effects of two major expressways in the Lone Star state, the Dallas Expressway and the Gulf Freeway in the Houston area. Texas and Michigan aren't exactly similar, but anyway, here's some of the highlights of the report:

Downtown commercial properties along the expressway system increased in value several times faster than similar properties in other parts of the city. Properties a few blocks away from the facility have been affected favorably, but on a smaller scale.

Low-cost, run-down residences along the expressway have been replaced by small businesses, light industries and multi-unit apartment buildings. The value of vacant land area has undergone a tremendous increase. There has been no special effect on values of restricted residential areas along the freeway.

Expressways, flanked by adequate service roads, force up property values even five miles away, and land along these expressways is of such value that shoddy or cheap types of developments are financially impossible.

One of the most significant conclusions growing out of the Texas survey is that good expressways bring a great deal of stability to the areas through which they pass.

The study points out that a well-planned controlled-access superhighway with frontage roads carries built-in insurance against early obsolescence of the expressway by preventing dense commercial traffic from crowding up against the main lanes.

In other words, an established traffic pattern, with all its effects on business, is likely to remain the same for many years. Businessmen can be assured a location keyed to a superhighway will not lose value in a short time.

That's what the Texans think. In our area we are more concerned with the effects on residential values. We have some expressways now, and when the 1 1/2 Mile expressway cuts through the township, we may learn in ten years or so whether too many expressways have good or adverse effects.

Too Much Control?

There is only one criticism we might make about Saturday's township annual meeting. It was so tightly controlled there was practically no discussion about township affairs, and a reasonable amount of this is good. Of course, the budget and other plans were worked out with several groups beforehand, which helped. Next year will probably bring an even better meeting.

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What's New With OUR NEIGHBORS

NOVI — A three member "contact committee" has been established by the Novi Planning Board to advise municipal industrial developers.

Village Manager Fred Olson indicated he would carry a request for an appropriation of limited funds. This money would defray costs involved in showing developers what Novi has to offer in industrial sites.

The Novi village organization contact committee, Olson said, is a step closer to the eventual establishment of a citizens' committee. Formation of such a citizens' committee was one of the initial steps that William J. Johnson, planning consultant, recommended should be undertaken to facilitate the village's planning program.

SOUTHFIELD — A restricted and remarkably polite group of 23 local residents from Berg and Cottage roads appeared before the City Council at its last regular meeting to speak their piece at the public hearing on the petition by General Sand and Gravel Co. for the removal of 8,000 cubic yards of sand from a part of the south half of Section 33.

This hearing was but one more in a long series dating back to soon after Motor and Machinery Casting Company of Detroit bought some property on 23rd Street in 1953 for the express purpose of dumping their foundry sand. After the company discovered the natural sand deposits, it contacted with the Michigan Department of Conservation in Nov. 1957, for the excavation of sand and for the leaving of the premises in such fashion as to provide for filling with foundry sand.

It was brought out in discussion that removal of 8,000 cubic yards of sand would require approximately 1,000 truck trips on 23rd Street and the local roads. Residents state that the operations at this site were causing unsightliness, messing up their property and doing considerable damage to the roads.

Based on information at the hearing, the petition to conduct the removal operation was denied.

BIRMINGHAM — The time for Birmingham to plan for the future is now. This is what economic consultant, Dennis Durden told the township board at the March 25 joint planning board-city commission meeting last week.

Businessmen and members of the Chamber of Commerce were among those at the meeting to hear Durden explain the importance of a comprehensive plan for the central business district.

Durden, a representative of the Larry Smith Co. of Washington, D.C., outlined a comprehensive plan and explained what an economic survey by his company would entail. His outline of the plan was presented to the planning board last September.

In an open forum after Durden's talk, some businessmen and city officials were in favor of an economic survey, while others felt it was unnecessary.

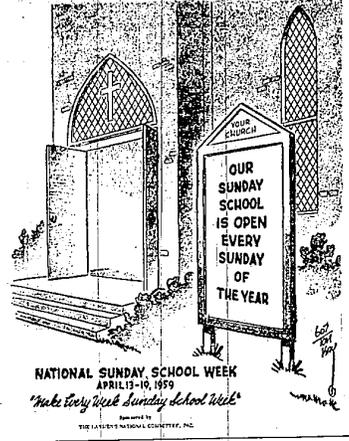
A proposal to hire Durden's company was postponed by the planning board at the end of the meeting.

LIVONIA — Vacant land appearing on the tax rolls for only \$250 an acre is now being offered to the city at prices as high as \$2,500 per acre, Councilman Robert Sasser charged.

He made his complaint in a letter to his fellow councilmen, with copies to Mayor William Breasler and the City Assessor.

After contending that homeowners (with proper assessments) had to make up the tax difference when vacant property was under-assessed, Sasser wrote:

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State Ranks 4th in Industrial Plant Growth, Future Bright

INDUSTRY is booming in Michigan. The state with the problems of economic climate" was ranked fourth in industrial plant growth during the past year and even brighter.

Consumers Power Co. is planning a \$100,000,000 electric generating plant on Lake Michigan at the mouth of the Big Pig River, 30 miles west of Grand Rapids. It required a special act of the Michigan Legislature to give the company use of state-owned submerged lands.

The bill would authorize the state conservation department to grant an easement over six acres of submerged Lake Michigan land in Port Sheldon township, Ottawa County. Present Dan El Karri said the new plant would serve Grand Rapids, Muskegon, Kalamazoo and the other communities in the 61-county area supplied with electricity by the company.

Coal to fuel the plant will be delivered by lake boats. The department of transportation is in preliminary construction work on the side and hope to begin construction of breakwaters and a deep ship and water intake. By the summer of 1962, he said.

"Actual plant construction will begin this summer, with the first unit, of 285,000-kilowatt capacity scheduled to begin operation in 1962."

The submerged land is shallow river-mouth area and because of the shallowness of the water is navigable only by small crafts.

The company's petition to the legislature promises that the general public will be able to visit the breakwater and port for a harbor of refuge.

DEMOCRATS in Michigan are promoting Gov. G. Mennen Williams as a presidential candidate in 1960 but are getting little cooperation from the nation's politicians.

It was the question of what Williams intends to do following his present term, which will give him 12 years in the executive office, considered the chief reason for the lack of cooperation from the United Nations World Health organization (WHO) said in Tokyo that her husband has "the cough" and will not run for governor again.

Michigan Democratic leaders were upset when a Chicago political war took the poll of 1956 convention delegates without mentioning Williams.

Looking Back Thru The Enterprise Files

25 Years Ago
APRIL 5, 1934
Voting Off
Farmington Township officials will continue in office through the coming year following their re-election Monday.

Party distinctions were not drawn by the voters in expressing approval with Joseph Graham, Democrat road commissioner, listed along with the Republicans as winners. However, the Democrat strength of a year ago, which caused a stiff battle for every office, showed a sharp decline Monday.

Voters did not go to the polls. A 20 per cent drop in voting from the last election was recorded.

Acting Postmaster
Farmington's postoffice will be in new hands beginning Friday when Norman C. Lee takes over as acting postmaster. He replaces Thomas H. McGee, postmaster here for the past several years.

Milk Prices
Dairy farmers of this section and all of the Detroit milkshed are operating under a schedule of increased revenue for their products as the result of a new licensing order, issued the latter part of last week by the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture.

The new price scale will mean a substantial increase in milk checks for the farmers.

10 Years Ago
APRIL 7, 1949
Voting Heavy
A comparatively heavy vote was cast in the Biennial Spring Election held last week.

The heaviest percentage vote was in the city with 765 voters going to the polls out of a total 988 registered. Of the six running for City Commission with three to be elected, Kenn Lomis and Emory O. Hatton, incumbents, were re-elected. James W. Aavanah, a resident of the newly added Floral Park area was the third Commissioner to be chosen.

Mayor Delos Hamlin was easily re-elected to his office last Friday. In the only contest for a Township office, incumbent Harry McCracken, Republican, defeated Fred Wilkinson, Democrat, for the clerk's job.

First Policeman
William G. Edgar took over duties as Farmington Township police officer last Friday. His office will be at the Town Hall. His primary job will be to inspect establishments in the township selling liquor. The township receives a fund rebate from the Liquor Control Commission for this service. Edgar,

Public Letter Box
Astor Street Bad
Gentlemen:
Astor Street from Orchard Lake Rd. to Violet is a bottomless pit of black ooze, in which six cars, to our knowledge, were stuck in one day last week.

The City has now closed the road to traffic. The cars from getting stuck. It also prevents delivery of furnaces and equipment to our business.

This has happened every spring. For the past several years, nothing but scraping has been done to the road. No gravel has been added or crushed rock to form a base.

Last year we were told paving would be done. City funds ran out before they got to this street. There is a vague whisper of paving this year.

In the meantime, we might as well close our shop to business.
Can't something be done?
Stevens Bros. Heating Co.
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