

Editorial Page

Walking Safety the Goal

Another sign of cooperative spirit on the part of school, township and city officials to make Farmington a better place in which to live and raise a family was shown last week.

We are referring to the appointment of representatives by each of these governmental bodies to the newly organized community safety committee. As was stated in a front page news story last week, the purpose of this committee will be to make an all-out effort to correct or at least reduce substantially unsafe conditions which exist for children walking to and from schools and play areas throughout the community.

The hope expressed that this would be a continuing committee is, in our opinion, a necessity. Not only must present unsafe conditions be corrected but some organization kept active to study and work to correct new unsafe conditions as they present themselves. A permanent committee could do much to see that unsafe and hazardous conditions are eliminated or reduced to a minimum before a new school is ever opened.

The need for a safety committee such as this was brought into sharp focus shortly after the opening of school last Fall. Parents in two different sections of the community took law into their own hands in protest to unsafe walking conditions for their children by blockading public roads. Some corrective measures to reduce the hazardous conditions were taken but it was not accomplished without very unfavorable publicity which gave a "black eye" to the community as a whole.

As was stated by us at the time these incidents occurred, we have never been in accord with any group or individual defying the laws of the land to accomplish an end regardless of how just that end might be. But, as was also stated at that time, we had to have a little bit of a feeling of sympathy for the protesting parents in their concern over the safety and well-being of their children.

Through an active community safety committee such as the one now formed there should be no need for unlawful actions such as were taken last Fall.

It will take more than the safety committee alone, however, to provide the safest possible walking conditions for youngsters in the community. It will take a spirit of cooperation on the part of every citizen as well in presenting any safety problems to the committee and then accepting a reasonable solution in a reasonable period of time. Parents will also have to continue to emphasize to their youngsters the importance of following routes specified for them and general rules of walking safety.

The joys and advantages of living in the country (if Farmington can still be termed that) or a suburban area are many compared to very cityified living. But along with these many advantages there are also some disadvantages. Those who want paved streets and sidewalks throughout the area, street lights every 100 feet or so, buses running down all main streets every half-hour, etc., never really wanted to live anywhere but in a city anyway, in our opinion. Just another part of the big metropolitan City of Detroit is not what Farmington is now and, it is the hope of many who moved here to get away from big city congestion, that it never will be.

That improvements can be accomplished through a cooperative effort on the part of school, city and township officials has already been proven here. Up until a few years back school officials never knew when or where new developments would be springing up next. Sometimes several homes were already up before they even knew an area was being developed. Subdivisions with dead-end streets and no provisions for tying into other subdivisions to be developed later have presented many of the transportation problems which school officials are still encountering today.

Now township and city officials are cooperating to see that the Board of Education gets an opportunity to review plans for all proposed new developments before they are ever approved. In this way suitable connecting roads, walkways, easements and the like can be provided for.

It is through this kind of united effort that a community can best be developed to the satisfaction of all of its citizens.

Wood Creek Farms Village

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The Fishers, Grace and Vern, with their daughters, Hammills and Tupper of Farmington, left Feb. 12th and drove on to Atlantic City, N.J. for the convention of the American Association of School Administrators. Representatives were there from all 50 states. You doubtless saw the picture of the Farmington group of men in last week's paper.

Of course, Vern was in session most of the time, but the women were able to attend the meetings with special speakers. These included Sec. Agriculture, Benson, George Romney of Bloomfield Hills, Nelson Rockefeller, and Eric H. K. Nichols, who was the only Farmington man who was unable to make the convention, and who gave an exceptionally fine talk.

There were many interesting exhibits of materials pertaining to school and education. Two of our architects, Mr. Myers of Detroit, and Mr. Tarapata who has designed several of the Farmington schools, were also there. Their wives and several other Farmington residents attended.

On Thursday, the Fishers, with some 50 others from Michigan, had luncheon in Washington, D. C. with several Michigan Representatives, including our Bill Brodfield. On the return trip they had an uneventful night and arrived in Farmington where they had to wait until the Pennsylvania Turnpike was cleared of snow. They reached home a week ago Sunday.

This Sunday the Fishers went to Ann Arbor for dinner at the Town Club with business friends, and for a time thought they might have to stay over. They did not, however, the drive home split the ice on the driveway.

The Schlesers, who went to Ypsilanti last Thursday to visit their daughter, Susan, and again see the new grandson, were back Saturday.

Some 15 brave men did make the Civic Association meeting at the Seavakseis last Thursday. They can't be blamed on what business was conducted, but I understand that some men had particularly enjoyable evenings.

The Fishers had a longer visit than planned, thanks to the very bad driving conditions.

But THIS is only a part of the problem about which I wish to speak. Up until 6:30 on the night of the 12th Mr. and Mrs. Fisher and Mr. and Mrs. Fisher with a crew of students were literally slaving physically to get their concert in a great barn which defies one to find any position of comfort for more than a minute span.

Now of course, the question of money is raised. The headlined headline, "If we are to have a decent auditorium for one school we will have to do it for all" will be said. I don't see this as a valid excuse for doing nothing. The big school affairs are seldom scheduled on the same night. Why can't we build two auditoriums? Surely music and theater will be as important as athletics in the future lives of our young people.

Twenty years ago the school original were found to be controversial, not having received a two-thirds majority response. These will be studied in the near future on a state-wide bases. The 1953-54 study is focused on four areas: education, program, teaching staff, financing, education, and higher education.

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