

# Annexation Election: What To Expect

By EMORY DANIELS

## FARMINGTON

Announcement of the court decision allowing an annexation vote surprised many Farmington Area residents. And the fact that a Nov. 3 vote on the question is possible adds to the suddenness of the court's ruling.

Now that the impact of that news has penetrated, a look ahead is in order in an attempt to foresee what developments the court order might engender.

**THE FIRST** unanswered question at this point is whether the annexation question will appear on the Nov. 3 general election ballot or be decided in a special election.

It appears the deadlines are being met and the annexation question will appear on the Nov. 3 ballot. The formal, procedural steps to get it on the ballot are being followed, and probably the only deterrent possible is another court injunction.

The likelihood of an injunction stopping the Nov. 3 annexation vote is small. Oakland Circuit Judge Frederick Ziem has said nothing about what his decision will be when the township asks him for an injunction. But it is almost certain he will deny the request; to do otherwise, it seems, would be expressing a lack of confidence in his own decision, announced Aug. 31.

**THE SAME** REQUEST will be made to the State Court of Appeals for an injunction, and a denial from the higher court is also predictable.

Remember, first, that the annexation petition already has been frozen for 10 months under Ziem's original injunction.

The higher court is not likely to freeze the petitions any longer. One reason for denial is that should annexation be defeated Nov. 3, that defeat would remove reasons for an injunction.

The other reason is that if the higher court overruled Ziem, the court can provide remedy by tossing out the results of the election.

Thus, the Court of Appeals is likely to allow the township to take and decide on the merits of Ziem's decision.

A test case to the State Supreme Court is likely on this lawsuit, and readers should be prepared for that path to be taken.

A NOV. 3 annexation vote was a very "tiny" proposition when Ziem made his ruling Aug. 31. But last week's actions have made the chance of a Nov. 3 vote is more probably than not.

The campaign has not really started yet, and so the outcome of that vote cannot safely be predicted. But one factor should be realized.

The present annexation question is totally unlike any other boundary proposition voted upon in the Farmington Area.

Other annexations involved

## analysis

small territories and simply added to the City of Farmington's boundary. This one would not just "add to" but expand city territory seven times.

If the annexation is achieved, the new City of Farmington would have about 14 square miles and have 30,000 residents compared to its present 2.6 square miles and 11,000 persons.

The southern limits would be Eight Mile and, on the north, 10 Mile east of Quakerdown and 11 Mile west of the village. East-west boundaries would be Inkster and Haggerty.

The only "old" thing remaining would be the city's charter, and that would be a candidate for revision.

Although the proposition is definitely not incorporation or consolidation, eligible voters should be aware that a "new city" is what's involved.

Because it's a proposition without precedent in the Farmington Area, prediction of the outcome is difficult.

**ONE** COULD guess that those city residents voting against consolidation will vote "no" on annexation.

That claim has to be qualified, however, because it is not known definitely how many voted "no" on consolidation, to preserve a small city.

Another claim could be made

that township residents in the area to be annexed voted in favor of consolidation to escape from under the township administration.

This claim also is plausible but must be qualified. South and central residents could have voted "yes" on consolidation because they were desperate for cityhood and believed the city and township are, indeed, one community.

It is known the sentiment of the northern half of Farmington Township believed the annexation. But the northerners won't be voting on this proposition.

**BEFORE ASSUMING** the south and will vote for annexation in order to obtain cityhood, we must consider the impact of the August primary.

Earl Teeple's 2-1 victory in the supervisor's race is certain to have an impact. Teeple has a large following south of 10 Mile, and those supporters may not want to desert the township before Teeple takes office.

Teeple has the capability, it would seem, to convince a number of southerners to vote against annexation. And Teeple does not want to ascend Curt Hall's throne with half the kingdom gone.

Ideally, a political campaign should not sway the outcome of a boundary proposition. But the

pragmatist will recognize that Teeple's victory will have some effect on the annexation vote.

**THUS, THE** campaign will be uphill most of the way for those promoting annexation.

There is the possibility the question can be defeated in either or both the city and area of the township to be annexed. A "yes" vote must be obtained from both.

But annexation will make available to south end township residents city services which they otherwise could not obtain, possibly for some time.

City residents may be more aware now that without land to develop, the city's financial plight will force tax rates to climb upwards. The plum of the industrial park being added to the city's assets may attract "yes" votes also.

**A QUESTION WHICH** might carry the most weight during the annexation campaign is: Which boundary procedure can best lead to the formation of a single community for the Farmington Area?

Consolidation was defeated by a narrow margin, and it was the first time city residents had voted on a boundary proposition for years. Sentiment for a single community remains surprisingly strong.

It can be argued annexation can accomplish a single community simply by the city's petitioning for annexation of the northern half if this one is successful.

But it can also be argued that this annexation will so alienate

northerners that a second annexation would not be possible.

**IF THIS** annexation passes, the northern half will be a prime target for annexation by either the City of Farmington or even the City of Novi.

The township has an incorporation petition on file with the Boundary Commission to join Farmington Township and Quakerdown into a city, leaving Wood Creek out.

But that petition will be tossed out if annexation is successful because of the drastic reduction in township territory. Of course, it is predictable that another petition will be filed asking an incorporation vote involving the northern half, just in case annexation passes.

Those residents, tired of all the boundary elections, should not look forward to respite.

Annexation definitely will not be the final boundary election. Regardless of the outcome of this proposal, the boundaries of the Farmington Area will remain unstable. This problem, it seems, demands as much attention as the immediate annexation question which seems destined for a Nov. 3 vote.

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They included Laurie Barrows, Jean Boles, Mona Boland, Debby Burns, Wendy Bulcholz, Lisa Clarke, Karen Cossabomb, Denise Davis, Patty Bilani and Susan Yochum.

Making the awards was Miss Vivian, director of Southeast Michigan Youth Red Cross, assisted by Clara Lee, field consultant of Oakland County Red Cross Youth.

An honor guest at the luncheon was Frances Hall, a resident of the nursing home, who in 1968 received a pin for 45 years of service to the Red Cross. Also attending were Lee Hastings, home administrator, and Barbara Silverman, supervisor of nursing.

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