

SEMCOG: Cities planning together

SOUTHFIELD — The fact that Southfield recently joined the regional Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) may be meaningless to the average resident.

The concept of regionalism is often vague and confusing and even a little ominous when the term comes from government circles.

SEMCOG officials define regionalism as hundreds of communities existing together in a large geographic area which are bound to share common needs, services and problems.

Regionalism and regional planning, officials say, attempt to identify common elements and find

ways to solve problems and provide services regional in scope.

"SEMCOG is a tool," explained Homer Case, chairman of the executive committee. "For the local elected official, the council is a forum where he can represent his constituents on regional matters."

"For the citizen, the council provides an opportunity to monitor and lend input on regional events that affect his community today and tomorrow. Like any tool, SEMCOG is only as effective as the people who use it. Participation is the key."

In 1973, according to Case, SEMCOG was responsive to important regional issues affecting 4.7 million people of Southeast Michigan.

"Regional thinking is especially vital in today's mobile society," states SEMCOG's sixth annual report. "Of major importance are highway planning, traffic management, water, sewer and flood control systems, recreational facilities, police and fire services, air and water pollution."

THE NEED for a regional approach to these needs was recognized six years ago, according to the report. Through the 50s and 60s, a fantastic growth in population joined the conveniences and opportunities of a metropolitan area, it says.

"Suburban communities sprouted, then mushroomed during these decades," the report states. "Unfortunately, orderly planning as a guide to this growth was often lacking, sometimes nonexistent."

SEMCOG was formed in 1968 as a voluntary association of local governments to provide improved services in regional affairs through coordination and cooperating of government units.

The organization, which serves the counties of Oakland, Wayne, Macomb, Livingston, Washtenaw, St. Clair and Monroe, is governed by delegates from 96 communities. Delegates are elected officials from member communities who make up SEMCOG's general assembly.

The general assembly elects an executive committee which meets six times a year. An executive director is appointed to handle day-to-day administration.

SEMCOG's source of operating revenue is a blend of local, state and federal funds. Southfield, for example, pays \$3,000 in annual dues. Membership dues are supplemented by state and federal grants according to various formulas.

ENTERING ITS seventh year, SEMCOG has developed into an agency that plans for the future growth of the region, provides statistical information to local governments, citizens and business communities, reviews applications for federal funds from local governments and deals with regional issues such as air and water pollution, transportation and land development.

"Planning is a role that took on a new meaning for SEMCOG in 1973," the report states. "The energy crisis focused attention on growing worldwide shortages of national resources and raw materials. Now we must examine these shortages more than ever in relation to regional growth and development."

"Sound, cooperative planning at the national, regional and local levels will be a safeguard against repeating our past mistakes. It will lead us into tomorrow with a firm grasp on the destiny of our region. That's what SEMCOG is all about."

Transportation and land use planning are still the hub of SEMCOG's activities and its 1990 general development plan. But federal and state agencies continue to increase their requests for regional planning services.

SEMCOG has become the designated agency to plan regionally for other needs of Southeast Michigan. Planning activities rely heavily on maps, surveys, population forecasts, demographic studies and computer data.

In 1973, the report states, "SEMCOG emerged as the first time it stood on solid financial ground with new and stronger support from federal, state and local government."

SEMCOG met the energy crunch head-on when it launched a tri-county computerized car pool system. Working with the census bureau, SEMCOG released new population estimates for the region indicating dramatic growth. Generally our agency enjoyed the fruits of its labor."

SEMCOG in 1973 presented a transportation plan that recommends expanding, rebuilding, maintaining and improving existing freeways and road networks and public transit.

The agency sets as a clearing house for federal grants for local projects and last year applied for more than \$439 million in aid.

Before any funds can pass from Washington to local communities, grant applications must be submitted to SEMCOG for review.

happy birthday, farmington!

In order to allow our patients and staff an opportunity to participate in the Farmington Founders Festival, our office will close at 5:30 on Thursday and Friday, July 25 & 26 and will be closed Saturday, July 27.

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Brotherton names campaign committee

FARMINGTON — John Anhut has been named the chairman of the "Brotherton for State Representative Committee."

The committee is working for the nomination and election of Wilbur V. Brotherton to the Michigan State legislature from the 64th District.

The seat which Brotherton is seeking was formerly held by Rep. Ray Baker who is retiring.

Other members of the "Brotherton for State Representative

Committee" are John Bailey, public relations advisor, Annabelle Hoeglund, treasurer, John Ogurek, legal advisor.

Finance coordinators are Claire Orsian and Ray Peltier, Esther Hedfield and Marie Faunce are senior citizen coordinators, and Jim Mascow and Steve Fleming are the young voters coordinators.

The field directors are Richard Duncan, Vivian Juresek Mrs. H. Richard Henderson, Steve Fleming.

Woman dies after crash

FARMINGTON HILLS — A 62-year-old Detroit resident died July 24 as a result of injuries received in an accident at Grand River and Middle Belt, June 28.

Mrs. Mary Jennings, 17180 Greenview, Detroit, was taken to Botsford hospital for treatment on the 28th following the accident.

Farmington Hills police said the accident occurred when a truck driven by Brian Gould, 16214 Mansfield, Detroit, entered the intersection at Middle Belt and Grand River without stopping for a red light.

Gould told police his brakes failed when he tried to stop at the intersection.

Witnesses told the Hills police that three other vehicles traveling west bound on Grand River hit either the Gould truck or each other. A car driven by Louis Grycan of Farmington and the Jennings car entered the intersection and hit the Gould truck.

A fourth driver, Dennis Rossow, of Novi, who was driving a motorcycle, told police he saw Mrs. Jennings and Grycan try to stop their cars before they hit Gould's truck.

Grycan told police his motorcycle hit the rear of the Jennings car causing him to fly off his bike onto the hood of her car.

Mrs. Jennings was the only one who was taken to the hospital by the police from the scene of the accident.

The other drivers went for private check ups later.

Gould was cited for hazardous driving by the Hills police.

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