

Who Should Receive Our Congratulations?

This week we don't know whom to congratulate, the city commission or the residents living on Eton road between Lincoln and 14 Mile.

Reason for our felicitation is that somehow the taxpayers-at-large of Birmingham stand to save \$10,662 which might have gone into the widening of this stretch of Eton. It presently is an 18-foot strip pavement, and it appears that it will be widened to 29 feet.

For the past several months, Eton residents resisted city attempts to widen this street, primarily because they felt any widening would add to the problem caused by truck traffic en route to and from the industrial area immediately to the north of this subdivision.

Wider streets, more trucks—hence greater danger to the many school children living in the area, they argued.

HOWEVER, JUST TWO WEEKS ago at a public hearing, residents agreed to the widening of the street to 29 feet. The city, which originally had suggested 36 feet, also accepted the 29-foot width.

It was pointed out that in all probability parking would not be possible on the narrower street, but would have been on the 36-foot width.

Eton residents reluctantly accepted this fact, feeling the area between the future curb and the sidewalk still would contain plenty of space for parking back of the curb.

Now here is where you can help us determine where our congratulations should go.

At that hearing, the commission passed the usual resolution determining necessity for widening of the street, and sent the matter to the city assessor for spreading of the assessment roll.

IN THAT RESOLUTION, it called for charging 85 per cent of the widening costs against the property owners.

At the following commission meeting—which was last week—Mayor Dean G. Beier suggested that perhaps the resolution was in error regarding the 85 per cent to be assessed against private property.

He pointed out that two years before—when Lincoln between Adams and Eton was paved to 36 feet—the city-at-large had reduced the charge against those Lincoln residents to 75 per cent.

The commission's reason at that time was that, because Lincoln was classified as a semi-arterial street, thus would carry more cross-town traffic, residential values would be adversely affected.

Governmental Services More Costly

The owner of a vacant lot on Southlawn has unsuccessfully attempted to get the city to charge him less than the \$153.40 the city says it cost to fill in the lot and grade it.

He told commissioners that a private contractor would only ask him for \$25 for the same services.

City officials said the lot was filled in because it was termed a public nuisance and health hazard because of several deep holes and water which stood for

SO THE CITY DECIDED to add another 10 per cent to the 15 per cent it usually pays or a total of 25 per cent—to help offset any residential property devaluation which might result because the street was 36 feet wide, rather than the normal 29-foot residential width.

Mayor Beier last week found only Commissioner Frank Rising supporting the contention that since Eton also is a semi-arterial street, the city should follow the same Lincoln assessment pattern.

The other five commissioners, in effect, said, "No, the situations are not the same. Although both are semi-arterial streets, Lincoln was made 36 feet wide, but Eton is only going to be 29 feet wide. Twenty-nine feet is a residential width. On normal residential widths, we pay only 15 per cent of the property owners assessment. On Eton, the city should pay only 15 per cent."

THIS THE ASSESSMENT roll, when it comes up for confirmation in the next few weeks, will carry an 85 per cent charge against private property owners.

By reasoning that semi-arterial streets 36 feet wide (but with parking on both sides) tends to depreciate residential values and therefore the city should pay a larger proportion of the cost, but semi-arterial streets 29 feet wide (with good possibility of no parking along them) are just as good as quiet residential streets, the city has been saved \$10,662.

The city would have staved the total cost of any widening over 29 feet, which on Eton is estimated to cost \$9,700 more for 36 feet than for 29 feet. And because it is to be 29 feet instead of 36 feet, the property owners are scheduled to pay on extra \$962.

TO STATE IT the other way around, by permitting the additional 9 feet in width, the Eton residents would have made the city spend an extra \$9,700 and assume \$962 more of the private property owners' share. They also would have obtained parking on the paved street at no cost to themselves.

On second thought, we believe we should congratulate the Eton residents for saving the city this money—but we doubt whether they realized at that hearing two weeks ago just how the city commission would interpret the agreement in a way that saves the city this \$10,000.

(However, when that Eton assessment roll confirmation hearing comes up, we wouldn't be surprised to hear the Eton residents call for a new interpretation, or else insist that the city put in the 36-foot width after all.)

long periods following heavy rains. While the property owner considered it quite costly, this instance may serve to remind other local residents that governmental services usually do cost more than those which are obtained from private enterprise.

On the other hand, it also should indicate that the city of Birmingham is of a mind to correct such situations, after first giving the property owner an opportunity to take care of it.

Cold or Warm This Winter, John?



Happenings of Long Ago

50 YEARS AGO September 19, 1902 Much unfavorable comment was heard about our streets last Sunday.

Miss Florence Brayman is a successful teacher in the Cateb Long school district and although it is her first school she has started like a veteran. We predict that this year, and will progress as successful a teacher as Birmingham high school ever graduated.

The bird hunters are afraid the fall shooting is going to be drowned out by heavy spring and early summer rains. If the hunting is poor the farmers will have to make fever repairs, as the fences which every year are torn down by careless, ignorant city men who invade farm and field.

5 YEARS AGO September 25, 1947 Public opinion, polled at a meeting Wednesday evening, favored the opening of a Chamber of Commerce office in Birmingham.

20 YEARS AGO September 22, 1932 D. A. J. Lewiston, Bloomfield township justice of the peace, has been named commander of the Charles Edwards Post, American Legion, for the county. He will have Leonard A. Cady, vice commander.

BHS gridlers will play this season under the captainship of David Curry, former coach of last year's eleven. Coach Miles Robinson said the team was shaping up well, and that most emphasis was being placed on training tactics.

A committee is gathering facts in Bloomfield Hills to help in the decision as to whether or not City, school and health officers, along with parents, are once more sharing their mutual problem. It goes with the school term, running, etc. classes, from September to June.

HORSE SENSE AND NONSENSE BY ALICE E. MORGAN City, school and health officers, along with parents, are once more sharing their mutual problem.

THE ONLY solution left is for dog owners to take proper care of their pets. Officials would welcome advice on exactly how this can be brought about.

MORE SERIOUS, of course, is the possibility of children being bitten. Even the friendliest of dogs will bite when hurt or even when they become over-excited.

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ONE THING OR ANOTHER By George Wm. Averill

So Governor Gerhard M. Williams needs three hours because he "keeps longer hours" than any former governor?

It seems to me that if Spady didn't go in for all that evening square dancing, he could let at least one of these guards go back to doing much needed regular state pension enforcement.

Mathematics is a wonderful science, if properly applied. But what those Fair Deal New Deal mathematicalians have been doing to it for the past two decades...

Here's how they seem to put figures to work: If one man can turn out a government report in 12 days, then 12 men can get the report done in one day.

Or if one ocean liner can cross the Atlantic in five days, then why can't five ships cross it in one day?

Mathematics is a wonderful science, if properly applied. But what those Fair Deal New Deal mathematicalians have been doing to it for the past two decades...

From the Tulsa (Okla.) Tribune: "But it is certainly true of the government as well as of present regime."

Queen teachers, preachers and writers have delicately confused us until we now face the question: Can America endure?

From the Logansport (La.) In-estate Progress: "We still believe that the Republican nominee, Dwight D. Eisenhower, offers the only hope of real American unity."

"We believe his election will mean a return to Constitution government, a guarantee of individual freedom and, at the same time, it will offer assurance of

ke made a long-storming tour through the Southland, making a Republican presidential candidate never had before. Texas looks like it is going to put its electoral votes in the GOP column.

continued American prestige the neighborhood of nations.

From the Hattiesburg (Miss.) American: "The late Senator Stephens Stevenson selected Sparkman as his running mate."

And from the Gilmer (Tex.) Mirror: "The only time Truman

"General Eisenhower is the safe from a continuation of Trumanism which is as deadly to democracy as any of our other isms."

And from the Gilmer (Tex.) Mirror: "The only time Truman can 80th Congress, which he called the worst in history."

The framers of the U.S. Constitution certainly were farsighted in setting up presidential elections no oftener than every four years—the populace couldn't stand the strain more often than that.

Just how "this" a person really is usually can be determined by the tone he uses in presenting his arguments. The louder and more positive he insists he is right, the more knowledge of the subject is limited and thus the greater the possibility of error in his judgment.

Most defeated political candidates can tell you why they lost out. What I'd like to hear is why some candidates were elected.

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Always waiting for HOT WATER? If so, you need an Automatic Electric WATER HEATER. You'll enjoy the best hot water service possible with a truly modern automatic electric water heater.

From The Eccentric's Point of View... The Birmingham Eccentric. Regardless of party, most candidates for President say that they expect to win.