

Downtown Parking Lots Need Only Minimum Screens

For several months, Birmingham's plan board has wrestled with the provisions of a zoning ordinance amendment which would permit fees to be charged on properties specifically zoned as parking districts.

The problem was presented to the plan board as the result of the city commissioner's discussions with representatives of the Wabek Corp. and Jacobson's, Inc., which together have invested more than \$337,000 in a proposed off-street parking development north of Willets street and west of Woodward avenue.

About half of the area—approximately both sides of N. Bates street—at the present time is zoned for multiple dwellings. The zoning must be changed to permit public parking.

The cost of the space involved, declare the owners, is too expensive for such extensive landscaping, and also would cut down on available parking space—the very thing the entire property is intended for, as relief to downtown parking problems.

TO DATE, WE BELIEVE (and we think a majority of the citizens of Birmingham believe) it is to the credit of the city commission itself that it has thus far refused to agree completely on the plan board's ideas on the subject.

The proposal again will be before the commission at a public hearing on April 26. But prior to that date, commissioners want to meet with the city planners to discuss the amendment in more detail.

Plan board members, according to City Plan Technician Robert Boatman, believe that owners can go before the zoning board of appeals if they believe exceptional circumstances are present in a situation.

But Wabek-Jacobson—and several city commissioners—believe there may be a more definite manner in which the new parking district can be described.

THE CITY COMMISSION, either because of more practical business experience, and/or because of its more direct official sense of responsibility to the equities involved, deserves much credit for its refusal to go along with the plan board's somewhat academic approach to the subject.

The Eccentric is not unmindful of the voluntary efforts the plan board is giving on its job, without monetary recompense. Such civic interest is fine . . . but we do suggest to the plan board that it endeavor to place itself equitably in the role of owners of business property, too.

After all, the development of a business section for any community is not solely to the benefit of merchants. Business serves the public, not only in goods and services, but also in helping to relieve residential property of a portion of the tax burden that finances local government.

THE OWNERS OF Birmingham business property do not seek any subsidy from the whole community; they are willing to carry their share of the off-street parking expense.

They do, however, seek to support an ordinance that is practical in its application, not confiscatory of property values in its demands.

Uncle Abner will point out how the blind man, like all others, can smell the living things around him. Uncle Abner will point out how the blind man, like all others, can smell the orchards in full bloom or when they are heavy with ripened fruit.

At THESE, he will tell you, are evidence of God, and who can argue with him?

He will point to the baby creeping across the floor. He will tell you that there is one of God's greatest miracles, and that you should seek His help in carrying out your part of the job of training this baby as a Christian and good citizen.

Uncle Abner is quite apt to tell you to listen to a singer. The voice,



HORSE SENSE AND NONSENSE

BY ALICE E. MORGAN

No one has asked Uncle Abner why he believes in God, but he's nervous to tell it, anyway.

He snorts mildly at the idea, for the old gentleman cannot see how or why a person could do otherwise.

"It's everywhere," he'll growl, "even a blind man can see it!"

If you question him, he'll point first, to the miracle of life which goes on in all the world. He'll point out that man can develop new means of growing plants and methods of specializing animals so they can meet certain characteristics and requirements. Then he will ask you where man's ability came from?

He chuckles when you give one of two answers—you don't know, or you say "from God."

WHEN HE HAS you trapped this way, he will go on to the blind man who can "see God all around him."

"God gave that man a skin, full of nerves and feelings. With it he can feel the breeze, the sun, the snow, the rain. He can feel the softness of flowers and the hardness of stones. He can feel the handclasp of a friend, the steadiness of his trained dog."

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He will point to the baby creeping across the floor. He will tell you that there is one of God's greatest miracles, and that you should seek His help in carrying out your part of the job of training this baby as a Christian and good citizen.

Uncle Abner is quite apt to tell you to listen to a singer. The voice,

he will say, is a gift from God. If it is a singing voice, it has a second gift, that which God gave some man or woman when He let them have the ability to train such a voice and increase its wonder.

THE OLD gentleman is fond of pointing out the miracles of your own body, comparing it to the man-made machines.

He will defy an engineer to make a pump that will work as steadily and stand the abuse of a human heart.

He will challenge the maker of the electronic eye to make one that can operate like the human sense of feel, reacting as quickly and perfectly to the impulse which activates it.

The world of insects, birds and wild animals is his favorite, for here he feels one of man's influence. The ability to live and prosper, to find their food, to instinct which tells them the good from the bad—all those things must come from some source—where else but from God?

UNCLE ABNER will not skip the weather. He'll point out how man has tried to control it and ask you to think of the job.

When anyone questions the power of God, the existence of God, Uncle Abner is delighted—if it comes in the evening.

He will stalk to the window, pull back the drapes and point to the stars and moon. Silently he will hold you there with that out-thrust finger. Then he will turn and say:

"I suppose Edison put them there, huh?"

Happenings of Long Ago

Bits of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eccentric—The Items That Make Up The Historical Background Of The Birmingham Of Today.

50 YEARS AGO
 April 8, 1904
 "With a tear in his eye Geo. H. Toms examined the earth the early part of the week and buried his pug dog that died before Christmas. The dear canine wore the same smilge that would not come off."

Master Frankie Weston, of Lansing is visiting his uncle I. Lee Truxas for a few days. The little fellow is seven years old and made the journey from Lansing all by his lonesly.

Mrs. Emily Trolop has been at Harper hospital where she had a cataract removed from her eye. Dr. Gillman performed the operation, and it is reported to be one of the most successful operations of the kind ever performed at the hospital. The good lady is home now with every prospect of permanent recovery.

Married Wednesday, March 30, Mr. Joseph Greer of Franklin and Miss Alta Heckock of Circle, Rev. M. H. Bartram officiated. The young couple have commenced housekeeping and are easily settled in their new home on the Patchett farm.

The old Martin house just east of the Presbyterian church is for sale at \$100. It is a bargain at this price.

Howard Carler is now a full fledged broker and will be pleased to transact business for you in this line.

15 YEARS AGO
 April 6, 1939
 A "superior" or first division rating for Class B schools was given to the Baldwin High School Band at the sixth annual band and orchestra festival, sponsored by the southeastern Michigan Band and Orchestra association.

Virgil G. Hyeman and Miss Ida Mae Mitchell of Birmingham were married at the Baptist parsonage by Rev. T. J. Edwards at 10 o'clock Saturday morning. They will reside at 155 South Woodward avenue.

A landmark for 34 years, the drugstore of Charles J. Shain on the corner of West Maple avenue and Pierce street, was damaged by fire at the sixth annual band and orchestra festival, sponsored by the southeastern Michigan Band and Orchestra association.

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30 YEARS AGO
 April 4, 1924
 Chief Anderson of the police department warns Birmingham residents that their chickens must be kept off the streets, and should be locked up to prevent their roaming abroad.

A movement was started Monday evening to inaugurate into the Masonic circle here a De Molar chapter, a junior Masonic order for boys between the ages of 16 and 21 years.

Robert K. McClellan of Harmon

ONE THING OR ANOTHER

Hauling of truck trailers on railroad flat cars apparently is a modern adaptation of a 58-year-old idea.

It has been discovered that an electric railway in California—the Oakland, San Leandro and Hayward Electric Railway, Consolidated—hailed wagons on flat cars over its 17-mile long route.

Back in 1896, the reason for this type of service probably was that it was easier and faster by rail than over the muddy, bumpy roads at that time.

Today, it still is easier and faster for distances over 200 miles—this time because of the vehicular traffic congestion and introduction of the traffic light.

By George Wm. Averill

cost much.

If the world has no'd you a living, it is because of what you did with your yesterdays.

Sen. Joseph McCarthy probably considers a "Patriotic American" as an individual who sings "God Bless McCarthy" while his personal life is being microscoped by the Senator's investigating committee.

Some cities permit overtime parking violators to appear at the police department within a specified time following the violation, and settling the parking ticket for 10 or 20 cents on the dollar.

This practice, it seems to me, is contrary to the idea underlying parking ordinances. Such legislation is designed to keep people from spending too much time in one parking space. The "special rule" would be a means of violating the law while obtaining additional parking time for a slightly higher fee than the first hour.

Most people who have no enemies merely have outlived them.

Lives there the woman with vanity so dead
 That to her husband she has never said:
 "Thanks, my dear, but at Eastertime,
 "I can get away with that old hat of mine."

Birmingham's got much more city park property per square mile of city area than have most municipalities. Yet for years it has been used for speed growing. Some attempts—admittedly small—have been made to get some recreational facilities on them.

There appears to be the idea that such areas must be extensively planned, well landscaped, with the latest in modern gadgets for the youngsters to use.

Back in my early youth, ditches, piles of earth, tree stumps, large sewer crock I could walk or easily crawl through—these were the "recreational aids" which I and my pals found the most exciting.

What's better, such facilities don't

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Joe's 'Illusions of Grandeur'

Up to date, this newspaper has been a defender of much that Senator McCarthy has stood for, namely: his voice raised against Communism in government has been a necessary warning to the American people.

However, since he got himself tangled up with the Army, and called some of the top brass some very bad names, we are

beginning to think that Joe has achieved for himself illusions of grandeur.

If he keeps on he will lose much public support. . . for Joe is, it seems to us, now hitting below the belt. Not that we think the Army is lily-white, either. But Joe is acting like a one-man government . . . and that isn't what the pattern of American fair play is meant to grow into.

Our Local Teachers' Salaries

The Board of Education of the Birmingham School District has just approved for its teaching staff substantial salary increases which, according to Supt. Dwight B. Ireland, will approximate a \$500,000 increase in next year's budget; this also would include the hiring of 40 new teachers next fall. Admittedly, this will be a considerable impact upon the district's taxpayers.

Yet the board is confronted with the realistic economic needs of the teaching faculty, many of whom are constantly tempted to leave their profession and enter business at higher salaries. This problem is national in scope, too.

No doubt the Board for some years still will have to move in the direction of raising the basic financial payment of its teaching staff.

From The Eccentric's Point of View . . .

Southfield Township is destined to reach high population figures, as the next score of years speeds along. This area, reasonably close to metropolitan Detroit, already has attracted thousands of new residents in the past few years. So long as Detroit remains a great industrial center, the areas all around it are bound to grow.

Now that March 15 has gone into history, your last income tax payment for 1953 and the first for 1954 also have gone the way of all tax monies. Isn't it wonderful that a three cent stamp can do for you Uncle Sam!

An idea of the vast changes that have gone on in the last score of years regarding the wearing apparel of women coincides with the observation of an old mosquito who said to his grandson: "And to think when I was young I could only bite girls on the hands and face."

The Birmingham Eccentric
 Published every Thursday, at Birmingham, Mich., in the Eccentric Building, 220-222 North Woodward Avenue
 Telephone MI 4-1100

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The Eccentric is a member of: National Editorial Association, Michigan Press Association and University Press Club

National Advertising Representatives
 Weekly Newspaper Representatives, Inc.
 1618 Guardian Bldg., 920 Broadway
 DETROIT 26, MICH. NEW YORK 10, N.Y.

The Eccentric will publish contributed material providing it has news value. Suggestions are welcome. Any erroneous reflection upon the character, standing or reputation of any person, firm or corporation, which may appear in the columns of The Eccentric will be gladly corrected if brought to the publisher's attention.

So They Say . . .

Dr. Howard Whipple Green, Methodist preacher:
 "Sermons should be aimed to coincide with the educational level of the congregation."

Konrad Adenauer, Chancellor of West Germany:
 "Sovietization of Europe is still the supreme goal of Russian policy."

My recipe for
COCONUT COOKIES . . .
 always successful in my
ELECTRIC RANGE

"MRS. MURPHY'S" COCONUT COOKIES
 Temp: 425°F. Time: 8 min.

1 cup shortening 1 teaspoon baking powder
 1 1/2 cups brown sugar 1/2 teaspoon soda
 1 egg 1 1/2 cups quick-cooking rolled oats
 1 1/2 cups pastry flour, sifted 1 cup coconut

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