

Viewing a Zoning Law

The Bloomfield Hills City Commission is on the homestretch in bringing its zoning laws up to date.

After the public hearing last week, the commissioners are now in a position to enact a new zoning code which is more realistic in terms of land use in a city that has shown tremendous growth in population and, more important for zoning purposes, a tremendous growth in traffic.

Zoning laws seem contrary to the American way of life in that they interfere with a man's free use of his property.

And yet we accept other restrictions on the use of property. We don't mind municipalities restricting the use of guns because we recognize that careless use of guns could harm the overall community.

THIS IS how zoning laws came into being. Courts recognized that if you mixed shopping areas and residential areas, the traffic from the stores would be dangerous for the home dwellers.

They said it is a proper function for municipalities to regulate the use of land if it was for the protection of the public's health, safety and welfare.

Later the courts let esthetics and property values be measures in the guide of proper land use, which are not quite as defensible as health, safety and welfare.

However, once the courts recognized that municipalities could enact zoning laws, they immediately had to start regulating the municipalities in their zoning to keep them from passing laws that were arbitrary or unreasonably denied a person the full use of his land.

THIS COULD be where Bloomfield Hills is until the new ordinance is enacted.

The present zoning laws do not take into consideration the change of circumstance in the community. They don't take into consideration the fact that today nobody wants to live on Woodward Ave., where a number of years ago it might have been acceptable.

The present zoning laws paint the community as one that doesn't have municipal services such as sewers and therefore needs bigger lots for septic fields.

BUT TIMES have changed and if Bloomfield didn't recognize it, the courts could

Study the Propositions

Both the Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills school boards expect to place millage propositions on ballots this year. The amounts to be requested and the dates for elections have not been decided.

Both school boards are still sifting through pertinent information before making a final determination. Current reports show that continuing growth patterns are necessitating additional construction. And, of course, operating expenditures will rise.

Birmingham's costs have been placed tentatively at \$600,000, while Bloomfield Hills has estimated its building program would cost from \$5 1/2 to \$6 million.

THOUGH THE possibility of a tax increase never comes as welcome news, there is comfort in the thought that both of these school districts have a reputation for thorough planning, effective administration and, thus, a quality school system.

On the whole, both are operated efficiently and economically.

As is always the case, the better informed the citizenry the greater the understanding of school problems and the greater the chance for passage of millage

have thrown out its regulations and let anyone do anything he pleased with his land.

This is why we are happy to see the commission in the homestretch.

However, we would like to raise a question about the proposed ordinance before it is enacted.

The new law increases the density of multiple housing from 3 families or units per acre to 4.5 families or units. We find no fault with this liberalization and feel the old formula would be hard to justify as a reasonable restriction on the use of land.

BUT AT THE same time that the law becomes more realistic, it allows the city's board of appeals to allow three-story multiple housing units under certain circumstances.

We feel that the only way the city can justify its low density formula, that is 4.5 units per acre, is on the grounds of esthetics.

And yet if they allow three-story buildings they are throwing esthetics out the window.

If the excuse for allowing three-story multiple housing is that it allows the use of more elevators, as stated at the public hearing, then we question the judgment on which the whole ordinance is based.

IF THE excuse is that some of the two-story multiple structures are hideous looking, just wait till someone has a chance at three-story buildings.

The ordinance does make a deeper setback necessary if a three-story building is constructed which helps cut down the unattractiveness of the taller buildings, but it is not enough.

Buildings that are 35 feet tall as allowed by the ordinance are normally taller than the surrounding trees and change the character of the community.

As to the rest of the proposed ordinance we find that liberalization of zoning along major arteries is realistic and are happy to see that the center will not at this time become a super shopping center with a peripheral rerouting of traffic.

With the exception of the taller multiple housing we feel that the proposed zoning ordinance is realistic and is needed in the Hills.

proposals which usually mean a better school district.

WE TRUST that the Birmingham and Hills school officials will, as they have in the past, make the information from their reports available to the public well in advance of election dates.

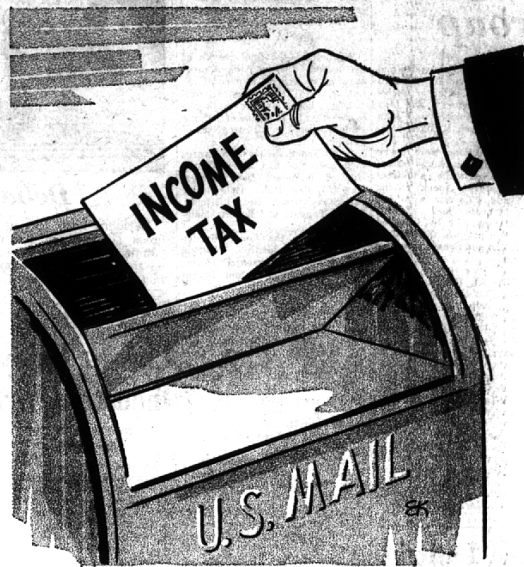
We would urge the PTA's and other groups to avail themselves of the opportunity to peruse such data and to take stands on the propositions. There should be open discussion sessions to sound out all ideas and thoughts, to raise questions and voice criticisms.

The opportunities can be created, but the real responsibility rests with the individual citizen to attend meetings and to acquaint himself with the facts; then go to the polls on election day.

AS WE have said here so many times before, the quality of the Birmingham and Bloomfield schools will continue high only as long as the community wishes it to be so and makes its views known.

If there be millage propositions on the ballots this year, let the facts be fully reported and digested first.

Mail Now for an Early Refund



Yesteryear Happenings

50 YEARS AGO
Jan. 23, 1914

The following news from the Sunday Free Press tells all about, how our Birmingham Blanding boy is telling the Cleveland Club where they can get off at, Fred Blanding, the Cleveland pitcher, is a genuine hold-out, one of the few that this winter has produced. The big Nap hurler isn't pulling this stuff to get himself a little advertising nor does he threaten to sign up with the Federal League. He simply states that he has returned his signed contract to president Somers and will not sign at the figures named even if he has to quit baseball.

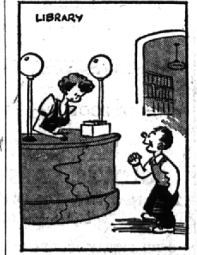
Next Wednesday night an all-star cast will present "Uncle Tom's Cabin" at the Family Theater. Those who have never seen this grand old play, should avail themselves of the opportunity and see it in the moving pictures. It is in three reels. Tonight is Western night and the two reels is "From Dawn 'Til Dark". Don't fail to see it.

There will be a Diamond Metal contact given in the Baptist Church Birmingham Tuesday evening, Jan. 27. Mrs. Grace Todd and Ren Bell will be among the contestants, others coming from Rochester, Oxford and Detroit. Good music and other selection. Price of admission 25c. Tickets can be secured from any of the Baptist Young People.

30 YEARS AGO
Jan. 25, 1934

A new schedule of classes in the emergency relief education program now in progress here will go into effect next week. Mrs. William McCallum, supervisor of the program, announced yesterday. The schedule is arranged so that classes

Comedy Corner



"I'd like to see something in a book I shouldn't read!"

will be held in Baldwin High School only three nights a week—Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday—instead of four nights as has been the case this week and last.

Members of the Board of Education last night agreed they would sanction a seventh grade at Quanton School next semester providing the salary of the teacher is paid by the parents of children in the grade. The approval was in answer to a request received from Mrs. Henry C. Duffield, Lone Pine and Woodward avenues, written on behalf of several parents in the Quanton district.

Friday night promises to be the best evening of the year for Birmingham. Not only for on that night, at the Community House, will be held the annual Scout Jamboree and banquet, with talks by prominent men, an entertainment program, Court of Honor and other features. The banquet, at 6:30 p.m., will be limited to 300 Scouts, their parents and friends. The principal speaker for the program will be Gordon "Mickey" Cochran, new manager of the Detroit Tigers.

15 YEARS AGO
Jan. 20, 1949

The annual parish meeting of St. James Episcopal Church, held last week at the Community House, saw a unanimous vote declare the readiness of church members to start work on the remodeling and expansion of the present church property. The estimated cost of the work has been set at \$150,000. An additional 110 feet will be added to the nave, with the overall length of the church to be extended 150 feet. The chancel and the sanctuary are also to be remodeled.

Skaters at Quanton Lake are warned that continued acts of vandalism may cost them this sport for a part of the season. John Johanson, city forester, whose crew has been in charge of erecting several safety measures there and the maintenance of the lake, said that a limited amount of money was available. "When it is gone, so is the skating," he said. "Within a few days after we string wire cable to keep the pleasure skaters out of the hockey area, several hundred feet of it was removed."

Birmingham will have an opportunity to measure its city planning progress and ideas against the yardstick of city experts when the Community Council City Planning dinner and public discussion meeting is held next Wednesday, January 28 at the Community House. The event takes the form of a dinner, for which reservations are necessary, followed by an open meeting to which everybody is invited.

PEOPLE'S COLUMN

Writer Protests Choice of 1963 Headline Events

To the Editor:

The very inspiring letter in the Jan. 9 issue of The Birmingham Eccentric written by Mrs. Deborah Gaffill, in reference to the Phantom Killing story and others following, expressed all surprise and disgust felt by any loyal citizen of Birmingham.

Why not a headline, "HAPPY NEW YEAR," instead of publishing all the sad happenings during the year, and bringing more grief and heartaches to the families involved.

We wonder what people outside of Birmingham think of our fair city now. That "Phantom Killing" review would not make a very good impression, to say the least. As Mrs. Gaffill says, we want news, not that kind.

After many years, still a homeowner and subscriber of The Birmingham Eccentric, I feel I have the right to protest.

LAURA T. HUNT
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STRICTLY FRESH

What a young man thinks he knows about women hasn't any relation to what he thinks he knows about them when he gets older.

WHO BENT THIS CARD?

The quickest way for a child to get attention in school these days is for him to bend his IBM card.

When your town turns down a school bond issue, doesn't it seem as if someone could say: "If ignorance is good enough for us, it's good enough for the youngsters, too."

It isn't because they dare to be different that beatniks act the way they do, it's because they don't know any better.

Are you planning to take an out-of-state winter vacation this year? The Secretary of State's office urges you to check your driver's license. If it is due to expire while you are out of Michigan, you are urged to have it renewed before you leave. Failure to renew could result in many complications, including physical examinations and involved correspondence.

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Eccentricities

By HANK HOGAN

When the state legislature reappointed the state last year into 19 new congressional districts, I'm not sure that it did Oakland County a service by making two districts out of the old county district plus Livingston County.

Bill Bloomfield, our present congressman, decided to run in the southern district, which includes most of our circulation area.

The new northern district then is without an incumbent and Oakland Countyites are lining up for a stab at Washington.

THE PROBLEM arises that at the same time we are getting a new congressman we are also getting two new state senators and probably four new state representatives.

And the lure of being a congressman at \$35,000 a year far outweighs the desire to be a state servant at \$7,000 per year.

This means that the state offices will lose some able candidates that normally might be in these new races, since the elections will be held at the same time and people normally can't run for two offices unless they happen to be a Texas senator or a Michigan governor.

THE FIRST TO THROW his hat in the ring was Waterford conservative Richard Kulin, who served as a Con-Con delegate a year ago and who has probably set a record for unsuccessful attempts at our state senatorial seat.

Then Birminghamite Jim Dickerson, who has been active in the Republican Party but has never held public office, decided a "moderate" was needed and followed suit.

Last week State Senator Farrell E. Roberts decided that eight years in Lansing was enough for anyone and he declared his candidacy.



MR. HOGAN

STILL TO BE HEARD from is former State Senator George Higgins from Fennelle who is in the process of moving to his farm in the northern part of the county. Rumor has it that it is not the northern air that is attracting him up there.

Bloomfield Townshipite George Taylor, presently county prosecutor, has made up his mind what he plans to do next November.

And waiting in the wings hoping that a lot of Oakland people will file in Livingston County State Rep. Tom Sharp. He figures that if enough Oakland people get in they will defeat each other, leaving the way clear for him.

WHAT WILL MAKE the primary interesting is that both Roberts and Dickerson are considered "moderates" while the rest of the crew wear conservative mantles, and Roberts, Higgins and Sharp are the only ones with prior legislative experience.

The voters will have to decide what kind of philosophy they want in their representative and whether experience is a factor.

Meantime, the state races will be denied the quality that these candidates might bring if there was no new congressional district in our fair county.

City Beat

By KEN WEAVER

"I feel a need to get back into—I would like to get back into—the community and look at it objectively without the responsibility of making decisions.

"My not running again does not mean in any sense that I have less interest in Birmingham. There is a lot of work to be done. I'm hoping you can continue to serve the community where it will help."

Twink Willett is getting her wish. She is back in the community, a private citizen engaged in a vocation but still devoted to public service.

What she said in January, 1963, in announcing her retirement from city government is coming true to a very large extent.

Though she no longer must make decisions for the City of Birmingham, she does still have a responsibility for making decisions that affect our city—as chairman of the Citizens Action Committee and the Birmingham Centennial Committee.

All of which attests to her interest in our city, of course.

AS SHE expressed the wish to do in 1963, she is helping the community. Her faith in the heritage, character and future of Birmingham will guide her and her committees in formulating plans for the centennial.

And don't kid yourself; there is much to be done. She has not taken on a fame-and-glory job only; indeed, she is not one to do so.

Conducting a year-long observance is no picnic, as the saying goes. There will be MEETINGS, Meetings, meetings, meeting, meetin, meet, meet, meet . . .

She will need help, of course. No one person, as Twink fully realizes, can do a job of this immensity alone. Nor can she and her committees do it alone—they must have the cooperation and assistance of all groups, of all leaders, of the citizenry in general.

That is, she must have the help of everyone if this is to be a meaningful and enjoyable centennial.

"FRESHLY OUT of government, I would hope that I could serve the community in communicating the needs to the citizenry," Twink said last January, adding that she could be as busy doing that as she was as mayor and commissioner."

True. She is and will be just as busy as ever—if not more so.

"You love your work and you feel you grow by learning and you want to learn even more," she declared. "I don't want to stop learning. Why pass up the opportunity to learn, something?"

(See CITY BEAT, 7-B)



TWINK

From The Eccentric's Point of View...

President Johnson hopes for passage of the tax reduction bill by Feb. 1. He's not only the chief executive, he's the chief optimist.

A California 17-year-old went 11 days without sleeping. Congress went for a year without waking up.

Now you can buy your own submarine. It's just the thing for buried treasure hunters who have \$3,500 they'd like to sink in one.

Goldwater has come out swinging in his bid for nomination. His rivals hope he'll soon be in a spin.

The FBI says the American Communist party sees a drift to the left among young people. Some observers figure it's just a case of wishful seeing.

France is reported about to explode its first H-bomb. This is known as progress toward world peace, DeGaulle style.

The federal arbitration board has said soundly that featherbed jobs on the railroads must be eliminated. But the unions are still hard of hearing.

Senator Byrd, chairman of the Senate finance committee, says the tax cut bill will be cleared by the committee "in due course" this year. At the present rate of progress, this could mean next July.

A Chinese Communist magazine says Khrushchev called Mao Tse-tung a "worn-out galosh." Mr. K. is more like a hiking boot. His tongue is always on the march.

Communist China still has a massive food problem. It seems that the great leap forward has come a cropper on crops.

A newly patented machine reads handwriting. And there's plenty of it on the wall for the machine to read.