

Hills' Town House Ruling Supported by Ex-Official

To the Editor: I was a member of the Bloomfield Hills Planning Commission when, following a long and careful study, that body recommended that three-story apartments be permitted under certain conditions. I consequently feel it is my duty to tell our citizens, who have recently been misled by incomplete and biased information, why this was done and why it is in the best interests of the city.

Several years ago a court decision forced our city to install sanitary sewers. This removed the health hazards associated with

sewage disposal fields near wells which up to that time had been necessary relatively large residence lots and correspondingly low population densities elsewhere. The presence of the sewer justified the requests by owners of undeveloped land for zoning changes that would permit increased population densities within the city—smaller single residence lots and more families per acre in apartment areas.

NEARLY TWO years ago, following an exhaustive study, the City Planning Commission recom-

mended to the city commission a number of zoning changes which in their judgment would recognize the changing equities of land owners and best insure the preservation of a "country living" environment in our city. The broader, greener, sunnier environment that exists in suburban areas, which our residents came here to enjoy.

After two public hearings and many months of joint restudy of all the Planning Commission proposals by the Planning Commission and the city commission, a new ordinance was adopted on March 6, 1964 by the city commission.

It includes the Planning Commission proposal to raise the families per acre permitted in apartment areas from 3 to 4 1/2 and under certain conditions to allow three-story buildings 35 feet in height with up to eight apartments per floor as compared with a 30 feet height limitation on two-story buildings.

THESE NEW controls were selected:

1. To make possible, in spite of a rapidly increasing population, the maintenance of the existing building space to open space ratio, in multiple housing areas (a 1/2 increase in number of apartments combined with a 1/2 increase in number of stories makes no change in this relationship).

2. To give the owner and his architect more latitude to produce economically the type of apartment buildings desired by potential tenants and to spread a number of apartments, which calls for an increase in upper floors and the number of apartments permitted per floor.

Two upper floors were judged to be the minimum number that could produce acceptably low cost apartments and since we do not want "high rise" structures, three story apartments were restricted to a 1/6 increase in height—namely, five feet more than the 30 feet height limitation on two-story buildings. The new ordinance increases setbacks from adjacent streets and other property which will assist in dwarfing height effects. It specifies in addition, a distance between adjacent buildings that will separate them sufficiently to prevent their shading one another in winter.

The attached sketches, which are all to the same scale, show that even on level land, the 35 foot apartments permitted by the new ordinance are not "high rises" and will not appear to be "high rises" in comparison with 30 foot apartments when viewed from adjacent streets or homes, and that their required spacing will produce a comparatively open and sunny outlook. Obviously 4 1/2 families per acre combined with three stories will produce apartment house developments that meet the desires of our citizens and respect the equities of our land owners in a practical manner; the population increase and the three stories are inseparable parts of this practical plan. It is equally obvious that the results of the recent three-story vs. two-story poll, which made no mention of the minor increase in apartment building heights nor of the effect on appearance of height of the required setbacks, was of no real value except to the degree in which it showed that our citizens had been misled.

SO MUCH FOR the positive approach to the necessity of meeting citizens' needs. What of the negative? Let's suppose, for the moment, that these reasonable and fair zoning provisions are not made available to land owners.

Legally, our city authorities have only partial control of land use in our city. Their control rests more on persuasion than on coercion. A land owner claiming a too restrictive control by the Planning Commission can appeal to the city commission. If he feels its decision does not reflect proper consideration of his equities, he goes to the courts.

The loss by the city of a court case of this kind can result—and in a neighboring community has resulted—in the land involved becoming "unzoned." The owner became free to do what he pleased with it, even to building manufacturing plants. It's obvious that the

Another View Seen of Oakland Animal Shelter

To the Editor: The March 19 edition of The Eccentric included two contradictory articles about the Oakland County Animal Shelter. One was written by an impartial observer, Virginia McMillan, who had occasion to visit the Animal Shelter, as I did. The other article was written by someone who had every reason to want the Animal Shelter to appear to be "One of the Best" in the public's eye. It was written by director of Animal Welfare of Oakland County.

My first complaint is that you gave this letter much more importance than with big headlines on the first page of section B and the other small headlines on the back page of section B.

On January 18 of this year we lost a 15-year-old brown wire-haired dog, belonging to my parents. After going everywhere possible to find him, we have found out nothing. We have reason to believe he was either found and injured on the roadside and if so why were we not notified? Or he could have been processed through the Oakland County Animal Shelter without us ever having been contacted. Since he had an Ohio dog license on the warden at the animal shelter informed us he would not call us if they got him. We should call them.

THIS, HOWEVER, is not enough. Several people who had had experience with the Animal Shelter told us it is necessary to go to the Animal Shelter which is in Pontiac, Michigan because the warden there do not bother to really check to see if your dog is really there. This is a case on that out of 10,813 dogs brought in, in 1963 only 896 were reclaimed by their owners?

On our visits, we observed cages crowded with dogs of all shapes and sizes. Some were sick, some young and healthy, all together and the vast majority with the certain signs of death being held in a lab for experimental purposes. Most of these dogs appeared to have been household pets—why should these or any dog be treated inhumanly?

IN CONCLUSION I also wish to concede that there are many dog owners who are partly responsible for the situation; those people who should never have an animal because they do not take good care of them. These dogs end up at the Animal Shelter with little hope of being recovered. For people who want to find their lost dogs, there should be a better system than having to drive to Pontiac every day. Our taxes pay for this operation and something should be done about it.

RUTH LAUER
18861 W. 14 Mile Road
Birmingham

Dells of Bloomfield Elects '64 Officers



Vincent R. Sanderoock, 5107 Wing Lake Road, is the 1964 president of the Dells of Bloomfield Property Owners Association. He succeeds Thomas H. Holden.

Ingraham Leads UCS Planners

Carl F. Ingraham, Birmingham attorney, was elected chairman of Oakland Planning Division, United Community Services, at their annual dinner. Elected at the same meeting were Mrs. Harvey B. Greene, Bloomfield Hills; Harold Lohoff, Avon Township; and Wharner Lovell, Bloomfield Township, as vice chairmen. Mrs. William H. Jackson, Birmingham, became secretary.

Newly-appointed members to the planning division are Mark N. Beach, Pleasant Ridge; Mrs. Dean Coffin, Lake Orion; Mrs. Kenneth H. Gaas, Birmingham; B. N. Grub, Hazel Park; C. Henry Haberkorn, Orchard Lake; Mrs. Lawrence S. King, Bloomfield Hills; and Mrs. Horace E. Sheldon, Birmingham.

MRS. G. REENE, the retiring chairman, gave a summary of the division activities for the year, including study of casework services to children, and protective services for older adults. This was supplemented by committee reports given by Theodore Ellison on youth employment training project; Mrs. John Rumsey on child care fund for County Department of Social Welfare; Charles B. Kaas on Royal Oak Township committee activities; Mrs. Ida Holstein, on school-social agency seminars; and Mrs. William H. Jackson on the newsletter, The Oaklander.

AFROTC at U-M Accepts Resident

Cadet William C. Wayland, son of Mr. and Mrs. William E. Wayland of 5071 Dianna Drive, Bloomfield Hills, has been accepted in the advanced corps of the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps program at the University of Michigan.

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TERRY BARR, DETROIT LIONS

Raps Decision Of Commissioners On Town Houses

To the Editor: The March 16 letter of some of the commissioners of Bloomfield Hills states that "the fact that two-thirds of the voters in Bloomfield Hills did not respond to the recent ballot survey indicates that they preferred to leave the decision regarding two- or three-story apartments to their elected representatives on the commission."

If we were to agree to this "logic," Commissioner Lee and Commissioner Colombo should have resigned after the last election since only about 40 per cent of the voters voted for either of them as their representatives.

SERIOUSLY, I was amazed at the response to the Citizens' Committee Survey. First, the voters were asked to sign their cards and "go on record"; second, between 100 and 200 citizens were away from the city at the time; third, of the approximately 1,370 cards mailed out, a total of 641 responded—47 per cent response. (Most public opinion surveys of this kind are regarded to be highly successful if a 15-20 per cent response is achieved.)

I would like to join the bewildered Citizens' Committee in wondering why the wishes of 84 per cent of the respondents were ignored. Before his death, my father served on this commission and would have been most responsive to the wishes of our citizens in this situation.

ROBERT CRAIG
280 Cranbrook Road
Bloomfield Hills

new ordinance multiple housing regulations will mean less vulnerable to court attack.

Under these circumstances it would certainly be poor judgment to consider for the city commission candidates who propose to invite the courts to dictate our zoning regulations or perhaps even "unzone" property within our city.

Citizens wishing to preserve in the future a city's somewhat limited control of land use within its borders, have no choice but to vote for Bergford, Blanchard and Schirmer—and incidentally, the obligation to be sure to vote.

O. E. HUNT
Rathorn Road
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