

GROSSE POINTE CIVIC NEWS

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF CITIZENS ASSOCIATION
OF GROSSE POINTE TOWNSHIP

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SPECIAL ELECTION

At a special election held Tuesday, January 8, 1924, the Village of Grosse Pointe Shores voted upon three proposals with a record ballot of 50 votes cast and but one dissenting vote.

A proposed charter amendment, changing the date of the annual village election from the second Monday in April to the third Tuesday in May and making the next annual election in the Shores on the third Tuesday in May, 1924, was approved by unanimous ballot.

A proposed amendment to the charter authorizing the council to enact zoning regulations was approved with but one dissenting vote.

A bond issue for \$30,000 for the purpose of constructing a fire house and acquiring a fire engine and suitable fire equipment was approved by unanimous ballot.

The bonds approved at this election were sold the next day at 4½ per cent interest and a premium of \$122.50.

Work on the fire house was started Monday, January 14.

The new zoning ordinance provides for the regulation of the location of business areas, the location of buildings designed for specified uses, the regulation and limit of the height and bulk of buildings, the area of yards and other open spaces surrounding buildings, the restriction of the maximum number of families which may be housed in a dwelling, and the zoning of the village into districts for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of the above regulations and restrictions.

A 3,000 gallon per minute pump was installed December 1 in the disposal system in Grosse Pointe Village at a total cost of \$3,634.99.

COURT DECISION ON DITCH

The last hearing in the matter of the Black Marsh Ditch was on December 12, 1923. The matter came on to be heard on the petition of the Drain Commissioner of Wayne County for the appointment of Special Commissioners, and on the motion of certain respondents to dismiss the petition of the Drain Commissioner, chiefly on the ground that all proceedings had abated. Both the petition and the motion to dismiss had been pending for some time. On December 12th Mr. Dingeman, the Drain Commissioner, appeared with his counsel and orally moved the court that his petition be dismissed, on the ground that the proceedings were incomplete. The motion was granted and the petition was dismissed. The Commissioner then announced that he would probably make application to the court at a later date for leave to file an amended petition. The court stated he would entertain such an application on proper notice to the respondents' counsel, who reserved the right to make objection thereto and be heard on the application.

The real question yet to be determined is whether the court has any jurisdiction to entertain an amended petition by the Commissioner, based on the old proceedings, or whether entirely new proceedings will be necessary under the new drain law. If entirely new proceedings are begun, all persons interested will have the right and opportunity to be heard.

According to law, when a petition for a drain is defeated, those who signed the petition must bear the costs. Such expenses to date are reported to be about \$7,000.

Grosse Pointe Village is contemplating parking regulations to prevent congestion at the corner of Fisher Road and the Boulevard.

BUS ORDINANCE

The Village of Grosse Pointe Park has recently passed the following ordinance covering public motor car operation within the village limits:

"That any motor vehicle operating for hire in the Village of Grosse Pointe Park shall first obtain a permit from the Village Council and shall operate such motor vehicle under such rules and regulations as shall be promulgated by the Village Council.

"This ordinance is deemed to be for the preservation of the health, safety and welfare of the inhabitants of the Village of Grosse Pointe Park and is directed to take immediate effect."

The council stated the ordinance in broad terms to permit the working out of its details through actual experience. Such an ordinance makes it possible for the village to regulate the bus and jitney service as regards schedule, fare, stops, and terminal points. Also, it will not interfere with the possible extension of the Detroit Motor Bus service through Grosse Pointe Park.

The other three villages are at present considering ordinances on public conveyances.

The Council of Grosse Pointe Village will act upon such an ordinance Friday, January 18.

A CHANGE IN DIRECTORS

At a recent meeting of the directors of the Citizens Association, J. J. Crowley presented his resignation as director. His letter stated that he could not devote the time necessary for the work. The directors elected Richard P. Joy, president of the National Bank of Commerce, to fill the unexpired term. At the annual election held last June, Mr. Joy received the next highest vote to Mr. Crowley.

Grosse Pointe Civic News

Grosse Pointe, Mich.

Consulting Editor,

H. P. Breitenbach

Editor, Lincoln Maire.

Printed once a month as the official publication of the Citizens Association of Grosse Pointe Township, under the authority of the following board of directors:

H. P. Breitenbach, Pres.; Dr. L. E. Maire, Vice-Pres.; Wm. M. Mertz, Sec'y; Jos. L. Hickey, Treas.; J. J. Crowley, Chas. Parcels, and Oscar Webber.

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Considerable interest with offers of financial support has been expressed in the plan outlined in the last issue of the Civic News for the organization of a scholarship fund. The following letter is self explanatory:

"In the December issue of the Grosse Pointe Civic News, I observe an editorial on "Helping Students Through College" in which it is suggested that a scholarship fund be established from which loans to students may be made to be repaid to the fund after graduation.

This plan is being operated by a number of progressive communities with splendid results. In the interest of aiding such a cause, the Fidelity Trust Company offers its services as trustee or in any other capacity free of charge."

FIDELITY TRUST CO.

By Scott E. Lamb,

Vice-President and Trust Officer.

Another citizen writes:

"Some of us no doubt have more or less helped students through college by private and individual assistance financially. Your suggestion of forming an organization for this purpose is very commendable and I shall be very glad to be one of several to further such a move, presuming that such an organization can be conducted on reasonable lines with adequate co-operation."

GEORGE OSIUS.

MACK BUS LINE

From a resident tax payer and user of the Mack Avenue bus line the "Civic News" has received the following description of rates charged by that service:

"The present rate of fare is ten cents from the Mack Avenue car terminal to the Seven Mile Road, and twenty cents to the Jefferson Avenue car line at the Defer road. The fare of twenty cents is also charged to passengers riding from any point lying between the city car line and the Seven Mile Road to any point between the Seven Mile Road and the Jefferson Avenue car at the Defer Road. For example, a passenger getting on at St. Clair Avenue and getting off at the Cook Road is charged twenty cents for a distance of about two miles. No fare is less than ten cents. The moment the bus crosses the Seven Mile Road another fare is charged. So the residents of the Township of Grosse Pointe living north of the Seven Mile Road must pay a double fare in going to and from Detroit or the same fare as those residing in Macomb County."

According to the above rates it costs a Mack Avenue resident, if he lives above the Seven Mile Road, fifty-two cents to go to Detroit and return. This is a high fare for the short distance involved.

The Mack Avenue buses run along the boundary line of four municipal units and two unorganized districts. Their route lies in two townships and two counties. In all there are eight governmental factors in the case. Under such circumstances regulation of rates is difficult to accomplish.

MUNICIPAL MAIL

In addressing municipal mail to any of our villages care should be exercised to get the proper name of the village written in full. The names of all four villages are very similar. Mail addressed to Grosse Pointe goes to the municipal hall in the Village of Grosse Pointe. Several hundred letters are annually opened and readdressed by this office.

NEW BRANCH OF PARENT-TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

A new branch of the parent-teachers association was recently inaugurated at the Trombley School.

Mary Evans, principal of the school, was elected president. H. A. Strickland, Chas. L. Phelps, Mrs. Irene Rifenberg were elected vice-presidents; and Mrs. H. L. Siebert secretary and Bert Wilson treasurer.

The committees will be headed by H. L. Siebert, publicity; Mrs. E. Y. Watson, music; and Mrs. D. W. Johnson, program.

Two unusual committees were appointed as follows: New Building, H. E. Gieseberg, and Old Building, L. J. Muchenthaler.

On the 18th of last December the newly organized chapter invited the members of the school board to attend their meeting held in the Grosse Pointe Park municipal building.

At this time the board was informed of a number of alterations on the Trombley School building that the parent-teachers association considered imperative despite the intended abandonment of the building.

The school board took immediate steps to follow these recommendations. Advantage was taken of the holiday vacation to make alterations in the furnaces and furnace room, to better sanitary conditions, and to redecorate class rooms.

CONTRIBUTIONS

The Civic News will be pleased to receive from our citizens contributions of a civic nature of interest to the people of Grosse Pointe. Short news items, advance notices of public meetings, and letters on current topics will be given space whenever possible.

Electric light and gas bills may be paid at the office of the Village Clerk in Grosse Pointe Park.

TAX STATEMENTS

Many taxpayers accustomed to paying taxes in Detroit and receiving statements for the same from the City Treasurer have been led to inquire why they do not get similar bills on their Grosse Pointe taxes.

Our Township Treasurer makes a practice of sending out bills to taxpayers as rapidly as it is possible for him to do so under the present system. But the tax rolls do not come into the Treasurer's hands until December 10 which is the date tax collections start. Consequently the bills are mailed at dates anywhere between December 10 and January 10.

No doubt it would be a great help to both the taxpayer and the tax collector if the tax rolls were rendered at a date early enough to allow the Treasurer to mail his statements before December 10.

The law does not require that statements be sent. The taxpayer is responsible for finding out the amount of his taxes and making payment. But both the taxpayer and the treasurer find it more efficient when the matter can be handled through the mails.

NEW LIGHTS

In Grosse Pointe Village the Edison Electric Company will carry on a program of replacing the overhead wire street lighting system with underground wires and a new style of lamps. The type of lamps used will be similar to those now on Lakeland Avenue.

Under the plan the Village is to designate the street for installation of the new system at such time as the company may state they are ready to progress with the work.

The council has designated Jefferson Avenue for the spring work. The system on this street is already underground but the lamps will be replaced by 38 lights of 1,000 candle power each.

No time limit is set for the carrying out of the program.

There will be no installation charge. The cost will be covered by an increase in rates.

OUR BUILDING IN 1923

According to conservative estimates, the buildings started in the Township of Grosse Pointe in the year 1923 are of a total value of \$3,357,565.00.

The figures used in the compilation of this total were taken from the building permits of the four villages and also based on a canvass of the township area not organized into villages. The figures are accordingly low as estimates given by architects in applying for a permit to build are invariably under actual cost of construction.

There were 567 structures of all types in course of completion in the past year. Of this number 361 were dwellings, 12 commercial, 77 garages, 43 additions and alterations, and 78 temporary structures now serving as dwellings.

This has been a record year for the township and every indication points to a bigger year in 1924.

One of the features of the growth has been the development of Grosse Pointe Park. Seventy-eight per cent of the building of the township took place in the lower village at a cost of \$2,000,890.00. There were 166 single homes built there, 43 two-family flats, 13 four-family flats, 6 commercial buildings, 17 alterations and additions, and 50 garages.

Despite the rapid building stride there is nothing of the mushroom growth in this development. A rigid building code and good restrictions on the property have no doubt aided in bringing about a desirable class of construction. Expensive structures together with other splendid if less costly examples of the architecture characterize the larger portion of this remarkable community growth.

In Grosse Pointe Village there were 31 single dwellings, 6 two-family flats, 2 commercial buildings, 13 alterations and additions, 10 garages and 5 temporary dwellings. The total cost of the building was \$579,200.

Grosse Pointe Farms gave permits for 24 single homes, 1 com-

mercial building, 13 alterations and additions, and 12 garages. The cost of building in this village was \$296,475. Due to the elongated proportions of the property in the Farms there has for years been a lack of available building property in this Village. Recent sub-division of some of the "Farms" or meadows has given rise to renewed building progress.

In Grosse Pointe Shores three homes and garages were built and three are in process of construction. All six homes are of an expensive type. The total cost of buildings is \$196,000. None of the homes here cost under \$15,000 while in the other villages the majority listed were under this amount.

In that area north of the Villages but still in Grosse Pointe Township there were 68 single homes built, 3 stores, and 73 temporary dwellings or semi-garages built on the rear of the lots to serve the purposes of homes until permanent ones could be built in front. The average cost of buildings in this area is approximately \$1,800. They are all of frame construction.

Figures on the types of dwellings in the four villages are as follows:

In the Park 112 were frame, 94 brick veneer, 18 brick, 3 stucco, and 2 stone.

In Grosse Pointe Village 23 were frame, 3 brick veneer, 15 brick and 2 stucco.

In the Farms 17 were frame, 4 brick veneer, 2 brick, and 1 stucco.

In the Shores 3 were frame and 3 brick.

The principal points of development were along Mack Avenue north of the villages and in the neighborhood of the Charlevoix and Jefferson Avenue car line terminals at the City Limits. The growth in the villages proper was uniformly scattered.

Due to overcrowding in the Trombley School the kindergarten was moved to the basement of the municipal building on Jefferson and Maryland Avenues.

GROSSE POINTE PARK BUILDING CODE

In Grosse Pointe Park the building code, which has been in effect since December 1922, is very similar to the one in the City of Detroit. Contractors and architects expect the same rigid restrictions as regards quality of materials and workmanship.

The Grosse Pointe code is more particular and specific concerning multiple dwellings or apartment houses than is Detroit's. It is written in such a way as to prohibit apartment houses from being constructed in solid oblong form, thus preventing them from being built on narrow lots.

The execution of the building code is under the guidance of a building commissioner in the department of subdivisions and is handled thru three bureaus. A bureau of building considers plans and specifications and reports their decisions on proposed

buildings to a bureau of license and permits, which performs all clerical work. A bureau of safety engineering examines all plans pertaining to elevators, boilers, pressure tanks, wiring, etc., and inspects the same.

The three bureaus are supplemented by a board of rules and a board of appeals.

In general the code covers all building work excepting minor interior alterations. It covers the erection of signs; installation of wiring; jacketed kettles; apparatus operated by gas, steam or oil; and storage of explosives.

The quality of materials is specified, also thickness of walls and cross walls; formula for concrete mixtures; stresses in wood, steel, and masonry work.

All buildings within the fire protected zone must be fire or semi-fireproof. Buildings outside of the fire zone may be of frame nature.

All buildings moved to another place in the village must be remodeled to conform to the code set down for newly constructed buildings.

Owners must get a certificate of occupancy before any one can take up residence in a new dwelling. There is no charge for the certificate.

If work is not started within 90 days after a permit has been granted it is not valid.

Grosse Pointe Park does not have a zoning ordinance. The development of the community thru the promotion of highly restricted subdivisions made this precaution unnecessary. Less than two per cent of the street frontage in the Park was sold as unrestricted property.

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CITIZENS ASSOCIATION
GROSSE POINTE, MICH.

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Detroit, Michigan
Permit No. 335

"They have a right to censure that
have a heart to help."

WILLIAM PENN.

Mr. Bernard B. Vogt,
696 Cadieux Rd.,
Grosse Ete. Village, Mich.