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Just the Facts

Monday, Jan. 10, 1994

Lourdine Osborne, Editor Susan Comstock, Ad Manager

Police News

William J. Schloot, 17, of 524 S. Market, was arrested at 8 a.m. Friday on a complaint by Bill Schloot of the same address. The younger Schloot was charged with battery and resisting arrest and was taken to the Public Safety Building.

Michael A. Abbott, 24, of 319 Front St., was arrested at 9:15 a.m. Friday on a traffic warrant. He was released on \$300 cash bond.

Police are investigating a residential burglary reported Saturday. David E. Hollen, 426 N. Fourth St., Apt. B, reported that someone took a set of license plates from his back porch.

The Hoopeston Fire Department was called to Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital at 10:31 a.m. Saturday to investigate an electrical smell. Police officers were also dispatched.

Court dispositions

Robert Clayburn, Hoopeston, pleaded not guilty to battery. Trial was set for Feb. 17.

Criminal damage charges against Brian Root, Hoopeston, were not filed by the state's attorney.

Obituaries

MOORE, Esther, 73, of Hoopeston, died at 8:35 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 6, 1994, at United Samaritans Medical Center, Logan campus, Danville. Funeral services will be 11 a.m. today, at the Hamilton-Orr Funeral Home. Burial will be in Floral Hill Cemetery. Memorials may be made to the United Samaritans Medical Center Hospice, Danville.

MORGAN, Pauline, 78, of Rossville, died at 11:03 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 8, 1994, at United Samaritans Medical Center, Logan campus, Danville. Funeral services will be 11 a.m. Tuesday at the Rosville United Methodist Church. Burial will be in Mann's Chapel Cemetery. Visitation will be 4-6 p.m. Monday at the Sunset Funeral Home in Danville and one hour before services Tuesday at the church. Memorials may be made to the Rossville United Methodist Church.

SMITH, Dorothy, 80, of Hoopeston, died at 7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 6, 1994, at Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital. A memorial service will be at 2 p.m. today at the Goodwine United Methodist Church. There was no visitation. Memorials may be made to the Goodwine United Methodist Church or the American Cancer Society. Hamilton-Orr Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.

Weather

Cloudy today with a 60 percent chance of rain or snow. High in the mid to upper 30s. Tonight, 60 percent chance of rain or snow. Low in the low 30s. Tomorrow, mostly cloudy. High near 35, low around 25.


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To rezone or not to rezone: that's the question

The city planning commission faces a tough decision today: do they recommend that a tract of the Hoopeston Industrial Corporation land be rezoned commercial or not?

The hearing promises to be interesting because of strong opposition to the request. In the last two weeks, I've heard more than a few people criticize the prospect of putting a Casey's General Store on the property.

People say the HIC was formed to bring industry to Hoopeston. Casey's, they rightly point out, is a commercial venture. The HIC, they say, should stick to what it was formed to do.

HIC members have come under fire for not caring about Hoopeston or the corporation. Ora Baer, who sent letters to HIC shareholders, says the sale will sound the death knell for the industrial corporation.

But will it?

The HIC has owned those 63 acres for about 40 years. In that time, at least according to Baer's letter, one company almost bought the property.

Other people say more businesses were interested but were not allowed to locate in Hoopeston because they would compete with existing businesses. It seems some former city administrations at least gave the appearance of having protectionist philosophies.

The corporation sat on the land through the 60s, 70s and 80s. HIC board members say they marketed the land as best they could, spending several thousand dollars trying to get an industry to locate in Hoopeston. They spent several hundred more dollars for borings and drillings providing EPA-required information for potential buyers.

Now it's the 90s and they want to split up the land. And although it seems to be an unpopular decision, it might be a wise one.

Change is never easy - nobody likes it. But

times are different than they were 10, 20 or 30 years ago and we have to change with them.

Illinois' business climate has become increasingly hostile to business over the years. That's

why so many plants locate just over the eastern border, where conditions are more favorable.

Also, speed is essential in today's world. While we're not far from several major cities, we're not really close to any of them.

The railroad running through the site would provide needed transportation, but in today's

world, much moves by truck. An industry there would increase traffic on Route 9. Increased truck traffic to the landfill already has people complaining.

Another factor seems to be the proximity of the high school to the land. HIC board members have said industries are hesitant to locate so close to a school, a decision hard to disagree with.

Several people have said Hoopeston doesn't need a Casey's, that we already have similar businesses. Adding another, they say, will hurt what we have.

Faced with all this, what should the HIC, the planning commission, and ultimately, the city council, do? Should they continue to act like Cinderella's ugly stepsisters, waiting for the prince to knock on the door? Or should they assess their options and get some use from the land?

Opponents raise valid points, but overall, it seems the best bet is to let the land be rezoned.

There are no guarantees that an industry will ever want to locate here. If the talk concerning NAFTA is right, industries will be move to Mexico before they move to Hoopeston, Illinois. And while Casey's would compete with existing businesses, competition drives the market place.

The halcyon days are over. Can we really afford to shut our doors on this opportunity?



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