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Township Officials Seek New Home for Sigurd Berg

A petition has been circulating as of late in the Scotch Plains Business District about the situation a man named Sigurd Berg finds himself in. In part the petition notes that, "After forty years as an honest, industrious resident of this city, he is faced with eviction from his home and workshop." Mr. Berg resides in a municipally-owned dwelling on Front Street, immediately adjacent to the Scotch Plains Municipal Building and expanse of lawn on the corner of Park Avenue and Front Street.



Mr. Sigurd Berg with his latest dollhouse creation

At the age of 85 (Mr. Berg was born August 14, 1889) Mr. Berg supports himself by making doll houses and crafted furniture. Miss JoLene Barham, who is founder and president of the Society of Doll House Enthusiasts of Carriage World -- part of the Stage House Village complex, began the petition drive a few weeks ago. The petition, presently signed by close to 400 people, also mentions that "We . . . suggest that the city which is planning to destroy his home should accept some of the responsibility for finding him another dwelling . . . which will also provide workshop space where he can continue his craft."

Born in Norway, Mr. Berg left at the age of 16 to travel the seas. For the next 18 years he belonged to the merchant marines, traversing the seas in iron-hulled ships with sails. Finally, he came back to land, and he says that for about the past 40 years he has been a citizen of Scotch Plains. As of Monday, he said he was told he must be out of his house by August 31st.

Scotch Plains Municipal Manager, Daniel R. Allan, on Tuesday said that Mr. Berg will be given an additional three or four months in which to find a new dwelling. Allan stated that "I am cognizant of the situation, and I have been trying to find a place for Mr. Berg to live." It should be emphasized that since Mr. Berg moved into his present home, he knew it would be a temporary one.

Allan feels the term "eviction", which is used in the petition is a "harsh" word. "Eviction is a legal procedure, and I don't think we're doing that." Asked if Mr. Berg is

willing to move out, Allan responded that, "Mr. Berg has made it clear that if he had a preference he'd remain in his present house."

But Scotch Plains has plans to remove the house in which Berg now resides, with plans of fashioning the corner of Park Avenue and Front Street into a park or recreation area, though the Township has no definitive plans. The town hopes to have something completed in time for the Bicentennial in 1976. Yet concerning Berg, Allan noted that "I don't think it is anyone's intention to take an older man and throw him out on the street."

Allan said that Berg had been notified of the three month extension beyond August 31st within the past month. Allan in turn had not heard of the petition until The TIMES had contacted him concerning Mr. Sigurd Berg. Hopefully within the upcoming months, a new home for Mr. Berg can be found.

THE PETITION

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

We are a group of citizens concerned over the situation Mr. Sigurd Berg of Front Street, Scotch Plains, finds himself.

After forty years as an honest, industrious resident of this city, he is faced with eviction from his home and workshop.

Although he and his friends have made numerous inquiries, he has been unable to find another place to live and maintain his workshop.

Mr. Berg is an unusual man who at the age of eighty-four is still willing and able to support him-

Council Clashes Over Traffic Summonses

Hears Progress Report On Slocum Property Purchase

BY: FRED HONOLD

The Councilmen and Councilwoman of Fanwood convened for an Agenda Meeting this past Monday evening at 8 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Borough Hall. Such sessions are conducted regularly to establish the nature and order of the Borough's business for the Wednesday evening Town Meeting. Though the Agenda Meeting is open to the public, only two town residents were present to view the evening's proceedings.

An air of informality cut across the several hour session, which appeared to be drawn along partisan political lines.

Van Dyke Pollitt, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee and hence Commissioner of the Police Board, reported that "Radar for traffic will be inordinately weighted 50 percent of the time on the four corridors of town." The four corridors are the roads maintained by the county, namely Martine, Midway, North and South Avenues. Thus, of the 31-1/2 miles of Fanwood roadway, 15 percent will receive 50 percent of the radar surveillance.

Councilman John Swindlehurst questioned the rationale behind the 50 percent figure. "Why not 75 percent," he asked. Swin-

dlehurst then proceeded to question Pollitt concerning two Police Reports of the radar activity and speeding summonses issued by the Department for Midway Avenue between Martine Avenue and Ridge Way.

The two reports, requested by Carol Whittington, include January 1 to April 2, 1974, and June 14 to July 26, 1974. In the first report, in 83 hours of surveillance 13 summonses were issued, 9 of which were issued on April 1 and 2. Ms. Whittington had phoned the Police Department on March 31 to remind them of her request. In the second report, 42-1/2 hours of surveillance were logged, this

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Board Of Ed Meets Tonite

The Board of Education will meet tonight at Terrill Junior High School. The session will begin at 7:30, and will proceed under a new format which will allow citizens to comment to the Board during the first half hour.

On the agenda is a report from the Educational Policy Committee, directed at codification and reorganization of Board policy.

Outreach Plans Musical Program

Outreach has a special week of programs: On Monday, August 19th at the Fanwood Train Station (rain date is Aug. 26) The DELIC FUNK Rock Band -- just back from doing a show with The O'Jays -- will entertain! This Plainfield group is sponsored by Eville Mack and managed by John Coleman. The group is composed of Victor Langston, congos and vocal; Franklin Eure, bass guitar and vocal; Troy White, drums and vocal; Jerome White, lead guitar and vocal; Sidney Miller, rhythm guitar and vocal; Cleo Brooks, vocal; Anthony Hafen, congos and vocal; Donald Banks, organ.

Tuesday night, August 20th, at Green Forest Park "Bowie, The Clown" will perform magic tricks, ventriloquism and entertainment.

Wednesday night is game night, and Thursday night brings movies to the OUTREACH Program. For information call Resolve at 322-5675.

self by building finely crafted furniture and Doll Houses. He is a model tenant. He does his own housework and cooking and his home is immaculate. He is very clean about his person. He is willing and able to do minor carpentry and/or repair jobs.

We are all proud that he is a member of our community and suggest that the city which is planning to destroy his home should accept some of the responsibility for finding him another dwelling (which he can afford) large enough to accommodate his present belongings and which will also provide workshop space where he can continue in his craft.

Mr. Berg is an active man. He does not wish to retire. Neither does he belong in a rest home, for though elderly, he is in relatively good health and very self-sufficient.

SIGNED:

Our Reporter Tours The Slocum House

BY: JOAN MONAHAN

For many years, Fanwood residents have cast admiring glances at a lovely and gracious old home, set attractively on over five acres. A sweeping circular drive and a beautifully kept front lawn provide a suitable setting for the Slocum house -- a home which figures actively in Fanwood's history, not only as the home of a former Mayor, Clarence Slocum, but also as a country hotel dating back to the early 1900's.



Situated in the shadow of majestic oak trees, in the center of five acres of groomed grass and lush foliage, reached by a horseshoe driveway and recessed a comfortable distance from Martine Avenue North, we find the residence of former Mayor and Mrs. Clarence W. Slocum, better known to the older Fanwoodians as "The Homestead."

Today, those same admiring glances are still focusing upon the Slocum home -- but there is perhaps more curiosity, more interest, than ever before. Recently, the Fanwood Borough Council introduced legislation designed to permit borough acquisition of the property, which has been put on the market now that Mr. and Mrs. Slocum have moved south.

If the borough were to buy the home and property for a new municipal building, would the building be saved? Could the old

building be restored and be used for administrative offices? Immediately, Fanwood citizens began to express interest, not only in acquisition of the lovely home, but in retention of it as a borough facility. Already, some have said it would not be useable for a municipal building, while others have registered very strong feelings about saving the homestead and perhaps adding wings. There is enormous sentiment on the subject from many Fanwoodians . . . and the top

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