

MARCH 10, 1972

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Lincoln

In addition to the fact that there are no fire alarm boxes along Lincoln Road, there are indeed no fire HYDRANTS. As a result, fire insurance rates are fifteen to twenty percent higher than they are in the heart of the city. Although the city supposedly provides fire protection for this district, one resident told the BRUNSWICKAN that recently a Maritime Products outlet burned down before a tanker could get there. To the risk of fire and contaminated water, add the fact that the area receives little attention from the Fredericton City Police, (an "odd visit," according to Rankin) and the fact that the children must play in an area in which there are open cesspools. (Last year, a youngster had a close call after falling into one.)

The area, says Mrs. Marguerita Clark, has come to be known as "Stinkin' Lincoln Road." Adds Mrs. Betty Poirier: "Tourists would never come through here, or if they did, they wouldn't come back." She said "the stench is terrible," and in the summer was most apparent even to motorists with their car windows open.

The smell, of course, is carried by the wind and there is always at least one residence positioned so as to be enveloped in the delicate fragrance of human waste.

Mrs. Poirier felt that City Council consisted largely of men who "have never known what it's like to be without anything," let alone water and sewage, an opinion which appears to be shared by many of the area residents. As to why Council has been reluctant to rectify the situation, Mrs. Poirier offered the suggestion that perhaps there was "more credit and glory" in the construction of something which is visible, rather than something buried beneath the ground.

Early in May of 1971, Mrs. Clark became so disgusted with the situation that she circulated a petition amongst the residents of Lincoln Road, seeking action on this problem. She obtained about one hundred seventy signatures representing about ninety-seven percent of the

adult population of the area. She found that the people she encountered were very glad to see her taking this action, but other than the fact that the petition served to inform residents of the area of the protest movement, it left them "no further ahead". The petition was presented to city council on May 11 when a delegation of the residents attended a council meeting.

Accompanying the petition was a brief which read in part as follows: "The lack of water and sewer service in the Lincoln Road area is causing a severe health problem. We feel this was brought about by the topography of the land, soil conditions, method of ditching of the highway and growth of population...All people in this area obtain their water from wells. Some of these wells have now become contaminated and these people are forced to haul their drinking water...The city should have some of the responsibility for the present situation as in order to improve the drainage along the street they deepened the ditches, thus the ditches now collected more surface water and ground water with the contaminates from the south side of the bi-way and essentially has become an open sewer...With the placing into operation of the new sewage treatment plant, we believe that Lincoln Road area is the only area in the city where the sewage finds its way directly into the river.. The lack of water and sewage in this area has, we feel, seriously impeded the development of the area and helped to inflate the land values in the existing serviced areas.. If the area must wait until there is sufficient revenue from the water rates to carry the cost of the installation; then the area will never be serviced...The City of Fredericton has recently approached the Capital Borrowing Board for approval to borrow half a million dollars for recreational facilities. Most people believe, and we agree, that these facilities are necessary to provide a balanced physical education program for the people of Fredericton, but what about health and a supply of pure, safe

drinking water for all residents of the capital of this Province? Is this not just as important?"

At this council meeting, in the presence of the delegation from Lincoln Road, a motion was approved to include the extension of water and sewage services to Lincoln Road in the 1972 capital works budget as a priority item as well as for the work to "begin as soon as possible following allocation of funds for it."

For the moment, it appeared that the ball was rolling. However, it might be noted that this motion was approved, not only in the presence of a delegation but also very shortly before a civic election. This was to be the beginning of what one Lincoln Road resident said appeared to be Council's playing a "cat and mouse game" with the people of that area.

Came the summer and the situation on Lincoln Road worsened. When an eight year old girl had to be pulled from a cesspool she did not know existed, the Daily Gleaner picked up the case and gave details of the situation on Lincoln Road as such: "The incident was a remote happening but the entire area from the experimental farm to the city limits abutting Lincoln at the railways is dotted with overflowing, ineffective cesspools and septic tanks. On the south side of the Lincoln Road, one area of the roadside ditching is a veritable open sewer where cesspool run-offs accumulate. The stench is unbearable at times, and the pools are open to any youngster or pet that might wander."

Still, there appeared to be cause for hope, that the required services would be installed in the near future. The week previous to this incident involving the little girl, it is reported that Lincoln Road received a cheap, and in the view of the residents, inadequate chip-seal paving job. The reason given was the possibility that water and sewage services might be installed and it would be

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