STATE BOUNDARY COMMISSION

ACT 191

CRITERIA QUESTIONNAIRE

FOR ANNEXATION

RESPONSE TO BOUNDARY COMMISSION QUESTIONS FOR DEVELOPING PUBLIC HEARING INFORMATION

Submitted by Petitioners:
Peter Whitman, James Harrington, and Faith Christian Family Church

1. a) Why is annexation necessary or desirable at this time?

It is necessary to annex this land into the City of Lapeer in order to provide public services allowing for the full development and use of the property. Elba Township has no available public sewer or water for the property in question. Soil conditions on the property are poor, with a significant part of the land consisting of wetlands. Therefore, it is not practical to consider a lagoon system or other onsite sewage disposal facilities. Municipal water service is particularly important to the church in order to provide fire suppression for future buildings. In addition, police and fire services for the property are in closer proximity within the City of Lapeer and are provided by much larger departments. Both the church and the other landowners are unable to fully utilize their properties without the City services described above.

b) Have you reviewed other alternatives that might accomplish your goals without annexation?

In the absence of City sewer and water services, the only other options are onsite facilities. Onsite sewage lagoons or large septic facilities are not practical or cost effective due to soil conditions and the presence of wetlands. The absence of public water lines leaves the only alternative for fire suppression being the construction of very expensive water towers or water tank systems. Both of these sewer and water alternatives seem particularly inappropriate given the fact that City water and sewer lines are immediately available to the east of the property.

c) What are these alternatives?

The alternatives for sewer and water service are described above. Efforts have been made to negotiate a Public Act 425 land transfer agreement between the City and Township. However, negotiations have broken down and the property owners are left with no alternative but to seek annexation.

d) Why were they rejected?

The sewer and water alternatives were rejected because the cost is excessive and the physical limitations of the soils on the property make them impractical. Utilization of a lagoon or other onsite sewage system would also increase the possibility of water contamination. It should be noted that the property belonging to Petitioners Whitman and Harrington has been listed for sale for over 20 years and the only interested buyers have conditioned any purchase offer on annexation to the City.

2. a) If annexation is accomplished, will the existing land use change?

Yes.

b) If yes, how will it change?

While the use of the land belonging to Faith Christian Family Church would continue to be utilized for church purposes, it is the intention of the church to expand its facilities and provide additional programs for the community. The property belonging to Whitman and Harrington would definitely change use in that the property is part of a larger proposed site plan for high quality residential development in conjunction with a larger parcel located on adjacent City property.

c) How soon can this change be expected?

It is the intention of both the church and the owners of the vacant property to proceed with more intensive uses for their land as soon as the economic situation allows.

3. At this time, what governmental services are provided to the area proposed for annexation?

The Township provides limited fire protection through a volunteer fire department located several miles from the property. The Township also provides limited police coverage by means of a contract with the Sheriff's Department for some patrol within the Township by a deputy for limited time periods.

4. a) What new or additional governmental services do you expect to be made available if the land is annexed?

If the property is brought into the City, the following services would be available:

1. Sewer service.
2. Water service.
3. Full-time police protection provided by a department located in close proximity to the property.
4. Service by a larger fire department also located in close proximity to the property.
5. Access to the City Recreation Department's Community Center at resident rates.
6. Fire safety inspections.

b) Are these available without annexation?

The above-described services can only be provided by annexation to the City of Lapeer

c) From whom?

Not applicable.

d) Under what conditions?

Not applicable.

5. If the annexation were approved, what would be the impact on the City, the Township, and the greater community?

The impact on the Township would be minimal in that the area proposed for annexation by the Petitioners only contains a piece of undeveloped property with a very limited tax base and a non-profit church which provides no tax base. The loss of these properties to the City would have no significant financial impact on the Township. The advantages of annexation to the City would include an increased property tax base due to new development on the vacant property, the acquisition of quality housing for residents of the City, income tax revenue which would come from persons living or working within the boundaries of the areas proposed for annexation. It should also be noted that the City boundaries would be "squared off", making for a much more logical boundary and easier provision of City services. The advantages to the overall community would be the most important ones for granting annexation. The church will be allowed to expand its facilities and provide new services for the community. The vacant land would provide housing for the community as well as additional tax base for the schools and all other County services financed by separate millages (senior citizen programs, libraries, emergency services, transportation, etc.). Development would also aid school system finances by increasing the pupil count. The Lapeer School District has been experiencing a decline in student numbers. The spin-off benefits resulting from this development would enhance the economy of the entire community.

6. If the annexation were denied, what would be the impact on the City, the Township, and the greater community?

The impact of denying annexation can be summed up in one word: stagnation. The vacant land will continue to lie idle and generate minimal tax revenue. The church would be prevented from achieving its goals of growing and providing greater services to the Lapeer Community. The economic benefits from development would not occur.