

# Mini M-275 hope of road commissioners

By MICHAEL MATUSZEWSKI

The Oakland County Board of Commissioners has come out in support of a parkway plan which would replace the scrapped M-275 freeway through western Oakland County.

The board voted 19-4 in favor of a plan proposed by the Commerce Township Board calling for a four-lane, limited-access, divided highway which would follow the route which had been proposed for M-275.

According to the State Department of Highways and Transportation, the township "urged dramatic emphasis on aesthetic design, lower-than-expressway speeds, lower noise pollution and concern for environmental damage with a minimum amount of right-of-way width."

The county board resolution took into consideration certain environmental objections to the original freeway plan. The board recommended laying the "Lakeland Parkway" plan, which is favored by Oakland County Executive Daniel T. Murphy, over the Commerce Township proposal.

In areas where the Commerce Township route runs into difficulties, the plans could be altered to swing over to the Lakeland Parkway route. Once the problem area had been bypassed the route could be redirected to the Commerce Township plan, Wilcox said.

Commissioner RICHARD WILCOX (R-Orionville), chairman of the board's planning and building committee, said, "We felt it was those local communities that would have to live with the road. Anything they could support, we could support."

He said Commissioner Robert McConnell (R-Farmington Hills) had obtained the verbal support of the surrounding communities for the Commerce Township plan.

The board resolution supporting that plan did not receive the commissioners' total support, however. Commissioner Alex Perinoff (D-Southfield) voted against the resolution but said, "I'm not against the plan. I just don't know what it is. I never saw the damned plan."

"I wanted to be sure that it would be beneficial, if not to all of the county, at least to most of the county," he said.

The board defeated measures to table the resolution and to refer it back to the building and planning committee for further study.

Commissioner Lawrence Pernick (D-Southfield) also voted against the resolution. "Unless you have a good idea, you don't promote an illusion to make it look like you have a good idea," he said.

"I see nothing wrong with endorsing an idea," Pernick said, "but as long as it is based on a technical examination and on in-depth knowledge."

He said he had not seen the plan or any diagrams. He also said that neither the county's road commission nor the planning commission had been consulted prior to acting on the resolution.

Pernick called it "an attempt to gather political support to ask the state to build the (M-275) expressway."

Commissioner Robert Gorsline (R-Milford) said, however, that the Com-

merce Township plan had gained the unanimous support of the building and planning committee before it was forwarded to the full board.

All other commissioners in the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers circulation area, besides Perinoff and Pernick, voted for the resolution.

According to the Department of State Highways and Transportation, support the parkway concept has been coming the area's local governmental officials. Murphy proposed the parkway concept, which would utilize existing right-of-way lines, in April.

The department formally recommended the parkway plan to the State Highway Commission Aug. 16. The commission, which has final authority over highway construction in the state, will take it up Wednesday.

ACCORDING TO SOME reports, several members of the three-man commission have indicated they will oppose anything which can be seen as a "junior M-275." A parkway following the original freeway route may fit into that category. Both Detroit daily newspapers have labeled the parkway M-275's "little brother."

The highway department staff, which has consistently backed the construction of M-275, in its report to the highway commission said it was "agreeable to further exploring the feasibility of constructing a parkway along the proposed alignment of M-275 from I-96 northerly to I-75."

The highway department report cited the need "to effect a compromise which addresses both state-wide and local needs and which also addresses local concerns regarding impact and aesthetics of the freeway cross section."

The report also maintained, "Studies have shown that any improvement of local roads to trunkline standards would be very disruptive to the community and would involve severe secondary impacts."

WHILE THE DEPARTMENT has considered the compromise parkway, its report to the highway commission still favors construction of M-275 as the best solution to western Oakland County's growing traffic problems.

"M-275 would provide mobility in and through an area which now has an inadequate road system," the report said. "Because of the inadequacies of the local road system, construction of M-275, as an addition of the system, would also provide considerable relief to the local road system," it concluded.

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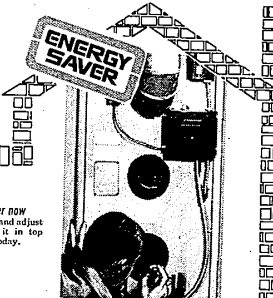


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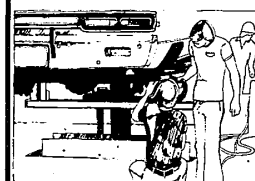
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