

After meeting with Young, Milliken

Murphy to veto SEMTA withdrawal

By MICHAEL MATUSZEWSKI

Oakland County officials finally have some transportation commitments and Detroit Mayor Coleman Young has blocked away from insistence that a subway be built along Detroit's Woodward Avenue Corridor.

That was the outcome of a 1½-hour summit meeting involving Young, Gov. William Milliken and Oakland County Executive Daniel T. Murphy last week. Murphy had asked for the meeting in the wake of a county board of commissioners' decision to try to pull Oakland County from the South-eastern Michigan Transportation Authority (SEMTA).

County commissioners favoring the withdrawal said the county was not getting a fair share of the transportation funds which were being parceled out to SEMTA's seven-county service area. They were also put off by Young's demand that a subway be built.

The commissioners were also upset that the Oakland County Advance-Reservation Transit system (OCART), a dial-a-ride program, as been held up in the legislature.

THE COMPROMISE between Murphy and Young touched all those bases.

•OCART, according to Murphy and Patrick Nowak, the county executive's top aide, will be on the road by October. Milliken and Young committed themselves to working to overcome legislative footdragging on the system.

•With the coming of OCART, another \$2.7 million, which previously had been axed from SEMTA's budget by the legislature, will be restored and will flow into Oakland County.



WILLIAM MILLIKEN



COLEMAN YOUNG



DANIEL MURPHY

•Young and Murphy agreed to accept SEMTA's recommendations for the development of a regional mass transit system. SEMTA and the Urban Mass Transportation Administration will determine whether the City of Detroit gets a subway.

MURPHY SAID he will veto the board of commissioners' decision to drop out of SEMTA. The board decided to drop SEMTA on an 18-6 vote and it will take 18 votes to override Murphy's veto.

Many commissioners, however, say that the board will sustain the veto.

"I don't know what the board of commissioners will do," Murphy said. "Hopefully, they will decide not to leave SEMTA. I will recommend that they not leave SEMTA," he said.

"I would hope," Nowak said, "commissioners would see the advancement and new reality of OCART and would not vote against a veto."

He added that the commissioners should support Murphy's decision because "we can feel assured that no one is going to get a subway without it meeting some serious scientific, technical and legislative tests."

"And, no one is going to cram that decision down our throats," he said.

YOUNG, WHO USED his substantial political clout last year to put two subway proposals on SEMTA's list of alternatives to be studied, said he is "supportive of a regional system that meets the needs of all the component parts."

"That means," Young said, "a single system so long as there is assurance that the needs of all the communities will be met."

"Let's let the experts do their jobs and not hamper them with political pre-demands," Young said.

"I've always been in agreement with Oakland County getting their small buses," he said.

BUT THERE WAS still disagreement between Young and Murphy over what form the best regional system would take.

"The best system is not a subway," Murphy said.

In areas where subways exist, Murphy said, there are large numbers of people commuting from the outlying areas into the cities. "That's the way it works in New York, Philadelphia, Boston and Chicago," he said.

"There just is not a large population in Oakland County that commutes to work in the city," he said.

YOUNG, HOWEVER, said "it would have to be a fluke" that SEMTA's analysis does not reveal a need for rapid transit in Detroit.

"If that happens," the Detroit Mayor said, "I'm hung."

Only a day before the meeting Young said Detroit would have nothing to gain from an areawide system that did not include rapid transit.

After the meeting, though, Young tempered his previous positions saying, "I'm hoping that everybody can get what they want out of an areawide coalition."

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