

The debate continues

State panel eyes 6-lane proposal for M-275

State highway department engineers have proposed a six-lane, 308-foot right-of-way for both alternatives to the cancelled M-275 freeway project.

Design sketches of the alternatives were presented to members of the Citizens in Opposition to M-275 at a meeting last week, while another session, this time with Oakland County Commissioner Robert McConnell and local officials who support a boulevard plan, was held last Wednesday in the Commerce Township Hall.

Following Monday's session, Citizens in Opposition chairperson Stephen Rosman said his group felt the highway department design was not acceptable in its present form.

"They've given us several alternatives," Rosman said, "and we've got to think about how it applies to our concept."

Rosman said he was concerned that the plans show six lanes.

"The department didn't give us any data to support its finding for six lanes instead of four," he added. "We want them to substantiate their traffic statistics."

The design was based on a four-lane peak by 1985, when the north-south trunkline probably would be completed, the engineers told Rosman, although the traffic statistics were based on other factors such as the extension of Decker Road in Novi, widening

of Orchard Lake Road to five lanes and the addition of a lane on I-96.

Other concerns listed by Rosman included: the use of Haggerty Road as a service road for existing businesses; the 308-foot right-of-way; the possibility that some property would be landlocked, requiring the state to acquire it; and approval from Novi and Farmington Hills for the road between I-96 and Eight Mile Road, which the department said would be expensive to acquire.

"We're at a very preliminary stage," Rosman said, "and we gave them some modifications to think about."

The citizens' group leader said he would contact the department's M-275 study team in the next week or two to discuss the design proposal, and added, "I hadn't anticipated the size and dimensions of their proposal."

In addition to Rosman and the six-man study team, others attending Monday's 4½-hour session were Citizens in Opposition members Jim Jardine and Tim Carpenter, who also served on Commerce Township's Road Study Committee, and Dick Grow of the East Michigan Environmental Action Council (EMEAC).

The citizens' group had proposed a scenic drive of four lanes, divided, with limited access along Haggerty from Eight Mile to about Richardson Road. Along Union Lake Road, the drive was supposed to be four lanes, undivided, with limited access and would have skirted Long Lake and Union Lake Village. A connecting road would be built to Williams Lake Road and then become four-lane, divided again to M-39.

McConnell's boulevard alternative would follow Haggerty from I-96 to about Pontiac Trail where it would veer northwesterly over the original M-275 alignment to M-39.

The commissioner's plan also called for a four-lane, divided, limited access trunkline.

Memorial Day marchers sought for celebration

A last minute drive for participants in the 1978 Farmington Veteran's Memorial Day Parade is being launched.

Group floats, marching units, bands and youth organizations are invited to join the May 29 parade.

There is a need for open top vehicles and antique cars. Any questions regarding transportation should be referred to Ralph Philip at 477-8561 or Don Gould at 477-2092.

There will be Memorial Awards for this year's parade. Awards will be given for the best unit; best adult float; best youth float; best mounted group; best youth group, boys and girls; best biker; best elementary band; best marching unit and best vehicle. These awards will be presented after the Memorial Services.

The chairman for the awards, Jerry Unhoefter, can be reached at 478-1373.

Any questions about participation in the parade can be referred to Wally Christensen at 474-8554. Questions can be answered by calling the American Legion Hall at 478-3174 or the VFW Hall at 474-8180.

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