

Hills, township will zero in on roads

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

The first step has been taken in forming a joint Farmington Hills-West Bloomfield Township committee charged with developing a strategy for dealing with road and congestion problems in both communities.

The Farmington Hills City Council last week approved formation of the committee. West Bloomfield officials have not yet scheduled approval on their meeting agendas. But Township Clerk Betty Sue Dupree said it is not anticipated because officials approved the concept when it was first suggested at a joint city and township meeting in April.

"A MAJOR and significant goal would be to bring together the inter-

Joint effort planned

A JOINT committee designed to study and develop solutions to traffic problems of common concern was first suggested in April when officials from both communities, including the Michigan Department of Transportation and Oakland County Road Commission, met to discuss the proposed extension of Northwestern Highway.

Although Farmington Hills' proposed extension of the state trunk line appears to be a dead issue in light of West Bloomfield's opposition, officials agreed they share many common traffic problems brought on by booming economic growth in both communities.

The proposed 13-member road committee is expected to be comprised of representatives from both communities, as well as from the Michigan Department of Transportation, Oakland County Road Commission and the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments.

COSTICK AND Doherty will be joined on the committee by representatives from each community's planning commission, department of public services and planning. A citizen from each community also will be asked to serve. It's expected that Kenneth Poye, president of the West Bloomfield Township-based Gate-

way "PLUS" homeowners organization, will serve as the township citizen representative, Costick said.

A speaker at April's joint meeting, Poye told officials he hoped his organization could be part of the proposed road committee.

"We believe working together, we can come up with reasonable solutions to our mutual problems," Poye said.

"WE FEEL some immediate rather simple low-cost changes can be accomplished that will reduce congestion 5-10 percent and help make current conditions more bearable until more extensive cures can be agreed upon by all concerned," Poye said in April.

In a memo to the West Bloomfield Township Board of Trustees and Farmington Hills City Council, Costick and Doherty outlined the committee's goals and objectives as follows:

- Develop a work schedule, including a list of needs and issues that must be addressed.
- Analyze major road needs for both communities. Focus will be on problems in corridors such as 14 Mile, Maple, Orchard Lake Road and Haggerty.
- Examine existing and pro-

jected traffic and population characteristics within both communities and the surrounding areas. This includes determining the amount of traffic traveling through both communities from other areas.

- Determine the impact of planned improvements on I-696 with particular focus on proposed widening of the freeway and additional interchanges at or near Drake and Haggerty roads.
- Analyze and identify alternative solutions to road problems.
- Develop a plan of action for road improvements that will be recommended to the township board and city council.
- Coordinate the study with the Oakland County Road Commission and MDOT, SEMCOG, and other communities such as Southfield and Novi.

"At the initial meeting of the joint committee, the communities will seek assistance from the professional road agencies in determining how best to proceed with this kind of study, what information needs to be gathered, who has such information, and how this information can be put together within the six-month time constraint available," Costick and Doherty said in the memo.

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