

County road discussion attracts few

Continued from Page 1

mittie that is traveling throughout the county during May and June to solicit residents' comments on options for financing more than \$700 million in road improvements in the next 10 years.

Farmington Hills Mayor Ben Marko echoed McDonald's disappointment. "Unfortunately, I don't see a lot of people here and that's kind of distressing to me."

Despite disappointment, McDonald is hoping that the committee's next 10 meetings — Farmington Hills was the first — will draw more of a crowd and comments from taxpayers.

Following a brief explanation of the Oakland County Road Commission's two-pronged plan of financing needed improvements, the public hearing drew comments only from city, township and county officials.

THE ROAD commission's plan involves a requested two-cent-per-gal-

lon gas tax increase for three years, as well as authorization to ask voters to increase the gas tax in Oakland County.

Charging fees to developers as well as requesting an equivalent of more than 1 mill from the county board of commissioners is also part of the plan.

The transportation committee has scheduled the hearings to determine whether the board of commissioners should support the road commission's plan or any others that might be suggested.

Farmington Hills, West Bloomfield and county officials addressed concerns about specific facets of the road commission program. Yet all appeared to agree that road problems are a top priority and that all units and levels of government must present a united front to solve the problems.

"We need to present a united front. We need grass roots support," said Fred Houghton, county board of

commissioners chairman.

Houghton chided Farmington Hills city manager William Costick for his concern about the state increasing the gas tax.

"The governor has already announced his opposition to approve any increase to the tax. I don't know that six cents (state increase and county gas tax) is too realistic to rely on," Costick said.

HE SUGGESTED it might be more realistic to concentrate efforts on the county level — particularly in levying a gas tax. With a county gas tax, all revenue generated would remain within the county. The county would get only a portion of revenue generated from a statewide gas tax increase.

"I don't believe personally we can

count on a tremendous amount of money from the state," Costick said.

Houghton also suggested that the board of commissioners give back its \$8 million surplus to local communities, which most likely would use it for roads.

County commissioner Alexander Perinoff, D-Southfield, opposed the suggestion. "I am unalterably opposed to giving back any of the taxes

that have been collected. We're going to need a heck of a lot of money. We're a burgeoning county."

User fees, such as a gas tax or vehicle registration fees, are the only type of taxes Perinoff said he would support.

"It's unacceptable" to pay more property taxes, Perinoff said. "Taxes, forget it as far as I'm concerned."

Police investigate links between assaults

Continued from Page 1

again and fled. The victim then called police.

The victim was transported to a hospital where she was treated for scratches and bruises.

The assailant's face was shielded by the ski mask. He wore blue jeans and is described as a white male, about 30 years old, 175 pounds, medium build. The description differs slightly from one given by recent

rape victims in nearby areas, but other similarities exist, police said.

On the evening of April 8, a 48-year-old woman was awakened in her bed in a Berkshire Drive house in Bloomfield Township by a knife-wielding man climbing on top of her. The woman was bound and gagged and raped twice during a 40-minute ordeal.

In the same home, another woman was sexually assaulted by a man who had broken in on the morning of April 24.

On April 15, a 40-year-old woman was approached on Lincoln near Westchester in Birmingham as she entered her garage. The assailant

held a knife and demanded her purse. She screamed and he fled.

THE WEST Bloomfield assault has more similarities to the attack in Birmingham than to the two in Bloomfield Township, according to Philip Denomme, youth officer in Bloomfield Township.

There are no assurances that the attackers are the same, Denomme said. "We just don't know — it's always a possibility."

Bloomfield Township police are concentrating extra patrols in the southern area of the township because of the attacks.

About 350 Birmingham-Bloomfield residents showed up last week at an anti-rape rally with police officials. Police urged residents to look out for each other, warned them to be aware of their surroundings and distributed an artist's sketch of a man who is sought for an indecent exposure incident that may be related to the sexual attacks.

Bloomfield Township police reports are filled with the sightings of suspicious people and calls from people who say they know who the rapist is. "People are aware and they're doing what we asked them to," Denomme said.

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