

Group wants open hearing on road plans

By James Radebaugh
staff writer

A West Bloomfield residents' group wants to hear what other residents have to say about a plan to widen Haggerty Road or build a new north-south highway.

The state transportation department announced this month that it will conduct the June 7 hearing according to a new, low-key format that allows participants to submit written statements or to express their views privately to stenographers who will record them.

The Concerned Citizens of West Bloomfield has complained that this format sacrifices an important purpose for holding a public hearing: to hear what other people have to say. "Our gripe is that it's not really a meeting. There's no chance to have a cross conversation," said Concerned Citizens co-president Larry Wasserman. "To me it's a step backward."

The hearing, scheduled for 3-5 p.m. and 7-9 p.m. at Novi High School, will be greeted with two on-going audio-visual presentations that will discuss various options for the project

officials said the format will help them get a better idea of how the public feels about the various proposals being considered to complete the link from Pontiac Trail to southern Oakland County highways.

Traditional public hearings, where participants are required to stand up and voice their opinions before what are often large and emotional audiences, often intimidate people from speaking, the officials said.

In the June 7 hearing, the public will be greeted with two on-going audio-visual presentations that will discuss various options for the project

and the processes the states goes through to obtain land for highway project. Transportation officials will also be on hand to speak informally with the public and answer their questions.

When the participants feel they are well acquainted with the issues they can express their opinions and concerns privately for the hearing record.

Concerned Citizens has asked the transportation department to revise the format of the meeting to allow a full public discussion. The group also asked that the location be

changed from Novi to a site more centrally located for residents of West Bloomfield, Farmington and Commerce Township.

WASSERMAN said state officials had not responded to the requests by Tuesday. However, Jose Lopez, assistant public hearing officer for the transportation department, said the hearing would go ahead as planned.

"That doesn't mean we're not open to suggestions," he said. "We are there to take comment from the public. We're open to whichever format works."

Lopez said that the members of the public who attended the department's first low-key hearing in January mostly supported the idea.

The proposal to link Pontiac Trail to I-96, I-275 and I-696 is intended to reduce traffic along north-south corridors in the area, according to transportation officials. Three general options being considered are to widen Haggerty Road to up to six lanes, making it the link, build a new highway a half mile east of Haggerty or to do nothing at all.

Concerned Citizens has not taken a stand on which, if any, of the options it will support, Wasserman said.

Critics of M-9 say wetlands report is inaccurate

By Phil Gionetti
staff writer

Critics of M-9 plans that involve cutting through virgin turf in northeastern Novi are questioning the accuracy of an environmental impact statement (EIS) released last week.

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) released the 2-inch thick document May 11 after months of delays, spelling out the alternatives available for completing the major north-south roadway.

M-9 is designed to link the I-696, I-96 and I-275 expressways and relieve north-south traffic congestion in western Oakland County as far as Pontiac Trail.

ARTHUR VALENTI, whose Summit Drive home would be moved or razed to make way for a clover-leaf interchange at Twelve Mile, said the EIS lacks information about several major wetlands near his home.

"There is something very wrong with the report," Valenti said. "It ap-

pears as if it has been altered and tailored to fit the needs of the department of transportation.

"I believe there is something very fishy here," Valenti said.

Several other wetlands that appear to be listed on city wetlands maps are not mentioned in the EIS.

MDOT officials hired the Chicago firm Envirodyne Inc. to prepare most of the environmental information. Throughout the evaluation, Envirodyne would not respond to phone calls from The Novi News and instead referred inquiries to an MDOT

number in Lansing.

MDOT spokesman Mike Flajole, who has headed up the M-9 project, said Envirodyne has done unbiased work, and that MDOT is satisfied with the job they did.

VALENTI is currently leading a petition drive among his Summit Drive neighbors to oppose the "off-highway" routes suggested in the plan. Nearly all of his neighbors have signed the petitions.

Valenti is also calling on the city to hire a set of "impartial engineers"

to do an evaluation of the natural resources in the area. That request was made just this week, and no response from city officials was available by press time Tuesday.

Nick Valenti, Arthur Valenti's son, said the family is considering hiring experts to do some aerial mapping of the area.

"There is no question that they have left some (wetlands) out of the report," Valenti said. "And you can start right in the backyard. There are wetlands in my backyard — but they aren't in this report."

From there, who knows how many others they have left off to suit their needs," he added.

Valenti and others in the Summit Hills subdivision are pledging to be out in force when the EIS is discussed at a public hearing at Novi High School auditorium June 7. Hearing times are set for 3-5 p.m. and 7-9 p.m. on that date.

Residents can make statements to court reporters then, drop off written comments, or discuss the proposals informally with MDOT officials.

A written transcript of the public hearing will be available in about 30 days.

3 still in running for business award

Finalists for the Michigan Entrepreneur of the Year awards have been selected.

The finalists were announced by John Boos, director of the Entrepreneurial Services Group in the Southfield office of Arthur Young & Co.

The awards program, sponsored by Arthur Young, the accounting and consulting firm, Inc. Magazine and WJR Radio, has been established to honor business people who are successful entrepreneurs. Winners will be announced at the awards banquet

on June 10.

The finalists in the various categories include: Thomas H. Landry, president, A.J. Elkin Construction Co., Farmington Hills; Michael W. Greives, president, Data Systems Network Corp., Farmington Hills; and Peter Karmanos, Jr., president, Computware Corp., Farmington Hills.

The winners in each category will be selected by an independent panel of judges and announced at the awards banquet on June 19 at the Westin Hotel in Detroit.

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Foot Facts: Troubled Toenails

Toenails often become thickened and discolored due to an injury or a fungal infection. The large toenail is most commonly affected. However, the other toenails may also develop problems. Some of the more common problems are mentioned. THICKENED FUNGUS NAILS appear opaque yellow, discolored, crumbling or flaking and possibly a cheesy substance underneath the nail. INGROWN TOENAIL is caused when the corners and sides of the nail grow into the surrounding skin. SUBUNGUAL EXOSTOSIS is when a bony spur forms directly underneath the big toenail. SUBUNGUAL HEMATOMA is caused when blood accumulates underneath a nail. TENOSIS TOE is thickening of the nail or separation of the nail from the skin.

When cutting toenails, trim straight across with the toenail clipper. To prevent ingrown toenails, do not round off the corners. Nails can also be filed and smoothed with an emery board and cleaned with a nail brush or toothbrush to remove any flaking or debris. Nails should be thoroughly cleaned with soap and water and then trimmed with an antiseptic solution.

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