Hills backs Connector despite roadblocks

ties," sald William Frantz, EPA en-vironmental review branch chief.

The local communities are count-ing on the Federal Highway Admin-sistration stance that even with the wellands issue, it plans to go ahead with the Haggerty Road Connector.

Of the affected communities, only Novi, West Bloomfield Township and White Lake Village have wellands ordinances. Farmington Hills does out.

orthogonal world create a

"The state has said that this flocal wetlands ordinances) would create a project with the federal agencies scuffle, aid David Call, Farmington Hills issistant city manager.

THE FHA, which would be asked

to finance the project, maintains it doesn't have the authority to require local communities to adopt wellands ordinances.

"There is a philosophical difference between the Federal Highway Administration and the EPA," and the Federal Highway Administration. "We interpret our regulations trator. "We interpret our regulations that the project of the federal properties and the state of the federal filt of the federal filter on the federal filter on Environmental Quality in Washington, which could delay the project.

White the federal agencies scriffe.

tal impact statement completed sometime this summer and the ground letting (breaking) should be-gin this fail," said Gloria Jeff, Michi-gan Department of Transportation deputy director.

Though MDOT plans to complete the environmental impact statement by Oct. 1, the FHA and the EPA must approve the document before construction can begin.

THE POSSIBILITY of delays prompted the affected communities' elected officials who serve on the project's policy committee to adopt a resolution supporting the FHA.

Committee members urged the EPA to give final approval to the environmental impact statement,

which would allow the project to move on schedule. The resolution agrees the FIWA does not have authority to force local communities to adopt wethands ordinances. In addition to Farmington Hills, other communities that approved the resolution were Novi, Commerce Township, Walled Lake, White Lake Township and Wolverine Lake VII-tage. West Bloomfield Township was absent.

The Southeastern Michigan Coun-

absent.

The Southeastern Michigan Council of Governments and the Oakland County Road Commission also approved the resolution.

"The local communities don't feel they need ordinances if they are not required," Call said. "The state is wary that if the locals pass ordinances, it could create a precedent

and affect other road projects."

If that precedent is set, Call said, "tremendous delays" could occur with large road projects. An "over-regulation of wetlands" could mean no more development in certain areas, he added.

THE POLICY committee agrees with the FIA that the state Department of Natural Resources regulations of wellands larger than five acres is plenty of protection, Call said.

said.

But EPA officials are equally con-cerned about the smaller wellands that could be affected by the Hag-gerty Road Connector, Call said.

The proposed boulevard will dis-turb about 30 acres of wellands. No net loss of wellands will result be-

The EPA estimates that 37-57 acres of wetlands will be filled in during the construction phase. But the EPA is more concerned about the wetlands affected by the development that will accompany the recipiet.

project.
Like MDOT, Call believes develop-ment will occur anyway.

"I don't think development is slowing down because there's not a road there. The roads around there are just being taxed," Call said,

Staff writer Sheila Phillips con-tributed to this report.

Hills council to vote on easing hoop prohibitions

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BUT NOT everyone was happy

about the pending zoning change.
Rolling Oaks subdivision board
member Richard Corey said the
multitude of pole designs — chrome,
stainless steel, red, white — are stainless steel, red, white — "starting to take an ugly view."

"It's almost un-American to talk about not playing basketball, but we have to face up to it," said Corey, a zoning board of appeals member who was speaking as a citizen. He opposes unsightly poles and those near the street. "We need some enverning."

those near the street. "We need some governing."

He said many of his neighbors have asked, "What can we do about people playing basketball until 2 octook in the morning?"

He also was concerned about kids chasing missed shots.
Planning consultant Claude Coates said the zoning ordinance probably init the place to regulate hours of play, Lichtman said playing into the

wee hours of the night could be considered disturbing the peace and so ticketed.

COUNCILMAN ALDO Vagnozzi voted to introduce the ordinance but questioned if it was needed. He also was concerned about front-yard

was concerned about front-yard safety.
When told subdivision bylaws could be amended by homeowners to address location and design of basetball poles, independent of eity ordinance, Vagnozzi asked, "How widespread are subdivision restrictions in this area?"
City attorney Paul Bibeau responded, "We have many of these

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hoops in front yards. They're a very popular thing and the city should ad-dress it."

dress it."

Although subdivisions may regulate basketball poles, they must enforce their regulations in civil court, Bibeau said.

Without the zoning change, the city would be forced to ticket everyone with a basketball pole in the front or minimum side yard and prosecute them in 47th District Court, he said.

REGARDLESS, MAYOR Fox said she wasn't "convinced there was a mended the zoning change."

Councilman Terry Sever said, "It's impossible to regulate unsightliness. For those who have unsightly basketball hoops in their driveway, they probably need their trim painted, garage door straightened and bushes trimmed."

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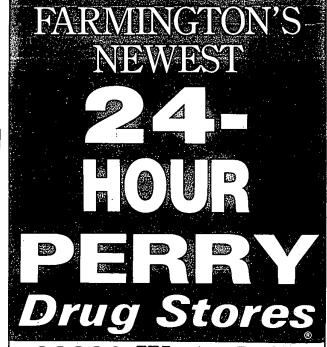
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