



By Tim Smith
staff writer

West Bloomfield officials describe the proposed Haggerty Connector as a "bad news, good news" situation for the township.

The bad news is the \$80 million connector highway — to which the Michigan Department of Natural Resources recently gave the conditional go-ahead — probably would severely affect the township's existing roads and services, said Supervisor Sandra Draur.

"My feeling is, it's going to have a dramatic impact on West Bloomfield," Draur said this week. "It will put a strain on our services."

But the good side of the coin for West Bloomfield is that the Michigan Department of Transportation is considering the township for development of new wetlands.

The DNR issued its wetlands permits for the project with the proviso the 46 acres of wetlands lost to the Haggerty Connector be replaced within a 10-mile radius.

THE NEW boulevard would be built west of existing Haggerty from 12 Mile Road north to Pontiac Trail, cutting through Novi, Commerce Township and a portion of Farmington Hills.

Farmington Hills manager William Cosick, however, applauded word the connector project is moving forward, because it will alleviate the

overload of traffic on surface roads and I-696 in that city.

Cosick said more than 30,000 vehicles travel the two-lane Haggerty Road every day and that the six-mile stretch of I-696 in Farmington Hills has only one interchange, at Orchard Lake Road.

"We've always been fully supportive of it," Cosick said. "We're delighted... and we want it to proceed. It's a very important project for us."

MEANWHILE, A source of concern for Draur is how the connector would abruptly stop at Pontiac Trail.

"She said that the connector of probably between 6-8 lanes would dump traffic onto the two-lane Pontiac Trail just a few hundred feet west of West Bloomfield's border."

"It'll be the same thing you have at the corner of 14 Mile and Orchard Lake," Draur said. "My concern is this road goes nowhere."

Although Draur clearly opposes the connector project — she unsuccessfully tried to persuade the township board to reconsider a resolution supporting it — she would welcome the construction of new wetlands in the township.

"I'd like (the state) to replace them in West Bloomfield, as much as we can get," Draur said. "But it's all in negotiations."

FEASIBILITY OF such work might be the primary stumbling block.

According to David Mekarski, West Bloom-

field's planning and environmental director, there are two possible sites in the northwestern section of the township for wetlands construction.

What MDOT is looking for in prospective sites, Mekarski said, are upland areas with high existing water tables and coarse, grainy soil suitable for reuse in road construction.

That would help keep down the cost of wetlands creation, he said.

But Mekarski said the transportation department, when all is said and done, might choose against building the wetlands in West Bloomfield because property generally is more expensive than other targeted areas.

"BOTH SITES have pending or planned residential development, so it's more than likely the cost of those sites may be prohibitive," said Mekarski, adding he has spoken with MDOT's Larry Alber, who is heading up the wetlands mitigation project.

West Bloomfield's longstanding emphasis on maintaining the environment could help MDOT's decision, Mekarski said.

"I think the bottom line is, West Bloomfield is highly interested in working with the state on any kind of mitigation project," Mekarski said. "The township, unlike other townships, can provide a proven track record and can play an active role in managing, enforcing and protecting the environment."

Hearing set for May 4

Continued from Page 1

THE CONDITIONS include that:

• Stokes cannot make a complaint against the city for any damages because of the adjournment.

• The hearing will be rescheduled to Monday, May 4.

• The spa remain closed pending the outcome of the revocation hearing.

Taylor requested the adjournment in writing Friday, two days after Oakland County Circuit Judge Alice Gilbert denied Stokes' request to lift the suspension on the spa's license and, to adjourn the revocation hearing before the council, pending the outcome of criminal charges against her. Stokes filed the civil suit against the city March 27.

UNLIKE HER employees, Stokes maintained her not guilty plea at the March 30 pre-trial conference in 47th District Court. She is charged with four counts of accounting and soliciting, engaging in an illegal occupation or business, loitering in a place of illegal occupation or business, and aiding and abetting. She also was charged with operating an illegal place of occupation or business.

Taylor said Stokes "is caught in the middle," and may be forced to choose between her Fifth Amendment rights and rights that protect her property interests.

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Resident to be inducted into Heritage Hall

Leon Cohan of Bloomfield Hills and Ramesh Mangrulkar of Farmington will be inducted into the Detroit International Heritage Hall of Fame, dedicated to increased fellowship among all races and nationalities, along with three other new members at Cobo Center Friday, May 1.

Also honored at the ninth annual Hall of Fame awards dinner of the Friends of the International Institute of Metropolitans: Detroit will be Rosemary Bannion of Detroit and Neal Shire of St. Clair Shores.

Cohan served three terms as president of the Jewish Community Council of Metropolitan Detroit, working to strengthen relationships between the Jewish community on the one hand and the black, Arabic, Hispanic and Polish communities on the other.

He is a director of Concerned Citizens for the Arts in Michigan and a member of the Arts Commission of the City of Detroit. He is a lifetime member of the board of trustees of the Michigan Cancer Foundation, having served as chairman of the foundation for three consecutive terms.

MANGRULKAR is an accomplished musician and vocalist who founded Jhankar, an organization to promote Indian art and culture, and frequently organizes and sponsors cultural programs in the Detroit area. He was primarily responsible for training more than 40 musicians for the biennial conference of British Maharashtra Mandala of North America, a U.S.-Canadian organization of Marathi-speaking Indians; the 1989 event in Troy attracted 2,500 people from the two countries.

He and his wife, Latika, produced, directed and hosted two local radio

programs on Indian classical music and on the needs of Asian Indian youths growing up in America. He also is co-founder of Bal Bharati, a club for young people of Indian heritage.

They will raise to 43 the number of people enshrined in the permanent Hall of Fame exhibit at Cobo Center for their contributions to intercultural development and community improvement.

Tickets for the May 1 dinner are \$85, of which \$50 is tax-deductible as a charitable contribution. Reservations can be made by call 871-8600.

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