County to decide stadium road battle

By ROBERT KIPPER

OAKLAND COUNTY—This week the county board of commissioners is expected to be title the two month-play to widen Opdyte Road in front of the Portize football stadium.

The request that the county supply to widen Opdyte Road in front of the Portize football stadium.

The request that the county supply 1850,000 toward the project will clear the county finance commistee Monday and be ready for final approal or rejection by the full board Thurnday. Even supporters of the request voiced only guarded optimism of passage. Commissioners Rotation Building Authority, pegged the chances of member of the Portize Stadium Building Authority, pegged the chances of the Portize Stadium Building Authority, pegged the chances of a support of the planning and building committee narrowly urged the full board to reject the proposal.

Last week one of the more influential commissioners. Paul Kasper (R-33). of Bioonfield Hills, announced he had decided against approving any younty funds for the stadium-related project.

Of the 12 commissioners from com-

county funds for use manufacturing project.

Of the 12 commissioners from communities served by Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, seven oppose the request, three favor it and one appears undecided. The twelfth commissioner, Pal Nowak (R-35) of Farmington Hills, favors loaning money toward the project but not giving it.

ward the project but not giving it.

MANY COMMISSIONERS have received feedback from their constituents opposing spending public
funds for what they consider a private
enterprise venture. The stadium has
been a controversial project since its
inception and part of the controversy
has been the suspicion that the public
would be asked to pay for a number
of indirect expenses such as upgrading roads surrounding the stadium.

If the board rejects the request, it is
likely the road widening project will
be scrapped. The county road commission, which has pledged \$300,00, has
announced it will not go ahead with

The widening of Opdyke would only give minimal relief to what most expect will be a horrendous traffic jam.

the project unless other governmental sources pay for half the project. It is unlikely that the City of Pontiace will contribute more. It has informally pledged \$250,000. The widening of Opythe would only yer minimal relief to what most expect will be a horrendous traffic jamear the stadium. It has been estimated that it could take as long as



five bours to clear the parking lot of the 15,000 automobiles and 400 buses that are expected.

The Opdysk evidening is the only road improvement planned before the stadium opens its gates in August for the first Detroit Lions exhibition foot-ball game.

AT LAST WEEK'S full board meeting, several county commissioners wanted the request killed rather than sent to the flanner committee for additional study. However, that effort was defeated even though two of the commissioners who warted more study agreed they intended to vote against the proposal when it comes to a final vote.

One of the reasons given for more study was the prospect that the county may be asked to pay less for its share of the project.

The county road commission has opened contractors' bids for the Opdyte project, although the contract hasn't been awarded as yet. If the low bidder is accepted, the project, once estimated at 31 million, could be completed for \$600,000.

pated \$118,000 aarings would be dis-tributed.

The three parties involved—the road commission, the county board and the City of Postiac—could each reduce its share. The road commission could still give \$60,000 and the other two parties spoil the savings. Or the county might benefit entirely from the savings and reduce its contribution by \$118,000.

\$110,000

The prospect that the county might be asked to spend \$150,000 for even \$100,000) instead of the quarter of a million dollars could change some commissioners' minds.

Friday postac city officials attempted to change commissioners' minds with a buncheon and a tour of the stadium site.

TWO OTHER potential funding sources—Poulae Township and the Poulaic Staffarm Authority—have re-housed temperature and the staffarm staffarm and the staffarm staffarm and the parting tot.

lot.
But even if it could, PSBA funds are all but spent.
"It's awfully elementary," says Harold Cousins, PSBA chairman. "We don't have the authority (to build roads) and we don't have the money."



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CLEARANCE ON MAN'

William H. Merrill, who directed the prosecution of John Ehrlichman and others for the break-in of the office of Daniel Elisberg's psychiatrist, will discuss that and other Watergate-related experiences at 8 p.m. Wednesday in the Seaholm High School Little Theatr's in Birmingham. (Photographed by Douglas Bauman).

Suit aims to block state stadium aid



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OAKLAND COUNTY—The Friday aftermoon lunchon designed by Protiac officials to influence coursy commissioners to support a stadium-related road project, falled to attract at
least one commissioner.

Dana Wilson (D-9), of Hassel Park,
spert that time poining two state legislators filling suit to stop state general
inned payments from going to the Protiace football stadium or any other publicowned sports stadium in the state.

The suit, filed in the Michigan Court
of Appeals in Detrott, objects to the
state subsidy for stadiums that has
given the Portica stadium 516 million
over the past two years

While the suit seeds an immediate
end to such payments. Wilson's just
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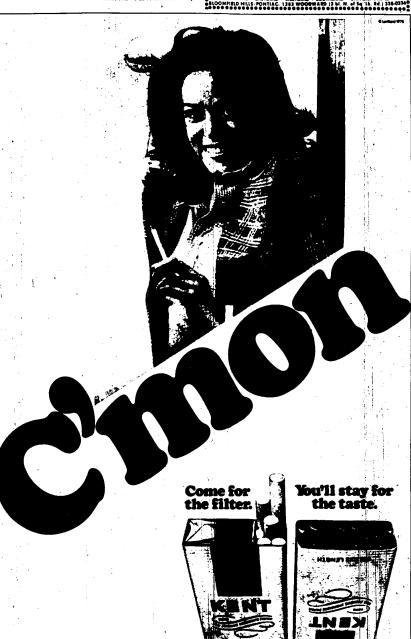
state funds to stadiums on an annual basis.

That law gives stadium owners amounts equaling two per cert of the amount of bonds issued for the project. Under that formula, the Pontiac stadium receives \$800,000 each year.

Also joining in the sait is Lorraine Wilson and company are defending the right of race track owners to receive general fund subsidies since race tracks. Ilis the state lottery, contribute large amounts to the general fund.

It isn't fair, they argue, that sports stadiums should also receive subsidies since stadiums don't contribute to the general fund.

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