

Complaints may scrap Kensington improvement

By SUSAN L. SILK

Bids have been let and engineering stakes placed but the asphaltting of one Bloomfield Township road slated for improvement late this summer may still be scrapped.

Hanging in the balance are a 1.4 mile gravel stretch of Kensington Road from Big Beaver to the city limits of Bloomfield Hills in Bloomfield Township, a small section

of sidewalk and perhaps as many as 175 trees.

Third in a series

Since the township developed a priority list of road work almost 12 years ago, Kensington, with homes on the east side of the street and railroad siding property to the west, has been scheduled for asphaltting.

More than a year ago, Homer Case,

township supervisor, signed an agreement with the Oakland County Road Commission to begin that work this summer, Case said.

The one mill township tax collected annually will finance its \$250,000 share of the road work. Another \$230,000 of the estimated expenses will be provided by the state.

When originally let out for bids, the Kensington road plans called for widening to a uniform 33 feet, con-

structing concrete curbs and sidewalks, installing gutters and covering the road with asphalt.

"I just took it for granted that everybody was in accord," Case said. Bloomfield Township, because this is not a special assessment project, is not required to consult with area residents regarding the work.

After the township makes its request, the road commission has only to decide whether the project is

needed, according to Leroy McEntee, road commission legal advisor.

"What motivates the township to suggest a certain project to be undertaken is not our concern," McEntee said of the matching fund programs.

RESIDENTS of Nantucket Green, a well-developed side street whose only egress is via Kensington, have long been calling for paving, Case said.

Side street residents dependent on Kensington Road, a lack of sidewalks for Students walking to school, a 5 p.m. "bottleneck" along Big Beaver from Woodward, and the cost of maintaining gravel roads, were cited as township reasons for supporting the improvement requests, Case said.

Citizen complaints, however, have been increasing since a June 18 information meeting, Case acknowledged.

A proposed 40-mile-an-hour speed limit, the removal of a large number of trees and concern for increased northbound traffic have been brought to the supervisor's attention, he said.

"FOR THE MANY years that we have lived here, the gravel road has been sufficient and safe," said Mrs. Arlene Shaler, a resident of the less developed area at the north-end of Kensington.

A 40-mile-an-hour speed limit, set by the road commission according to Case, may pose more of a safety threat to the youngsters than the present gravel, Mrs. Shaler said.

"Gravel doesn't make for speed," she said.

Mrs. Shaler and her family moved to their heavily wooded, five-acre site

more than 20 years ago for "rural peace and quiet," she said.

Removal of as many as 175 trees along the road would destroy the natural sound barrier, she said.

Although she'd "rather be knee-deep in gravel" paving seems impossible to stop, Mrs. Shaler said.

"If it has to be, couldn't they at least show some consideration for the ecology?" Mrs. Shaler said.

CASE IS trying to strike a compromise that will allow the project to go forward.

Plans for sidewalks will be limited to between Big Beaver and Burnley—a side street just north of Nantucket Green, instead of the entire length of Kensington.

After the bids are opened by the road commission later this month, Case will "sit down with the road commission and ask them to put in a right turn lane at Woodward and Big Beaver to ease up the bottleneck."

Without that improvement to Woodward, Case said, he would recommend to the full township board that the Kensington work be postponed.

"I'll consider the children's safety and what the police department recommends first."

"But we're not ready to 'ya we'll ram it down their throats' either," Case said.

At this stage of the project Bloomfield Township is "honor bound" to proceed, according to Case. But the point of no return is not reached until a contract is awarded, a road commission spokesman said.

Lawsuits plague road commission

By SUSAN L. SILK

OAKLAND COUNTY—Legal battles over paving continue to plague the Oakland County Board of Road Commissioners.

When blacktopping crews paved recently in Sly Farms subdivision of Bloomfield Township, they had to

work around Orinoco Circle by order of the Michigan Court of Appeals.

In June, Oakland Circuit Judge James S. Thornburn ruled that David Lebenborn, an attorney resident of un-paved Orinoco Circle had no cause to bring suit against the county road commission.

Lebenborn has since been granted a reprieve from Thornburn's ruling and an injunction against the road commission enjoins it from bringing the asphalt spreaders onto Orinoco Circle until perhaps October when the appellate court can consider the merits of the lawsuit.

Lebenborn has charged that state Act 246, outlining the steps by which the road commission may make special assessments against residents to finance road improvement programs, is unconstitutional.

NO OAKLAND Circuit Court trial date has yet been set for the suit brought by a number of Bloomfield Township Wing Lake Shores subdivision residents against the road commission.

During a July 5 hearing, Oakland Circuit Court Judge Frederick C.

Ziem removed the temporary restraining order holding back the asphalt trucks headed toward five streets in this subdivision.

Although the road commission received the go ahead to begin their paving work there, Ziem also allowed the anti-paving residents to proceed toward trial of the case.

The Wing Lake lawsuit, like Lebenborn's, charges that the special assessment procedure is unconstitutional, according to anti-paving attorney and subdivision resident, Barry Kushner.

Should the court find in favor of their position after paving has been completed, there would be little chance that the asphalt would be torn up, Kushner said.

However, the opposing residents would still be permitted to claim damages against the county, the attorney said.

Unit head appointed

Ronald B. Kevern, director of career advising and placement, Oakland University, has been named commercial division chairman for the 1974 United Way of Pontiac-North Oakland campaign.

As chairman, Kevern, of 207 Orcharddale Drive, Rochester, will head up a volunteer structure responsible for corporate and employee campaigns in all non-manufacturing firms employing 10 or more persons, except those in the pacemaker division.

Kevern, a long time supporter of the United Way served as a commercial division vice chairman in 1973 and prior to that, in 1971 and 1972, as chairman of the Oakland University United Way drive. He also has been very active with the YMCA, a participating agency of the United Way.

Very active in church work, Kevern has been a member of the St. Pauls United Methodist Church, Rochester, since 1955, and is currently chairman of its administrative board.



RONALD B. KEVERN

Classes have registration

Registration is being held for four-week swimming classes for persons of all ages and a two-week accelerated tennis clinic offered through the West Bloomfield Schools Community Education Program.

Mother and toddler swimming for children six months to five years of age, preschool swim instruction for four to five year olds already possessing some knowledge of swimming and Red Cross courses for children six to 12 years of age will begin the week of Monday, July 22. The latter course has

10 different divisions based on skill.

THE FEE for each swim class is \$8 per person.

The tennis clinic will be held from Aug. 5 through 16 open to persons of all ages. The fee is \$12.

Persons must register in person at the community education office in Abbott Middle School, 3380 Orchard Lake Road, at Commerce Road, Orchard Lake.

For more information, call the community education office at 338-3070 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Mondays through Fridays.

2 receive appointments

Lloyd Haynes of Birmingham and G. Robert Harrington of Bloomfield Hills have been appointed to new positions within Michigan Bell.

Haynes has been named vice president of public relations and revenues. He began his career with Michigan Bell in 1946 and has been vice president of revenues for five years.

Harrington, a 32-year veteran with the company, has been named vice president of personnel. He was previously vice president of public relations.

Both appointments are effective Aug. 1.

Ship crew sets reunion

The crew of the USS Hunter Liggett (APA-14), World War II ship, sets reunion Aug. 8-10 at the Pfister Hotel, Milwaukee, Wis.

Information is available from Joseph Rubino, P.O. Box 1397, Glendale, Calif. 91209.

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