

NW Residents Take Firm Stands On Middle School, I-505 Route

Firm stands on a neighborhood middle-school and the routing of proposed freeway I-505 were taken Tuesday by members of the Northwest District Development Association.

After a lengthy discussion, the community group, which consists of property owners and residents of Northwest Portland, decided it would be in their best interest to advise that a middle-school be located outside the district.

The association will recommend its proposal to the Portland School Board, which asked the organization to consider the feasibility of utilizing Couch or Chapman schools to house middle-schools under the Portland School District's present reorganization program.

Under the on-going, 10-year program, the district is restructuring Portland schools, placing 6th, 7th and 8th graders in the new middle schools.

Neighborhood Changing

In a tight contest, Northwest residents also voted to maintain Couch School as an educational facility in the future, advocating its potential to house the Metropolitan Learning Center and as a community center.

Couch School is in an area which is predominantly inhabited by older, single residents, but many felt the character of the neighborhood may change.

In discussing the effects of a middle-school, the group emphasized costs of converting Couch and Chapman, traffic, existing school populations and, more importantly, the character of the neighborhood.

Concern was also expressed for the preservation of existing housing, as well as parks and open spaces — critical in developing needs required for middle-school programs.

Taking a strong stand on the proposed I-505 freeway, the association laid down four points to be presented and defended at a hearing before the City Council March 10.

Objectives Listed

The objectives included: 1) The association supports multiple-use of the freeway corridor, greenspace, walkways for pedestrians, commercial-residential development and that the route be depressed as a buffer between residential areas to the south and industry to the north.

2) The same number of residential units taken out by the freeway be replaced in the Northwest residential area within half a mile.

3) Families being relocated by the freeway have an opportunity to stay in the Northwest district with replacement housing provided for them in the district.

4) That traffic be minimized through the residential area, and that north and south avenues not be utilized as major

arterials to disrupt the neighborhood.

Plans for developing I-505 have been prepared by the Portland Planning Commission for submission to the State Highway Department.

Proposed is a freeway from the Fremont Bridge west to connect with NW St. Helens Road, utilizing a corridor between existing NW Thurman and Vaughn Streets.

Though it is not yet scheduled by the State Highway De-

partment residents and planners have been preparing to insure the freeway will not harm the viability of the Northwest district.

If the present proposal is followed, the freeway will provide a buffer between the expanding industrial development north of NW Vaughn Street and the largely residential neighborhood to the south of NW Thurman.

Design hearings are scheduled for this spring.