

# Loeb Sticks To Overton For X-Way

3-6-68

## Council Will Reconsider Vote For Change

Mayor Henry Loeb today called for construction of the east-west expressway as proposed through Overton Park despite a new stand by City Council to have it moved.

Councilman Jerred Blanchard, meanwhile, reversed his position on the rerouting and asked that council members reconsider their new position next Tuesday.

Council unanimously approved a resolution yesterday asking the federal government to move the east-west expressway from its designated Overton Park route "if possible."

### Resolution

The Council resolution said:

"It is the decision of the Memphis City Council that the expressway through Overton Park be not routed through the park, but another feasible route selected.

"If the route cannot be changed, it is suggested that the route be moved to the north perimeter of the park along N. Parkway." It was not clear whether this would eliminate N. Parkway.

Blanchard explained his reconsideration move:

"I voted for it yesterday. I woke up this morning and I realized we hadn't heard a word from either the state or the City of Memphis. I tried to see Tom Maxson (city engineer) yesterday but he was out and I didn't have a chance to talk to him before the strike took over everything.

### MORE EXPENSE

"I called Maxson this morning, and he said that the change would require a lot of expense and delay and would take more trees out of the park than the present route."

Blanchard added:

"Maxson said people in the path of the expressway have now bought other homes and some of them would have two houses. I realized I had made a mistake. I want to rectify this and take a new look at the situation. It seems it is too late to tinker with the route now."

### LOEB POSITION

Loeb had previously made clear his support for construction of the expressway as soon as possible along the route adopted by the Tennessee Highway Department and U.S. Bureau of Public Roads. The route is along the transit route through the park, on the south side of the zoo.

"My position is unchanged," Loeb said today, adding: "This is based on the facts that there have been many hearings, a lot of right of way has been purchased, there is a problem of where to put it that minimum damage to be done to the park and, most important, the need of expressways to help our traffic situation."

Mrs. Gwen A w s u m b, Council member who introduced the resolution yesterday, said she is in favor of the rerouting "since it is possible to do it without losing the expressway." She added:

"I am not in favor of further extensive delays or extensive costs. If we could have an alternate route along the northern perimeter of the park without too much delay or extra expense, I would hope the people in charge would give heed to this, because I have

CA

March 6

1968