

CA 04.23, 1977
 'Solid Support?'
 O.P.
 Oct 23 1977

To The Commercial Appeal:

Why do all the local and state politicians think that the "vast majority" of the citizens of Memphis want an expressway in Overton Park? So far as I know, there has never been a vote by Memphians on the subject; therefore I do not understand how the politicians can make this statement.

A statement by Rep. Robin Beard appeared in The newspaper Oct. 1, in which he said the highway had the "solid support" of Memphis citizens. Where did he get this information?

I do not belong to the organized "handful of environmentalists" that Beard mentions, but I do love the parks of Memphis. They cannot be replaced within the inner city — there isn't any land left.

I have seen what an expressway did to Riverside Park. A highway requires a very large amount of land. There is not much left of this park except the golf course.

Since Memphians do not visit Riverside as often as Overton Park and since I cannot recall any notification to the people of Memphis that land in Riverside Park was to be used for an expressway, I seriously doubt that very many citizens realize that the land was used for this purpose.

The damage to this park is not as drastic as the plan they have for Overton Park. The expressway at Riverside runs along one side of the park, whereas they intend to build the highway straight through the interior of Overton Park — dividing it in half.

I am every happy that the "handful of environmentalists" have been successful so far in defeating the politicians.

LOIS WALSH

1189 Bradbury Cove