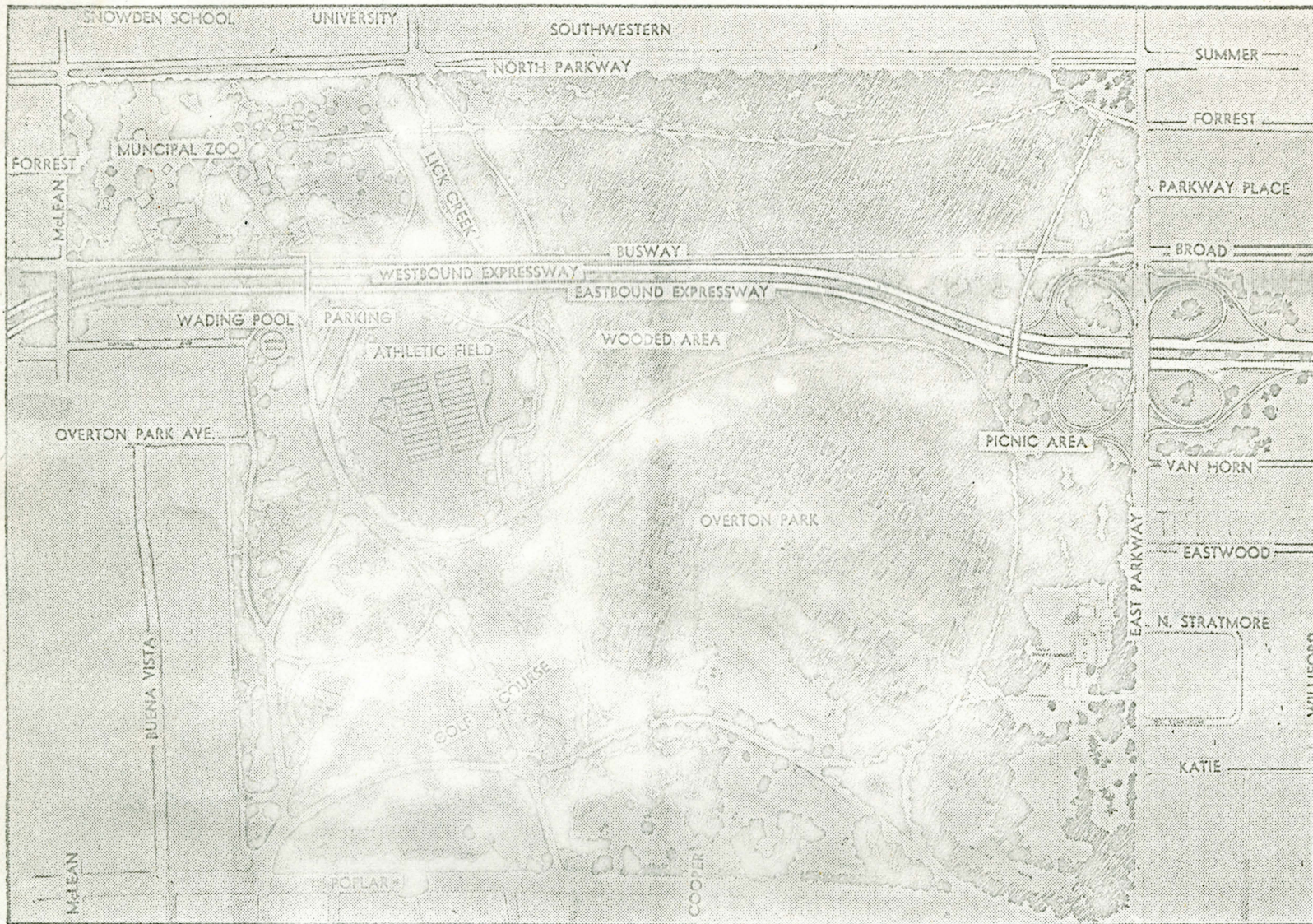


MEMPHIS, TENN., WEDNESDAY MORNING, MARCH 15, 1961



COMMERCIAL APPEAL 3-15-61

**CONTROVERSIAL ROUTE**—Several hundred Memphians appeared at a public hearing yesterday to speak for and against the proposed east-west expressway route which would cut through Overton Park. State officials will review a transcript of the hearing before making a final recommendation. (Story on Page One)

## Throughway Session Theme Is 'How Can We Stop You?'

Shouts, heckling, charges of a "stacked" hearing and an overflowed audience were the hallmarks of a public hearing on the proposed east-west expressway route through Overton Park. Although the hearing was not scheduled to begin until 10 a.m., a crowd was waiting outside the Shelby County Courtroom by 9. By 10:30, the chamber was overflowing and Mayor Henry Loeb proposed moving to Ellis Auditorium. There were shouts of "No, No." He called for a show of hands, but then Commissioner Moulton said he thought all would be more comfortable in the Auditorium. There, Mr. Pollard began a long review of how the expressway routes were located. He

## Goodwyn Measure Is Now State Law

### Ellington Signs Controversial Land Trade Bill

From The Commercial Appeal Nashville Bureau  
NASHVILLE, March 14. — Gov. Buford Ellington Tuesday signed into law a bill which enables Goodwyn Institute to exchange buildings with First National Bank of Memphis. The Governor's action closed the pages on a bill which was essentially one of local interest to Shelby Countians but nevertheless produced stormy controversy on the House floor. It may also have established

Among those who supported the planned route were City Commissioner William Farris, Palmer Brown, president of the Downtown Association; Carl Howe, president of the Memphis Chapter, American Institute of Architects; Sam Bates, representing the Building Owners and Managers Association of Memphis; George Houston of the Kiwanis Club; Roy Marr, vice president of the Chamber of Commerce, and Mercer West, chairman of the Memphis and Shelby County Planning Commission.

**Joyner, Ragsdale Oppose It**  
G. B. 'Pat' Joyner and Frank V. Ragsdale were chief spokesmen against the east-west location. Mr. Ragsdale is chairman of the Traffic Advisory Commission and Mr. Joyner is vice chairman of TAC's streets utilization committee.

Both advocated eliminating the east-west leg and, instead, building a full circumferential route around the city.

Mr. Joyner said the present east-west route not only cuts through a park but goes through an area of substantial homes "and will damage the pocket-books of every taxpayer in America." Mr. Ragsdale pointed out that in Nashville, Little Rock and San Francisco "the people wouldn't let them run expressways through parks, but in Memphis nearly two and a half miles of right-of-way is in Memphis parks."

## Teenager is Killed In 2-Car Smashup

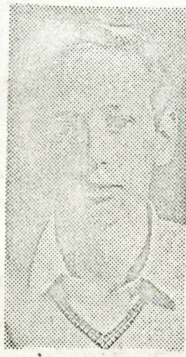
### Richard David Bills, Student At Whitehaven, Victim

A 16-year-old Whitehaven student was killed late yesterday afternoon when the car he was driving collided with another at Highway 51 South (Bellevue) and Holmes Road.

Richard David Bills, son of Mr. and Mrs. Floyd E. Bills of 4367 Hodges Road, died of head injuries in a Jack Ruby ambulance en route to Methodist Hospital.

He became the ninth traffic fatality in the county outside the city this year. There had been six such deaths at this time last year.

William E. McDaniel Jr., 20, of 5131 Windham Road, driver of the other car, told Tennessee Highway Patrol troopers he was driving west on Holmes at



Richard Bills

## Shelby Sales Tax Bill Deals Near Death Blow In Tab

From The Commercial Appeal, Nashville Bureau  
NASHVILLE, March 14. — The Senate Steering Committee virtually killed the Shelby County local sales tax bill Tuesday. By voting to table the revenue measure, the power committee in effect eliminated all but the most remote chance the bill could be approved this session.

Senate Speaker William Baird said he referred the bill to the Steering Committee for action because the state general two years ago had held such legislation is of a nature since the tax would be collected by the state revenue commissioner.

Reports were that opposition from rural West Tennessee lawmakers contributed heavily to its defeat in committee. Rural opposition was one of the potent factors in failure of a similar measure in 1959.

**Needs Two-Thirds Vote**  
The theory is that those from rural western counties who do much of their shopping in Memphis don't want to pay an extra one cent tax on retail purchases. Their sentiments apparently weren't altered by a provision in the bill which would exclude from the extra tax those items bought in Shelby County for delivery in other counties.

Action on the Steering Committee can be reversed only by a two-thirds vote of the Senate. Such a majority is all but im-

the running for another year.

By what vote the Committee removed the Bill from consideration known but the vote was by a show of hands. The measure got substantial favorable

The steering group afterward similarly local sales tax bill for County.

## Defeat Of Bill Triggers Tax Of Tax

Death of the Shelby sales tax bill means tax increase this year Court members said

Squire Ned Cook, committee chairman, means property tax higher than they

3-15-61

file

# Protests on X-Way Route Under Study

## Arguments Made During Hearing Yesterday Are Recorded on Tape

City and state officials today had before them strong protests against routing of the east-west expressway thru Overton Park.

State Highway Commissioner D. W. Moulton said the entire public hearing yesterday was tape recorded.

He said city and state officials would consider all the arguments before sending their final recommendation to the Bureau of Public Roads.

Most of the opposition was against routing the expressway thru Overton Park. Some mainly businessmen — spoke in favor of the proposed route and urged starting construction as soon as possible.

About 400 persons attended. About 90 per cent of them waited thru lengthy discussions on the merits of the present expressway route to voice their opposition. Many complained later that the meeting seemed packed — that those favoring the present route were given first chance to speak and those opposing had to wait two hours to be heard.

Opponents spoke as individuals and as members of the Committee on Preservation of Overton Park. Here are their comments.

### Comments

Mrs. Hillman Rodgers of Brunswick, Tenn.: "I am a lover of land and its beauty. We have preserved nature in Overton Park for ages. We have had sympathetic engineers in the past. I know the studies say it is more economical and feasible to go thru Overton Park, but there is more to it than mathematics."

Mrs. Watkins Overton, wife of the late mayor whose family the park was named after: "The origin-destination studies made by Harland Bartholomew and Associates show the flow of traffic goes northeast and southeast from downtown. Overton Park is between those routes. It serves neither route. That park has been there for 60 years. We are not against progress. We only ask reconsideration for another route farther north."

C. P. J. Mooney, attorney: "You can't convince me the east-west expressway will benefit the downtown area. Why so strong a need to bring the expressway thru the park? Why not follow Southern Avenue? Why not widen other streets, like Jackson?"

Mrs. Henry Lake: "I understand real estate people have bought up large tracts of property along the east-west right-of-way. Naturally they would be for the present route because they would be feathering their own pocketbooks." Her comments came immediately after W. D. Galbreath voiced approval of the route route on behalf of the Mortgage Bankers Association.

Mrs. Richard Moxley: "What can we, as citizens, do to stop

### Part Already Taken

John B. Vesey, former Park Commission superintendent: "We have been opposed for years to letting park land be taken. Part of Overton Park was taken to widen North Parkway. Part was taken to widen East Parkway. Part was taken to widen Poplar. Now they want to take more for the expressway. Why not widen other streets?"

William S. Pollard, partner in the Bartholomew firm, explained: "Present street lanes will handle only 500 cars an hour in peak traffic. Expressway lanes will handle 1500 cars. Thus, it would take 24 new lanes if we were to replace the expressway. Then we would indeed have chaotic destruction of property."

### 'Not Land Bank'

Mrs. Duncan H. Williams Sr.: "Overton Park is not a land bank put there for your convenience."

Mrs. William Dupre: "I am sorry we are getting so big we are going to have to run an expressway thru one of the city's garden spots. We women beautify and you men keep statistics. We are here to keep you informed."

Mrs. James Hogan Jr.: "There has been no mention of making a tunnel under Overton Park. Since it will run thru the park as a depression, why not cover it?"

Pollard said a tunnel was considered, but high costs of drainage pumping equipment and ventilation made it necessary to bypass this idea.



MRS. WATKINS OVERTON  
"We are not against progress . . ."

you from coming thru Overton Park?"

Pollard: "Follow the procedures of democracy. Speak or write to your elected and appointed officials and explain your position. The ideas expressed in this public hearing

will be thoroly reviewed. "The final answer will be what will do the greatest good for the greatest number, with respect to the rights of the individual."

### Question on Money

Mrs. Ralph W. Handy: "I understand that \$10 to \$15 million is being spent for this expressway. This is our tax money. Our committee has done a lot of research. These people are working for nothing. Would it be possible for us to get (city) commission money?" Her remarks were to Commissioner Farris, who had spoken in favor of the expressway, but asking planners to study all possible alternatives to keep from going thru Overton Park.

Farris said money could not be made available to the committee.

Mrs. Handy: "During your campaign you said you would

back formation of a committee to preserve Memphis landmarks. Has that been done?"

Farris: "It is being done now."

Walter Simmons, Memphis Housing Authority director, asked reconsideration of the location of the east-west expressway. He said figures used to determine the location were now outdated. He urged planners to wait until the 1960 census figures were released in June before making final recommendations. Said Simmons: "I think the number of people here to object to the expressway going thru Overton Park is enough to let

you know they are against it and ask your reconsideration."

Two surveys ordered by Congress supply these figures

Pollards disregards the fact that a circumfrential would take through traffic off our streets and then they would be adequate.

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It would take much suburban traffic also.

Riverside has given a part to this expressway. Last summer a part of Orange Mound Play-ground was sold to a business.

It is rumored that there is a drainage problem in the depressed section but Memphis citizens have no right to information.

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