

*Thus, afternoon testimony showed disruption of churches, etc., caused by the "approved" I-40 route, was this edited out?*

# Engineer Defends Park Route, Labels Alternates Disruptive

By MICHAEL LOLLAR

A Memphis civil engineer continued the Tennessee Highway Department battle for an Overton Park expressway in federal court yesterday, defending the park route against a barrage of alternatives.

George Barnes, manager of the Mid-South division of Buchart-Horn Inc., argued that an alternate route utilizing the L & N Railroad right-of-way would be inferior to the park path.

He claimed alternate proposals to tunnel the highway through the park are dangerous and disruptive.

**The trial before United States Dist. Judge Bailey Brown will enter its 17th day of testimony at 9:30 this morning, with the highway department presenting City Engineer Thomas Maxson as its fourth witness.**

Buchart-Horn, an engineering firm, was awarded a contract by the highway department on March 25, 1964, for detailed design study of the segment of I-40 from Claybrook, west of the park, to White Station Road on the eastern edge of the city.

Mr. Barnes testified Wednesday the Buchart-Horn study was a check on previous studies by Harland Bartholomew & Associates. And, he said Buchart-Horn endorsed Harland Bartholomew's conclusion that the park route is the most "feasible and prudent."

Under cross-examination by John W. Vardaman, attorney for the plaintiffs, he said yesterday a route along the L & N railroad north of the park would be "monumentally disruptive."

"The fact that most of the

right-of-way for the park route is already cleared is one factor," Mr. Barnes said. "It's gone, and to go through and acquire right-of-way for an L&N route now would just create twice the damage."

**Judge Brown interrupted:** "Assume nothing had been done, no right-of-way cleared anywhere. Would it then be

feasible and prudent to use an L&N route?"

"No," Mr. Barnes said. "An L&N route would disrupt the grid pattern of the city — violate the major street pattern." The state claims the L&N right-of-way, which runs diagonally through the city, is contrary to the north-south and east-west alignment of city streets.

"And," Mr. Barnes said, "an L&N route would tear up facil-

ities that are serving the people, such as the railroad tracks themselves which would have to be placed somewhere else, taking even more land.

He also said the L&N route would disrupt the 10 Memphis Light, Gas & Water Division water wells located alternately along both sides of the railroad right-of-way.

"Time is a factor too. We have talked about it taking about one minute longer to

drive on L&N route than the park route. I live out east. If I want to get downtown to the Medical Center . . . say my daughter is bleeding to death. I don't want to take a minute or two minutes longer to get there. That may sound like an emotional issue . . ."

**Judge Brown interrupted:** "That's the weakest thing you've said."

Robert Conratt, an inde-

pendent highway planning and traffic engineering consultant, earlier testified an L&N route would disrupt: The city water wells, the predominantly black

Springdale community, the Shelby County Growers' Association, McLean Baptist Church, the Church of the Good Shepherd (Episcopal), the Vollintine-Evergreen Community, St. Teresa (Little

Flower) Church and Little Flower School, the Crosstown Theater and several blocks of residential area north of Overton Park from Watkins on the west to Holmes on the east.

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