

2A July 22, 1975 - OFF 24 15

# Opponents Of I-40 Proposal Offer Petition To Officials

About 75 opponents of a plan to route Interstate 40 over North Parkway and around Overton Park yesterday presented a petition containing 1,101 names to a joint session of the City Council and County Court.

George Morrow, an attorney living at 676 Center Drive, said routing the expressway on land adjacent to a park "is exactly the same legally as putting it through the park."

Morrow also said a parkway has the same legal protections as park land and threatened to contest in the courts the plan to go over North Parkway.

"We're going to be in the courts a long time if this proceeds," said Morrow, who spoke on behalf of the Hein Park Civic Association.

J. Wise Smith, an architect with offices at 5100 Poplar, described the plan as six lanes of traffic elevated over North Parkway from east at Hollywood west to McLean.

Guy Northrop of 1814 Forrest, spokesman for the opponents, said the neighborhood surrounding North Parkway "would be vandalized by this plan." Northrop, editorial page editor for The Commercial Appeal, said he disqualified himself from writing "anything to do with Overton Park."

Northrop also blasted the City Council and County Court for "secrecy that has surrounded this plan."

"It's very nice to see J. Wise Smith come out of the woodwork," Northrop said.

Dr. John Shea Jr. Thursday said he commissioned the proposal, but he refused then to identify the architect and engineer who developed the plan.

Chandler, who said he appeared at the joint meeting when he heard charges of secrecy, said, "There's nothing secret about this plan. Someone came to me one day with the plan. When we get an alternate plan, we're obligated to present it to the people."

"I want an expressway through the city," Chandler said. "If it goes through the home of the editorial writer of The Commercial Appeal and five others and that's all it does and it doesn't ruin your neighborhood, I would approve it."

"But I will join with you in protecting your neighborhood if you can prove it will ruin your neighborhood. We're saying this is an alternative. We await your alternatives."

"If I had control, I would put bulldozers in Overton Park tomorrow and start knocking down trees," Chandler said.

Squire Vasco Smith said, "We need to let environmentalists know bodies of gov-

ernment are prepared to go on record to say we need to go through Overton Park." Smith moved to resolve that the expressway go directly through Overton Park at ground level, the original I-40 plan, but his motion was ruled out of order.

After two hours of debating the I-40 highway question, the City Council and the County Court approved two and deferred action on four zoning cases in the five-mile zone.

Despite opposition from 140 neighbors the City Council and the County Court approved a smaller single-family lot size on 74 acres on the north side of Egypt-Central Road in the Northwood Hills area. Change from agricultural to residential for Opponents were protesting the more dense residential zone.

The two bodies also approved a zone change from agricultural to residential for 74 acres on the south side of the proposed extension of Walnut Grove Road.