



Recess: 10:45 pm to 11:02 pm

BALLOT LANGUAGE FOR ROAD MILLAGE. (Members received a 4/27/92 letter from John Staran; the proposed ballot language; and the proposed resolution.)

Mr Buller said he has talked with people, and he is inclined to give more credence to the argument Gary Peters made at a previous meeting. He said there are maintenance issues beyond collector roads that are addressed in the ballot issue. He said it might not be bad to have two parts to the ballot issue.

Mr Buller said the road rebuilding that should be done in Rochester Hills would cost millions of dollars. Other communities have long-term millages for repairing and resurfacing roads on an as-needed basis. Mr Buller said a millage to pay for resurfacing neighborhood roads would obviate the need for special assessment districts.

Ms Roberts said she talked with residents since the last meeting and was advised that we should go after the least amount we need now and come back for more later.

Mayor Ireland asked Mr Buller if he is suggesting eliminating special assessment districts for paving projects. Mr Buller said Mr Beaton had suggested that a millage could supplant special assessments for repaving projects. Mr Buller said there are two benefits he can foresee: first, the residents avoid a cumbersome SAD process; and second, for a relatively small amount of money we could be assured of paving all neighborhood roads on a timely basis if the millage were a regular feature of the city tax structure.

Mayor Ireland questioned whether people on gravel or freshly paved roads would vote for a millage that would benefit others. Also, she noted that Troy is able to pave streets at very little cost to the residents, because Troy has a 50% commercial tax base. With a 75% residential tax base, our homeowners have to pay a greater share for city programs.

Mr Beaton said he would like to see the SAD process eliminated eventually. The feedback he has received from residents is that 1 mill is too much to ask for. Mr Beaton said he does not see a lot of people in District 4 who want to pay for fixing Adams Road. He suggested splitting the ballot question to have one question for road maintenance and a second issue for major road improvements. Mr Beaton said we must get the major road question passed. We have a critical window of opportunity.

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Mr Funk said some good suggestions were made at the last meeting about splitting the millage. Also, he believes discussion is warranted regarding the level of millage that would be supported by the community. Mr Funk said the ballot language as presently written would provide one mill for eight years. Current forecasts indicate that we would need \$26,000,000 in four years to take care of local roads; that would require adding 4 mills to the tax rolls. Mr Funk does not think that would be successful.

Mr Funk said he spoke with people from the County Road Commission last week. Federal money for our SCATS system may become available in October. In response to Ms Shepherd's question, Mr Funk said we would need to contribute matching funds for that program.

Mr Peters said it does no good to talk about our needs unless we can get the money to pay for them. He said the Public Library is requesting a mill for operating expenses. We need to convince the voters that we have a sound road plan and to let them know their tax dollars would be leveraged to match funding from other sources.

MOTION by Peters, seconded by Roberts,

Resolved, that the Rochester Hills City Council hereby approves the following ballot proposal language for placement on the August 4, 1992 Primary Election Ballot:

In order to accomplish needed safety and traffic flow improvements to the following major roads: Livernois between Walton & Hamlin; Crooks between Hamlin & South Boulevard; Hamlin between Rochester & Crooks; Adams between Tienken & Hamlin, SHALL THE CITY OF ROCHESTER HILLS levy a tax of up to one-half (.5000) mill on the assessed valuation of all property assessed for taxes in the city, as authorized under Section 4.27 of the City Charter, for a period of nine (9) years, being the years 1992 through 2000 inclusive?

YES _____
NO _____

Mr Peters suggested that we limit the ballot request to improve just the major roads. He said we should have as simple a proposal as possible. If we want to include traffic signals, we might limit that part of the language to improvements on Walton Boulevard and Rochester Road.

Mr Peters and Ms Roberts added to their motion language to provide for SCATS systems on Walton Boulevard and Rochester Road. There was no objection from the Council, and the motion was amended.

Mr Cohee said there is an opportunity for SCATS funding if we have matching funds.

Ms Shepherd asked why we would limit SCATS to Walton and Rochester. Mr Peters said it seems that the SCATS system works most effectively on multilane roads. Ms Shepherd said the SCATS system in Troy is not on multilane roads only. Mr Peters reiterated that the system seems most effective on better roads. He believes we should try to get maximum efficiency and maximum leverage.

Ms Shepherd said what is being said tonight is misleading. She said the voters rejected a half-mill proposal last November. She said that Members now are suggesting we triple the amount of roads to be included in a proposal for the same millage amount. She said the last millage request was predicated on our ability to obtain matching funds.

Ms Roberts said the SCATS system sounds good, but she would like to see how it does in Troy through a Michigan winter. Ms Roberts said we need to get our roads improved first.

Mr Cohee suggested that the ballot language not limit the SCATS funding to specified roads. The city needs to have flexibility to provide improvements where they will be most

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effective throughout the community. He noted that the Avon/Dequindre area needs signal improvements. There are other applications that could be considered, if flexibility is allowed.

Mr Peters and Ms Roberts added to their motion language to provide for SCATS systems at intersections throughout the community. There was no objection from the Council, and the motion was amended.

Mayor Ireland said it is important that we take advantage of the federal dollars available to get the SCATS system in Rochester Hills. If we do not, those federal funds will go elsewhere.

Mr Ternan suggested changes to the ballot proposal language, including deleting the introductory phrase. Mr Peters and Ms Roberts concurred, there was no objection from the Council, and the motion was amended.

Mr Jones said we should not be wrangling about collector roads or the SCATS program. He said we must crawl before we walk. Mr Jones said it is time to ask the voters to get with the system and do something now to improve the major roads.

Mr Funk asked if the Council is considering a second ballot question to address collector roads. Mr Jones said we would be competing with ourselves if we had two ballot questions. He believes it is time to ask the voters to support half a mill for nine years to attend to needed improvements.

Mr Beaton agreed with Mr Jones' statement. He added that concerns about collector roads should not be forgotten during budget sessions this summer. Mr Beaton said collector streets in the Hampton development have deteriorated and need attention. Mr Beaton said the one square mile that is Hampton includes the first (Hampton; Slavik Group) and fourth (Hampton Crossings) largest contributing taxpayers in the City of Rochester Hills, and he thinks the city needs to address their problems.

Ms Shepherd said the ballot language from November 1991 requested one-half mill to be spread over 10 years. She said that proposal was to pay for improving Livernois (Avon to Walton), Crooks (Auburn to Hamlin) and Hamlin (Rochester to Livernois). Ms Shepherd said people will not believe that the same half-mill spread for a shorter time will improve eight or nine road segments.

Mr Beaton asked Ms Shepherd to read last year's ballot language aloud. She said she does not have the language in front of her. It is recorded, the November 5, 1991 ballot proposal was as follows:

In order to accomplish needed safety and traffic flow improvements, such as upgrading of signals at appropriate major road intersections within the City, to create an integrated computer controlled system and provide intersection improvements necessary to support and maximize operating efficiency of the road system, and to provide for improvements to the following major roads: Livernois between Avon & Walton Blvd; Crooks between Auburn & Hamlin; Hamlin between Rochester & Livernois; and Avon Industrial/Star-Batt Realignment, and to provide funds for repairs and maintenance to major roads, shall the City of Rochester Hills levy a tax of up to one-half (1/2) mill on the assessed valuation of all property assessed for taxes in the City, as authorized under Section 4.2.7 of the City Charter, for a period of ten (10) years, being the years 1992 through 2001 inclusive?

Ms Shepherd asked if the half-mill over nine years will pay for the projects listed in the ballot language, as proposed by Mr Peters. Mr Cohee said the Council Members have received the numbers that were provided in Mayor Ireland's April 6 memorandum. That memo outlines what the staff's projections are for the costs of the projects and what the city's match is likely to be.

Ms Shepherd said she does not believe all of the listed roads will be widened for a half-mill in nine years. She said the Administration presented a half-mill package that included some roads; and added another half-mill that included Adams and some other projects.

Mr Cohee said he would be happy to check the numbers and provide Ms Shepherd with further information, if that would be helpful.

In response to Ms Shepherd's questions, Mr Cohee said that Rochester Hills, like all communities in the Metropolitan Detroit area, has been a participant in the SEMCOG meetings for the transportation improvement program (TIP). Mayor Ireland said Mr Cohee has been our representative to those meetings.

Ms Shepherd asked if the whole point of TIP was to identify projects that are to be worked on in the region. Mr Cohee said TIP is a compilation of all road projects that are required to be approved or passed on by SEMCOG. That does not necessarily include all road projects in the Detroit Metropolitan area.

Ms Shepherd said it is her understanding that the new federal highway transportation act will require SEMCOG's approval before Rochester Hills could receive federal dollars for our road improvements.

Mr Cohee said SEMCOG will be making decisions about the TIP for the region in the coming years. In the past, SEMCOG has not always made those decisions.

Ms Shepherd said she called SEMCOG to ask which of the proposed road projects in Rochester Hills are approved for funding with federal dollars. Ms Shepherd said it is her understanding that we can get federal dollars for the projects currently listed in SEMCOG's program. Mr Cohee said projects may be added to SEMCOG's list.

Mr Cohee said the Crooks Road project is part of the transportation improvement program. The Livernois project is part of the program. Hamlin is part of the program. Other projects that may come into that program are Adams Road from Walton to Avon and Hamlin Road between Crooks and Livernois.

Ms Shepherd said Mr Cohee sent an application to the Road Commission to add those roads. She said the point she is trying to make is that we are asking our voters to support funding for roads that have not been through the proper process through SEMCOG to approve them for federal funding. Ms Shepherd said the timing is such that Mr Cohee has submitted to the Road Commission additional roads to be considered. Ms Shepherd said the Road Commission is still compiling its list, which will not be submitted to SEMCOG until the end of May, and SEMCOG will not have a revised list until September 30.

Ms Shepherd said we are presently approved for Adams between east and west Hamlin, Hamlin from Adams to Crooks, Livernois from Avon to Walton, and Crooks from Auburn to Hamlin. Ms Shepherd said we going to the voters in August with a ballot proposal that includes roads that have not been approved by SEMCOG.

Ms Shepherd said there are Council Members who have said we should do things in a proper way. She said we are doing things now that are round-about, trying to circumvent the proper procedures that have been defined by the new federal mandates. Ms Shepherd said she would challenge the Council with the thought that the timing on this is not right. If there is a desire to proceed with the projects that have already been approved, that is fine.

Ms Shepherd said all the Council Members have received copies of SEMCOG's Regional Development Initiative (RDI). She said this City Council has endorsed the RDI and has supported SEMCOG in its efforts. Ms Shepherd said many Members of this Council have spoken in support of the RDI. Ms Shepherd asked what we are doing but turning around and falling into the traps the RDI is trying to address, which is continue development the way it has been the last 20 years. Ms Shepherd said this will do nothing but promote more traffic. She said SEMCOG representatives she talked to say new lanes make it more attractive for single-occupancy vehicle travel.

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Ms Shepherd said she has looked at the Road Commission traffic counts for different locations along Adams Road. She said that half of the southbound traffic at morning rush hour on Adams at Walton comes from north of Dutton Road. Ms Shepherd said we will participate in using up an additional 40% of our land for a 6% increase in population by supporting these kinds of road improvements. She said it will be more attractive for single-occupancy vehicle travel. Ms Shepherd said the whole point of the RDI is that things cannot go on this way. Ms Shepherd said we will never be able to build ourselves out of the traffic demand of this area.

Ms Shepherd said some people believe that our roads will be safer if we widen them. She said our wide roads are Rochester Road and Walton; those are our dangerous roads. Ms Shepherd said it is a crime to tell people widened roads will be safer.

Ms Shepherd said that widening Adams Road will make it easy for urban sprawl to continue north of Rochester Hills.

Ms Shepherd said the RDI was initiated because of the megamall proposal. She said the RDI recognizes that what happens in one community affects neighboring communities; and she said we are ignoring that.

Ms Shepherd said she has been told that SEMCOG will have an extensive public review process for each project. They will not automatically buy into our proposals. She said SEMCOG will evaluate alternatives. Ms Shepherd said SEMCOG is aware of the consequences of urban sprawl.

It is recorded, Ms Shepherd read from the RDI to illustrate that auto-dominated transportation and expansion of roads and highways is very expensive and promotes urban sprawl. Ms Shepherd said it is unconscionable to participate in this.

Mr Cohee said there have been some things just said that are totally inaccurate and inappropriate. First, the RDI is not an adopted regional policy, and it is unlikely to be for some time to come. The RDI is an idea that will probably grow and pick up steam as time goes by.

Second, Mr Cohee said it has been represented that the way the projects have been handled has been improper or inappropriate. Mr Cohee said the Administration has never at any time in its many discussions with the Road Committee and the City Council represented that the projects have been approved as part of any TIP or any program. All that was said was that the Administration believes, based upon the criteria that we know are used to judge which projects get included in the TIP, these projects have a high degree of likelihood for qualifying for funding in the future.

Lastly, Mr Cohee said nothing inappropriate has been done in terms of how the projects have been handled. Submitting proposals to the Oakland County Task Force to be included eventually with the SEMCOG program is exactly the proper process to follow.

Last November's millage question failed by 109 votes. Mr Funk questioned whether that question would have passed if there had been some upfront discussion on the Council about the facts and the options.

Mr Funk said it is interesting that Members of this Council are characterized as being "anti-SEMCOG" simply because they feel they have to live up to their responsibilities, as called for on page 2 of the City Charter.

Mr Funk said there was a workshop on March 21 at which the Council and Administration carefully reviewed all the current, projected and forecasted road improvement projects, including those mentioned in the ballot language. Mr Funk said an effort is being made to put together a cooperative team effort to put forward something that this community needs.

Mr Jones said it is the Council's responsibility to make logical decisions to help the city move forward. He said the road issue has been around for years. There are concerns about when major road improvements will be made. Mr Jones said the last ballot proposal needed to be laughed at by the voters. The current proposal is a comprehensive road program that provides a system of improvements.

Mr Jones said the voters will have an opportunity on August 4 to do something finally about our major roads. It is the Council's responsibility before then to put forth the facts to allow the voters to make a sound, informed decision.

Mr Jones said there have been accidents and fatalities on our roads. People have turned left into oncoming traffic because of their frustration with the delays and congestion on our roads. Mr Jones said we need to do something about the major roads in our community before any more of citizens perish because of driver frustration.

MOTION by Jones, seconded by Roberts,

Resolved, that the question be called and debate closed on the motion on the floor.

Ayes: Jones, Roberts

Nays: Buller, Funk, Peters, Shepherd, Beaton

MOTION FAILED

Mr Buller said he agrees with Ms Shepherd that urban sprawl must be stopped. He does not think the type of urban sprawl we should be concerned about will be the result of the proposed road improvements. I-75 and M-59 are the roads that create urban sprawl.

Mr Buller said he advocates the use of public transportation. However, there remains the question of what we will do about the congestion that we have in parts of our city right now. Mr Buller said he drives many miles to get to and from work every day. The congestion starts within five miles of here.

Mr Buller said previous development decisions have in effect caused us to paint ourselves into a corner.

Mr Buller said there are road problems we must address. On Rochester Road, the SCATS program may be the only practical, affordable solution. He does not believe it will be possible to widen Rochester the way Mound Road has been widened. Mr Buller said Crooks Road is dangerous. As it is currently functioning, Livernois Road is dangerous. By next year, there will be a new interchange at M-59 and Adams Road.

Mr Buller said we have to have a comprehensive plan to deal with traffic. He keeps hearing what people do not want. They do not want to ride buses; they do not want carpools; they do not want denser development in certain areas.

Mr Buller said it is probably true that four-lane roads will fill up with traffic. In part that is because even those roads will be insufficient in a few years, because of unenlightened self-interest.

Mr Buller said he agrees with everyone here. It is, unfortunately, necessary to do something. Mr Buller said we have reached a point where the window of opportunity is making it urgent to move on with a decision and to educate the community about the opportunities, options and needs.

Recess: 12:18 am to 12:23 am

Ms Shepherd read a letter from a resident, **John Lawton** of 1523 Horseshoe Bend West. She said he enclosed an article from an April issue of the *Wall Street Journal*, which addressed the idea of creating transportation alternatives. Ms Shepherd read the following:

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The Mayor's Advisory Committee on Homeowners Affairs and others encouraged these kinds of directions during the public hearing on the revised master plan. As you and the City Council discuss the millage proposal for roads, I encourage you to keep this concept in mind. In addition, I hope you will address the deteriorating roads which already exist in our city and do not have adequate funds available for maintenance. I find my position on road widening evolving. A few years ago, I would probably have been in complete support of this. Today, I am concerned with the role it plays in further encouraging suburban sprawl. I am also more concerned with the proper maintenance of the existing infrastructure, which is not occurring. If new roads must be built, a plan must be included to maintain both the existing roads and the new ones. In this recessionary year, it will be difficult to support new and improved roads when old and serviceable ones are not receiving adequate care.

Ms Shepherd said Mr Lawton is the Chairman of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Homeowner Affairs.

Ms Shepherd said sections of Adams Road that are proposed for widening have unusual features. She said the proposed widening would go through one of the most recognizable, most important, and most famous historic areas in Oakland County, namely the Meadowbrook area of Oakland University. Ms Shepherd said no thought has been given to the impact of a major road alongside that major historic area. Ms Shepherd said the Council goes to great lengths to take care of the Stoney Creek historic district; but ignores what she considers to be the most famous historic area in our community, which includes the old Dodge farmhouse, the Meadowbrook Music Festival and one of the nicest golf courses in the area.

Ms Shepherd said Adams Road bisects the number one and number two ranked natural features in our community, which are the Clinton River and the Oakland University property. Ms Shepherd said Adams Road does not belong on the list of projects, because too many things are at stake and it is inappropriate to widen that road.

Mayor Ireland said Mr Lawton's letter expressed his personal point of view. It was not written on behalf of the Mayor's Advisory Committee nor did it represent the views of that Committee. Mayor Ireland said her office has received a similar letter from Mr Lawton and responded in full to him.

Mr Funk said a public hearing was held regarding adding Adams Road to the Master Transportation Plan. He said a corridor study had been conducted for that road. The Planning Commission made the decision to include Adams in the Master Plan. The Planning Commission also outlined special parameters for the development of that road in view of all of the sensitivities about that area. Mr Funk said there have been misrepresentations made tonight. It was implied that there has been no responsible action regarding the safety and the environment along Adams Road. He said that is not true.

Mr Beaton said the Road Commission of Oakland County wanted in 1985 to make Adams Road a five-lane highway. Mr Beaton said he attended a Road Commission meeting at which about 200 people told the Road Commission to keep Adams a two-lane road forever. Mr Beaton said he told the audience that growth requires compromise, and he suggested making Adams a four-lane boulevard. Mr Beaton said that concept was well received by that audience.

Mr Beaton said the proposed road development would provide narrow, four-lane, tree-lined, residential boulevards with sidewalks. He said that would be an attractive road system for our community. The city hired a consultant, put together a committee of citizens, and devised a Master Road Plan that calls for residential, four-lane boulevards.

Mr Beaton said we have a great road system for a community of 10,000 people. Unfortunately, we are not a community of 10,000. Rochester Hills population exceeds 60,000. Mr Beaton said it is imperative that the Council adopt the motion on the floor and sell this program to the community. Mr Beaton said he believes the ballot proposal is a good one.

It is recorded, the Council voted on Mr Peters' motion as amended and restated here:

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MOTION by Peters, seconded by Roberts,

Resolved, that the Rochester Hills City Council hereby approves the following ballot proposal language for placement on the August 4, 1992 Primary Election Ballot:

In order to provide road improvements to the following major roads: Livernois between Walton & Hamlin; Crooks between Hamlin & South Boulevard; Hamlin between Rochester & Crooks; Adams between Tienken & Hamlin; and to provide funds for improved intersection signalization on Walton Boulevard, Rochester Road and other roads throughout the community, SHALL THE CITY OF ROCHESTER HILLS levy a tax of up to one-half (.5000) mill on the assessed valuation of all property assessed for taxes in the city, as authorized under Section 4.2.7 of the City Charter, for a period of nine (9) years, being the years 1992 through 2000 inclusive?

YES _____
NO _____

Ayes: Funk, Jones, Peters, Roberts, Beaton, Buller
Nays: Shepherd

MOTION CARRIED

POSTPONEMENT OF AGENDA ITEMS.

President Beaton said that, due to the lateness of the hour and the need to adjourn to the proposed Session this evening, Agenda Items #15 through #20 will be postponed to the May 20, 1992 Council meeting. Briefly, the postponed items are First Readings of proposed amendments to the following Chapters of the Code of Ordinances:

- #15 - Proposed Ordinance to amend Chapter 3-06 (Carnival, Circus, etc.).
- #16 - Proposed Ordinance to amend Chapter 4-01 (Subdivision Control).
- #17 - Proposed Ordinance to amend Chapter 4-03 (Unplanned Land Development).
- #18 - Proposed Ordinance to amend Chapter 4-09 (Streets).
- #19 - Proposed Ordinance to amend Chapter 6-07 (Municipal Water Department).
- #20 - Proposed Ordinance to amend Chapter 6-08 (Municipal Water Supply and Sewer Disposal System).

ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

MDOT Meeting re M-59. Mayor Ireland said she attended the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) informational meeting on Monday, May 4, from 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm. The informational meeting regarding the M-59 widening project was held here at the request of the City Council. MDOT was represented by officials from both the Lansing and Southfield offices. Mayor Ireland reported that seven residents attended the meeting and asked questions. She was assured that MDOT will conduct decibel counts. She has followed up that meeting with an official written request for a noise level study along the entire M-59 corridor through the City of Rochester Hills. She also requested that the results of that study be presented to the City of Rochester Hills. Mayor Ireland said the MDOT officials apparently were under the impression that City Council Members would be at that meeting; however, none were there.

Closed Session. Mayor Ireland said she would like to request a closed session to be held on May 20. The purpose of the meeting would be to discuss a specific strategy relative to current negotiations with AFSCME Local 1917. The information that would be provided during that closed session is confidential, basic and necessary to the ongoing contract talks. Mayor Ireland said she will be bringing a consultant to that meeting and would, therefore, like the meeting to be held at 7:00 pm rather than after the Council meeting.

Mr. Terman said he will review the Open Meetings Act to make sure the stated reason for the meeting is in compliance with the Act. Mr. Terman suggested that the Council use of