

Highways May Destroy Newark Neighborhoods

Newark community leaders viewed with alarm last week's announcement out of Trenton that another \$43-million in State Highway Department funds would be spent in Essex County in the next 18 months.

The growing alarm is the result of a callous and bureaucratic attitude by State Highway Department officials and the Addonizio administration toward the plight of thousands and thousands of families who will be forcibly uprooted by planned highway construction through Newark's urban areas.

Most of the families that will suffer are Negro or Puerto Rican.

Already, federal and state authorities, with the tacit approval of the city administration, are preparing to tear down the homes of thousands of families who live in the path of the proposed Routes 78, 75, and 280.

Route 78 as presently planned would tear apart the Weequahic community, the only racially integrated area in Newark. At a public hearing last October, state highway authorities admitted they hadn't even examined the alternate route proposed by the Weequahic Community Council that would dislocate 15,000 less people than existing plans.

Route 280, known as the East-West Freeway, would also displace thousands of Newark residents, mostly Negro and Puerto Rican, from the Orange St. area.

But the most destructive of the proposed highways will be Route 75, known as the mid-city connector. This monster highway is scheduled to wipe out homes of thousands of Negroes and Puerto Ricans right along Belmont Ave., from North Ward through the heart of the Central Ward and deep into the South Ward.

All these proposed highways will be EIGHT LANES WIDE and will go directly through some of the most heavily congested areas in the city.

If Newark's housing shortage has already reached the crisis stage, the wanton destruction of homes planned by state and city authorities for these highways can only intensify the crisis.

Newark community leaders have noted that while Mayor Addonizio has paid lip service

to the need to change the plans of highway authorities just to preserve the inadequate housing we now have in the city, he has thus far failed to take any concrete action to prevent the wholesale destruction.

These leaders recall Addonizio's ringing words in his inaugural speech spelling out his uncompromising opposition to stop the bulldozers:

"Neighborhoods must not be amputated by highways."

Addonizio Failure

But since he made this statement, Addonizio has failed, according to community leaders, to support his words with action.

Instead of demanding that all state Legislators and Congressmen from Essex County refuse to support any appropriations (money) for either the state or the federal governments until these authorities alter their plans to destroy huge parts of Newark, Addonizio actively campaigned for several of the winning candidates who now do nothing to stop the destruction.

This is one of the reasons several community leaders believe only when a Negro is elected Mayor will Newark's community be protected by the political power structure.

**DON
NEWCOMBE'S**

**THE FINEST IN
LIQUORS**

**WINES
BEER**

FREE DELIVERY

483-3897

607 ORANGE ST.

NEWARK, N.J.

