

# Environmental issues

## —the By-pass and hike-bike trails:

### *here's what the candidates think*

Like a malignant tumor or a budding flower the State College By-Pass situation has been developing for nearly a decade. And the project is still at ends with itself.

Lacking a \$23-million mid-section to connect the already completed two ends of the road, local environmentalists are attempting to see to it that ecological damage is at a minimum however the ends are met.

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, weary after years of arguments and counter-arguments by local communities each looking after their own best interests, would like to go ahead and finish the road as soon as possible.

The environmentalists say, "Watch it PennDOT, if you don't want a court fight on your hands." So, the negotiations continue.

Here's what local political candidates had to say on the by-pass and other environmental issues such as more hike-bike trails.

#### MAYORAL CANDIDATES:

**Jo Hays (Democrat):**

Hike-bike trails? Certainly. The mid-section of the by-pass should be completed at an early date without violating sound environment principles. I have a feeling this issue will be resolved before the mayor takes office.

**Lawrence Perez (Republican):**

I am in favor of completing the middle section of the proposed by-pass. This completion will help to alleviate some of our present traffic problems. Hike-bike trails are under the purview of the Recreation Department. If this

department presents a plan which is functional and economically possible, I would definitely support the request.

Understanding that safety is a prime concern of the bicyclist, continuous trails over borough streets with less automobile traffic could be a solution. Riding on heavily traveled state highways is liable to cause accidents. It must be understood, however, that hike trails will not necessarily be biketrails. This, in itself, will cause duplication of expenditures.

#### BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Ingrid Holtzman (Republican):**

I am a member of the Centre Citizens Council which has fought the construction of the by-pass on the giant scale proposed by PennDOT. Being an optimist by nature, I take heart from this group's recent talk with the PennDOT chief and hope that at least an appropriate compromise will be worked out. I follow the suggestions of the bike-hike organization with interest, and hope some of their recommendations will be realized.

**John Glatz (Republican):**

I believe the middle section of the by-pass should be completed as soon as possible. Hike-bike trails will enhance the liveability of this area and should be considered within economic realities.

**James McClure (Democrat):**

I am appalled at the kind of road we are building—appalled by its width of right of way, its cost and impenetrability. Now that both ends are finished, do we abandon the middle section and try to attract the outdoor roller skating championships of

the world? The answer is that we should connect the ends of the by-pass in the least destructive manner and with an adequate union with the Benner pike. The existing plan obviously does not meet these criteria.

**Henry Yeagley (Republican):**

We must continually review any activities which affect the environment, remain environmentally aware and, to the extent possible within our available resources, insure minimal negative environmental impact. Borough Council, with the help of its authorities, boards and commissions, should function as a "watchdog" for the public in environmental affairs.

In regards to the by-pass, I supported the most recent special COG committee's work with PennDOT to modify the design, and the subsequent Regional Council of Government action to urge completion of the center section of the by-pass in keeping with that modified design.

I favor interconnecting hike-bike trails throughout the region, wherever it is economically feasible and legally possible. This type of recreational "open space" is critical to the well-being of future generations.

**Dean Phillips (Democrat):**

The State College By-pass is an environmentally unsound project. The by-pass is built to class one rural standards, which means that it goes through hills and mountains instead of going over and around them. The road is as wide as a football field is long and has 150-acre interchanges. PennDOT's traffic predictions suggest that in 1990 the by-pass will be

used about as much as Pugh Street is now. In other words, the road is grossly over-designed.


The by-pass also represents a danger to the University water supply and to the students who will have to cross four lanes of traffic to get to the IM fields by the flower gardens.

I feel that the by-pass should be scaled down and completed. The road does not need massive interchanges or a 300-foot right of way. PennDOT seems to be ready to compromise. If a compromise agreement could be arranged soon the by-pass can be completed at a tremendous savings.

I also have serious doubts about PennDOT's intentions. The chairman of the Appalachian Thruway Commission indicated yesterday that they are waiting to see what happens to our by-pass before they decide what to do with their road. There is the possibility that they intend to run the road through the State College area. We should take immediate steps to find out what Penn DOT has on its mind. We don't want to make the same mistakes again.

**Harold Zipser (Republican):**


The middle section of the by-pass should be completed without delay. It is imperative that proper access be provided for the Centre Community Hospital. Traffic should be diverted from the borough to avoid additional congestion in the streets not to mention the fumes and noise. This, I think, would improve the immediate environment of the borough. Hike-bike trails I think would be a wonderful addition to our area. However, this is a regional problem and must be faced by the borough as well as the surrounding townships and the University. One political entity cannot solve this problem.



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