

# Front St. residents split on new paving plan

Front Street residents are divided over Marietta Council's plan to re-pave their street.

Many residents of the blocks between Perry and Gay Streets are upset because the paving job will destroy big trees and wreck

the 110 year-old brick and stone pavements of their blocks. Residents of other blocks enthusiastically support the paving plan.

Council held a public meeting on the subject Monday evening. About 15 citizens showed up. Most

opposed the project, but supporters of the plan are busy rallying support for their point of view.

On Thursday, Council will vote on the paving proposal. Both supporters and opponents are circulating petitions among Front

Street residents, in an effort to influence the decision.

The main issue is the big trees, which project into the street. Digging up the road will disturb the trees' root systems, and may kill them, even if the engineers try to leave them standing.

Current plans call for removal of the trees, starlightening the curbs, and widening the street by 4 feet.

Homeowners will have to pick up the tab for installing new concrete curbs. The borough's engineer estim-

ates that the cost to residents will be \$5 per foot.

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## Wants pavement -

Ruth Andrews

"I'm definitely in favor of paving the street," says Ruth Andrews of 460 E. Front Street. "Either that or I'll have to get a horse and buggy for a dirt road."

Mrs. Andrews is circulating a petition among the

neighbors at her end of the street, to show their support for the paving project.

We talked to Mrs. Andrews on Tuesday morning. She had knocked on every door within 2 blocks of her home, and so far, everyone she talked to had agreed with her.

"Even though they have trees," she said, "they would gladly sooner lose their trees, and have not only a good street but decent-looking curbs. It'll raise the value of our property."

Ruth Andrews thinks Front Street has been neglected in the past, and that residents deserve the

new pavement. "We all want it badly, at least at this end of town," she says. "I'd even like them to start paving at my end."

To the sometimes-heard objection that a flood might destroy the new pavement, she replies, "The people and the houses got through the last flood. We survived it. The street will make it." The present paving job, she adds, has only a 50 percent chance of weathering high water.

"I've got a new car," she concludes, "and I only drive it on part of Front Street. If the street gets any worse, I'll have to trade it in on a horse and buggy."

## Opposed-

Jack Shaub

"If they repave Front Street, leave the curbstones, and leave the trees, okay," says Front Street resident Jack Shaub. "If they take all the trees down, there will be no more trees on Front Street, and that's ridiculous."

Like many other residents of the well-restored first few blocks of Front St. (roughly, between Perry

and Gay Streets), Jack is vehemently opposed to Council's paving plan.

"The big issue is the trees," he says. But they are not the only issue.

The 110 year-old river stone curbs are crooked and sunken, but they fit the historic character of Jack Shaub's restored section of street. The brick cobblestones would crack

and disintegrate, he fears, if residents tried to remove, then replace them."

The cost of the project is another objection. Residents who live on fixed incomes will find themselves facing heavy bills for new curbs and sidewalks.

"At \$5 a foot," says Mr. Shaub, "someone with 200 feet will have to pay \$1000."

## Council (cont'd)

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commission and the Marietta planning commission.

Council drew up a resolution providing for moderate reconstructing and paving Front Street from Perry to Waterford Avenue. The work will cost an estimated \$29,500, to be paid for by liquid fuel tax money.

The resolution also included the resurfacing of Longenecker Avenue at a projected cost of \$3,800, and of Mulberry Street, at a cost of \$568.

When the resolution is passed, residents of Front Street in those sections where complete reconstruction or major repair is taking place will be informed that curbing must be installed.

Mayor Bernard McDevitt spoke on the possibility of a flood this Spring, and said the borough will send questionnaires to residents of flood-prone areas. The forms will ask such questions as the names of members of the household, presence of any handicapped persons, whether the family has shelter if they find it necessary to move, and if help will be needed to move them. Completed questionnaires should be returned to the borough office.

Council noted that, in case of emergency, housing would be provided at Riverview Elementary School. The Armstrong Cork Company said it would open a warehouse for residents to store their furniture in case of flooding.

In other business, the Council:

—Purchased a rifle for the police cruiser.

—Approved an amendment to an existing ordinance, the borough tax collector at setting compensation for \$100 per year. The amendment will take effect January 1, 1978.

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