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Civic Coalition Rejects I-95 Ramps Proposal

By PAUL CRITCHLOW

Regional Transportation Writer
A powerful center city coalition of 14 civic groups turned down on Wednesday a compromise proposal from the state to redesign a set of mid-city access ramps to the Delaware Expressway (I-95).

A spokesman for the Neighborhood Preservation Coalition, which includes representatives of Society Hill and Queen Village, said it would continue to fight for the elimination of all planned ramps.

The disputed plans call for on- and off-ramps at the foot of South and Balmbridge sts. on both sides of the unfinished mid-city section of the superhighway.

Residents have bitterly protested the ramps, claiming they would feed thousands of additional vehicles through the area's quiet, narrow streets, endangering children and causing pollution.

Under the new proposal, the state — which considers some sort of access to I-95 near the

historical area a must—would limit all access to the superhighway to Delaware ave. on the riverfront side.

A concrete barrier would be erected along the east side of Front st. to seal off the neighborhood, and a connector road would be built inside the existing right-of-way to funnel all

on-and-off-traffic to and from Delaware ave.

"We are opposed to any ramps in the area," said John F. Hunt, attorney and spokesman for the coalition.

"To us the state's new proposal is just a cosmetic change which will put the same amount of traffic in basically the same areas and we will still have the same problems."

Hunt said traffic would still filter through neighborhood streets from Delaware ave., and might worsen the crush at the Moore st. interchange a mile south.

The coalition is also seeking to block the use of that interchange, which is already built near Pennsport.

Hunt said the community would oppose reported state efforts to get the design changes approved by city and Federal officials without a public hearing.

State officials have expressed fear that a public hearing would delay completion of the expressway beyond 1976, the Bicentennial year.

Hunt, who said he is preparing a Federal lawsuit against the ramp plans, added that coalition leaders expect to meet soon with state transportation officials.

Florida Refuses Medical Aid to Divorcee

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (UPI). — Howard Thomas divorced his wife of 32 years last month in a well-publicized move to make her eligible for state assistance in her fight against multiple sclerosis — but it may have been in vain.

State aid had been cut off because Thomas made just over the limit allowed, even though his earnings were far below the cost of the intensive



HOWARD THOMAS

that had Mrs. Thomas remained in Florida until after the application was processed she would have received aid for about two months out-of-state treatment.

Johnson indicated there may be other reasons for the withholding of aid but did not elaborate.

"In general if a person is out-of-state for a physical reason, we give no exception if

less than \$400 in donations for the treatment of Mrs. Thomas.

"That will be applied to her account. As I understand it, there's also a trust fund in Florida and we will bill that trust fund down there until that's depleted," Mrs. Cantilena said.

"After that, we'll have to hope that people will be generous."



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