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CITY & REGION

I-95 Neighbors Fume over Goode's Ramp Plan

By STEVEN A. MARQUEZ
Daily News Staff Writer

Neighborhood groups that have opposed a plan to build five new ramps to improve Center City access to Interstate 95 said they have not changed their minds despite a "good neighbor" policy Mayor Goode has proposed to address community concerns about poor highway maintenance.

While they said they welcomed the city's promises to improve maintenance, leaders of five neighborhood groups said the "good neighbor" proposal is too vague.

"I was really discouraged that he didn't put some money behind the good neighbor policy," said Marge Scherneck, president of the Queen Village Neighbors Association. "We want to see it become much more specific. We want a guarantee."

"It's really not what we wanted," said Mary Ware, director of the Pennsport Civic Association. "What we wanted was a definite commitment."

Queen Village and Pennsport — as well as the Society Hill, Whitman and Franklin Bridge North community groups — oppose construction of any new ramps until the city remedies existing I-95 problems such as graffiti, noise, vibrations, traffic congestion and the dumping of trash under the highway.

Goode has backed a \$21 million plan that includes southbound on-ramps at Market and Morris streets and two ramps that would pass under the highway at Penn's Landing: a northbound on-ramp and a southbound off-ramp linking I-95 with Delaware Avenue near South Street.

The fifth ramp would deposit northbound traffic onto Wharton Street, replacing the Tasker Street ramp and the partially built Queen Street off-ramps.

Goode also proposed a \$10 million cover on the highway at Chestnut Street, a \$2.67 million pedestrian bridge over it at South Street, \$1.75 million for right-of-way improvements and \$1.5 million worth of additional noise barriers in Queen Village, Pennsport and Whitman.

The city Parking Authority is also considering construction of a parking garage near Delaware Avenue and South Street, which would be linked to the pedestrian bridge.

Of the seven civic groups directly affected by the ramps, only the Old City and the Rivers' Edge groups lean toward Goode's plan.

Goode sent all the neighborhood groups a draft of an I-95 Maintenance Management Program, which lists various options about right-of-way

maintenance but contains no specific proposals.

Elizabeth Ostrander, vice president of the Society Hill Civic Association, said the letter did not alleviate her concerns about poor security in the park that covers the highway in her neighborhood.

"I think it's a fruitful beginning to a discussion," commented Richard Camitta, I-95 liaison for the Franklin Bridge North Neighbors. "I don't think it's a solution."

A host of government agencies have jurisdiction over various sections of the I-95 right-of-way.

For example, the city Recreation Department maintains the Rizzo Rink under I-95 at Washington Ave-

nue, while the Fairmount Park Commission is in charge of the park on the Society Hill highway cover.

The Department of Public Property maintains the parking lots under the highway in Pennsport, while the Streets Department has jurisdiction over streets that run under I-95. The state Department of Transportation oversees other parts of the right-of-way.

"We have a situation over there where even to get one relatively simple maintenance task completed, even a light bulb changed, you can have five or six agencies involved," said Deputy Streets Commissioner John Heany.

The city is weighing several options for a unified maintenance plan, including the possible creation of a new city or quasi-city agency to handle the problem, he said.

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tigation is not complete.

Police Commissioner Kevin Tucker also declined to comment on Brown's remarks.

Brown would not say why he believes the FBI C-4 was used. Nor would he discuss the contents of the commission's upcoming report. The interim report, which will include the commission's major findings and opinions, should be ready by the second or third week of February, Brown said.

Commission members met last night to discuss the contents of the report and are scheduled to do so again Saturday. Brown said he is optimistic the 11-member group will reach a consensus about the major

During his speech before the alumni association, Brown implied that several bomb squad officers had refused to testify before the MOVE commission because they knew that C-4 had been used.

"Once the use of C-4 was disclosed, to a man, the officers of the bomb squad took sanctuary in the Fifth Amendment and refused to cooperate in any way with the commission," Brown said.

Explosives experts and the Philadelphia fire marshal's office determined that the bomb ignited gasoline stored on the MOVE roof and thus triggered the fire that ultimately destroyed 61 rowhouses and left 11 people dead.

The contents of that bomb also have been in dispute since August, when police first disclosed that Klein added C-4 to the device. Police initially used



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