At the July 29 meeting of the Lawrence City Commission it was decided by a 4-1 vote that the governing body would continue plans for the building of a roadway called the Haskell Loop.

The proposed Loop, located in East Lawrence, begins at the corner of 7th and Connecticut and meanders south and east until it turns directly east near the corner of 11th and Delaware (see map). It will be anywhere from 2-4 lanes wide, and is designed to carry industrial and other traffic through East Lawrence.

It has gained support from various groups and important individuals in town.

The mayor, Barkley Clark, has said, "There are two primary purposes behind the road: (1) to provide a thoroughfare which will remove high volume traffic from residential streets in East Lawrence and (2) to serve as a buffer between the residential areas to the south and west, and the industrial areas to the north and east including the railroad tracks."

One of the commissioners, Donald Bums, has noted that with the building of the Clinton Parkway there will be an ever-increasing flow of traffic coming into town from Kansas City on I-35, and that the Loop will be necessary to route that traffic smoothly and quickly into the downtown area. Thus the need for the Loop.

Dick McClanathan, City Planner, has stressed the historic quality of the idea in his argument for the Loop. At the July 29 meeting he noted that since 1900 with the development plans have included references to the need for such a road.

At Hash, Chamber of Commerce Representative, focused on the necessity of the Loop to the continued health and well-being on the downtown business district.

There were a group of individuals who disagreed that the Loop was either valuable or necessary. These people decided to go door-to-door in the neighborhoods that would be most directly affected by the Loop. It is important to note that they did not go to shopping centers blocks away from East Lawrence to get signers. In the survey area polled, 234 citizens signed their petition stating they opposed the building of the Haskell Loop (see map).

It was hard to figure. The city fathers wanted it. The planning commission wanted it. The East Lawrence Improvement Association itself had voted in favor of the Loop. Yet there they were, those 234 signatures--of those living in the area.

And then the hearing happened. The petitions were presented. The city fathers spoke. Argument raged on for 2 and 1/2 hours.

To understand the shock that was felt by the petitioners when the commission voted 4-1 for the Loop, you must understand the reputation of the current commission for being people-oriented. Frequently in the last few months the present commission had responded positively to neighborhood opposition on key issues. Suddenly this pose was crumbling--and then it vanished.

Her House Is Bisected in Street Dispute

In Des Moines, in 1945, Mrs. Clara Caspary, 44, crippled widow, refused offers to move her dwelling to make way for a street widening project; the village council ordered the house saved in two. Mrs. Caspary, shown emerging from what is left, is living in the one room untouched by carpenters' saws. (AP)

In Lawrence, Kansas, in 1975, a mild version (they don't saw you in half anymore) of this is in process. 27 houses will be destroyed. Poor people will be relocated to places where property taxes are higher, neighborhood spirit destroyed in an area where people value it, value their friends and long-term relations.

"The road will pass right near my front door, leaving my home and family on the industrial side of the road, with lots of traffic and noise. I'll soon be on fixed income. I won't be able to afford a move anywhere," Ramon E. Romero 916 Penn.

"Why squander good, sound housing when the town is so short of living space? We have a lot of older people here that will never adjust to this road. I won't, because it will be in my back yard!" Hanna Leibengood 946 N. J.

"I've lived in East Lawrence for over 50 years, and I know that we need a lot of other things besides a road. The children really need the baseball park. We need good houses for our poorer people. We can also improve our roads we have. We just don't have that much traffic here," A.R. Bailey 138 Oregon.

"If this road comes in, I'll have to look over it from my front porch," Mr. Pringle 905 Penn.

Although their homes will be taken by condemnation proceedings (a budgeted legal expenditure), those in the path of the Loop will be relocated. Those left on either side of the road way will not be so lucky. The homes below, SW corner of 8th and Delaware, will face the road foreground.

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I hear laughter, scorn, revilement—or respectful acceptance.

Our motto is "Every reader a writer.

Imagine it like this. You sit on the floor in a big vacant house. Visit. Write for us.

The Chamber of Commerce can promote the air—into that silence, everything is projected. You hear doing, or not doing, bad movies that hacked you, and so you are illuminating only emptiness.

You can't afford to zoom. And we can't afford to build roads, which will encourage zooming, and will take gas wasting machinery to build. We'll just sit here and we'll all go bust.

Traffic jam relief to East Lawrence is one of the reasons for the building of the Haskell Loop. Some folks don't see the problem. Ray Days said, "In reference to the traffic problems...The best alternative is to do nothing beyond routine maintenance and resurfacing work. None of the streets (with the exception of Connecticut) is heavily traveled. Even Connecticut is used far below its capacity."

I've never seen a traffic jam in East Lawrence."

There are happy times at New York School this year. For the first time in several years, we have one session of separate kindergarten. We are sharing our teacher, Mrs. Gaffney, with Indiana School in the morning. Mrs. Gaffney and her student teacher, Miss Wright, are at New York School now. Afternoons with an enrollment of 15-20, we are on the way to single classrooms for each grade level. One of our city commissioners, Marc Lillie, has organized a public hearing for the approval of the Loop by the Planning Commission. He has been very helpful to the community in working with the Loop Committee. The Loop is ridiculous when studied carefully, for it exactly contradicts the reasons for constructing it. I keep hoping that the powers that be will realize that the Loop does not have to be built just because it has been planned. I only hope they realize it before good houses and our East Lawrence ballrooms are destroyed. This is written as a private citizen.

You are illuminating only emptiness.

The 1975 Plan calls for the preservation of the old bluffs at 6th and Iowa (because of aesthetic qualities). The Loop does not have to be built just because it has been planned. I only hope they realize it before good houses and our East Lawrence ballrooms are destroyed. This is written as a private citizen.

What is an old idea good? more valid? important? By what magic can an idea take on a life of its own? So that a comic might say, in his Loop argument, "It's going to be built, that's all there is to it."

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"It should be noted that the Haskell Loop has been in planning for over a decade," said Al Hart, Lawrence Chamber of Commerce President, at the July 29th meeting and Loop debate.

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And suddenly you can picture mobs pelting the shutters with foul eggs and soft tomatoes, trampling the lawn, winks at you. Failure stares you down like an enemy comic. The greatest fear is that you are outrageous. You feel the source of power and know-how in town, you are illuminating only emptiness.

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One association has committed itself to the outright denigration, cars and clothes. We live on what no one much interest in the problems of the poor or the working people of the neighborhood. IAssociation, an office I have held since last October. Lawrence. Much to my disappointment, it has can no longer tolerate these deficiencies in the organization or even appear to tolerate them by remaining an officer.

One of the reasons I joined ELIA was because I felt it was interested in maintaining the residential character of the neighborhood. Indeed, our constitution and by-laws state that one of our purposes is "to improve living conditions" in East Lawrence, with the approval of the Haskell Loop project (which is neither on Haskell nor a loop) last November, our association has committed itself to the outright destruction of 37 residential properties, the forced and uncompensated deterioration of 20 or so others which will be to the shadow industrial zone east and north of the proposed loop, destruction of the only neighborhood park in East Lawrence, and multiple harmful effects on a large portion of the neighborhood. In approving the road you, in effect, asked the city to commit over $1,000,000 in community development funds to make East Lawrence into a drive-in-and-out-of, rather than a lived-in, neighborhood. This action would have caused me to resign immediately, except that I had hoped that by staying on I might help ELIA have a say-so in how the $60,000 in community development funds for this neighborhood will be spent. It has not, however, made any difference.

The other reason I joined the association was because I thought you might help the poor and working people of East Lawrence, especially in the area of housing. I am a poor man myself, both in fact (I have no money) and by reason of commitment (if any person is poor in Lawrence, I am poor too). That is why I am interested. I believe the bringing of housing and working people are the finest people in the city. We have more incentive than any other people to be a businessman, a professional person or any other person, male or female, with an income of $30,000 per year and a family to support. Put this person on an income of $5,000 or $6,000 per year (or less) like we poor get for our families, and he wouldn't know how to stay alive. Yet we poor get by somehow, and it can be easily seen that one of our greatest needs is social reform, which we are unable to do.

I believe that the East Lawrence Improvement Association has done too little to help us, falling even in fact to act so much as our spokesman before the rest of the city. This was most apparent in the ELIA resolution last December urging that twice as much of this year's community development money be spent on the Haskell Loop (or, as I call it, the Pennsylvania Street Connection) as for housing-rehabilitation grants.

The late-summer sun is bright and hot by mid-afternoon. Basking winnowingly at the corner of 11th and Delaware in East Lawrence, the old municipal ball park quiet's awaits a brighter future. The proposed "Haskell Loop" will trace a line right through second base.

For now, the softball season is over, and most of the other league play has moved to the new Holcom Sports Complex at 25th Street, west of Iowa. What's left for East Lawrence residents is an island strewn with broken glass and nail-studded boards. The dugouts are filled with mud, debris, and the stench of urine. When the wind blows, litter of all description whips around home plate. The stands are in need of repair. In general, the entire facility has deteriorated due to the neglect of both its users and owners. The fact that the park remains in use is a matter of pride and visible reminder of the city's past and present disregard for the neighborhood as a whole.

Now the city is planning to destroy the stadium, so it can build a road, for the supposed benefit of the neighborhood. Originally slated to take out the livestock "barn" here east on East 11th, the route of the roadway has now been pushed to the west, to save money in land acquisition, and to allow existing industrial uses more breathing room. So, the livestock barn stays, and the ball park goes.

Yet, in spite of the park's state of disrepair, it is still of great functional value to the neighborhood. Aside from South Park, it is the only large open area within easy walking distance of the residents. The nearest baseball diamond is more than two miles away, southeast of 19th and Harper. The park is one of the few in the city with lighting facilities. This is pure insanity, in the midst of a severe flight of people out of the "central city." It is the only large open area that most people of East Lawrence can address itself to. This is a value fostered by the rapid growth of the suburbs around Lawrence, and the flight of people out of the "central city."

These homes were built to last, by people who intended to live in them, not by developers who seek only profit. East Lawrence needs these homes, and the integrity of the neighborhood depends upon it.

On the ideals just expressed, I cannot stay as an officer in the East Lawrence Improvement Association. However, I will not yet resign as an ordinary member in hopes that, as a result of my speech tonight, new policies and directions might be initiated to reverse the old. The policies and directions I would like to see are: total rejection to the Pennsylvania Street Connection, the commitment of ELIA to be a spokesman for the poor and working people of the neighborhood, a commitment to East Lawrence as a place for living—not just so much real estate to be exploited for individual profit. And, finally, a commitment to more and better public and co-operative housing for poor and working class people.
I was about to graduate from the university and had accepted a full-time job there. Lawrence had become very dear to me since I came here in 1969 as a student. It combined an exciting small-town atmosphere with the cosmopolitan flavor and cultural flair that accompanied the university. In short, I decided to buy a house here and stay indefinitely.

East Lawrence attracted me for many reasons. I had been living on Tennessee Street, and the relatively small distance from the university was an important factor in my decision. It is a residential area, and I found it very welcoming. There are many trees and gardens, which add to the overall ambiance of the neighborhood.

Many of the older houses in East Lawrence have been beautifully restored and updated. The architecture is diverse, ranging from Victorian to Craftsman style homes. The residents take pride in maintaining their properties, and the neighborhood is known for its strong sense of community.

The people in East Lawrence are friendly and welcoming. There are numerous community events and activities throughout the year, which help to foster a sense of belonging among the residents. Whether it is a neighborhood potluck or a street fair, everyone is encouraged to participate and enjoy the festivities.

The schools in East Lawrence are highly regarded. The education level is high, and there are many opportunities for extracurricular activities. The community is invested in the well-being of its youth, and this is reflected in the quality of the local schools.

In summary, East Lawrence offers a combination of convenience, beauty, and community that makes it an excellent place to live. I am grateful to have called this wonderful neighborhood my home.