



Sunpapers photo—Ellis J. Malashuk

This home in the 700 block Howard road, in Sudbrook Park's historic district, will be moved to make way for the rapid transit line. For nearly 30 years, residents of the community

have lived under the threat of an expressway also coming through their neighborhood, but that plan has been changed. The Northwest expressway instead will begin at the Beltway.

Finally, an answer for Sudbrook Park

By PETER RUEHL

For nearly 30 years, the residents of Sudbrook Park have wondered whether their community would have its tranquility interrupted by a major freeway or a rapid transit line, or both.

Now they have at least part of their answer. The transit route will go through the area, designed in 1884 by Frederick Law Olmsted, the famous landscape architect who also laid out New York's Central Park. And one house in Sudbrook Park's historic district will have to be moved.

The fate of some 14 other houses outside the district is still unknown, according to transit officials, because final designs are incomplete. Those houses are on relatively deep lots, which could mean that a few will be out of the rails' path.

The vagueness of the homes' status, and that of about 20 others in Sudbrook Park, characterizes a continuing situation that community residents have complained of since the early 1950's. That was when the state first announced plans for the Northwest expressway, a multi-lane highway that was to run from Patterson avenue in the city to the Beltway (through Sudbrook) and continue to Owings Mills.

The State Highway Administration, and its progenitor, the State Roads Commis-

sion, acquired rights-of-way along that route during the 1950's and 1960's, including the houses in Sudbrook. The houses were subsequently rented for an indefinite period, made all the more indefinite when the state ran out of money for the project.

Compounding the road issue was the simultaneous decision by the state to send the rapid transit system along the same route, running it on the Northwest expressway's median strip. That would obviate the need for obtaining another right-of-way, but in the eyes of Sudbrook Park residents, would also mean their hope for a third alternative — nothing at all along the route — was futile.

But that is apparently how it will turn out. Last September, Hermann K. Intemann, secretary of transportation, said his department had \$400 million in unanticipated revenue, and it would be used to construct a 4.2-mile segment of the expressway between the Beltway and Dolfield road.

So the freeway won't go through Sudbrook Park, but MTA officials say they will use the right-of-way through the community for the rail line, despite part of the area's status as an historic district. Only one home in the district, in the 700 block Howard road, is in the way, and it will be moved to another location, says Ted von

Briesen of the MTA's planning and marketing division.

The other 20 homes affected are outside the historic district, but 14 are in Sudbrook Park, north of Milford Mill road. They belong to the state because they were in the freeway's right-of-way, but since the rail line's bed is much narrower, they may be saved.

A long time in the works

"They're on rather long lots," Mr. von Briesen said, "and it might be possible to take part of the yards and leave the houses. We don't know yet."

The Northwest expressway, or at least the first 4.2 miles of it, will be scaled down from six to four lanes and construction should begin in 1981. By 1984, work should be completed, with the remaining 6 miles built sometime later, DOT officials say. That includes the rapid rail, which will still run on the expressway's median strip in the segment beyond the Beltway.

Somewhat typical of the lengthy controversy is the lack of coordination and communication among officials in the highway and rail bureaucracies, due in large part to the fact that few who started the project are still working on it. One

Continued on Page 6

Sudbrook Park gets answer to old questions

Continued from Page 1

planner, noting the confusion, commented, "I was still in grammar school when they started talking about this."

Several highway administration officials, for example, did not know the portion of the right-of-way between the city line and Beltway would be used for rail transit, even though it was their agency that acquired the property years ago.

The 14 houses in Sudbrook Park and 20 others between the city line and Beltway along the route will have dubious futures until a final design is drawn and approved by state and federal agencies, including

the Urban Mass Transportation Administration.

"Until such time as a decision is made," said Calvin Reese, director of the State Highway Administration's real estate division, "we shall continue to hold these properties."

If the homes can be saved, the state will offer to sell them to their original owners. If they cannot be located or no longer want the houses, they will be sold at auction.

"What will be nice," Mr. Reese said, "is when the thing's built and nobody will have any questions."