Pro, Con For Street Closing Heard

By JACKIE BROOKS
Staff Writer

Columbia City Council Wednesday heard arguments for and against closing a portion of Matthews Street between Oak Street and Drew Park, for use as a day care center playground.

The Columbia housing authority, in exchange, would deed all of Ithica Street between Oak Street and Drew Park to the city in exchange, according to Dr. John Chase of the Columbia Housing Authority.

At an 11 a.m. hearing Dr. Chase told council the authority hopes to have the day care center in Drew Park open by Sept., 1971, to serve 90-100 children of the Saxon Homes and Drew Park area, plus other neighborhood children.

Proposal for the closing of the street initially came from the City Manager's office, Dr. Chase said.

The request was first heard May 20, of this year.

If the request is granted, the housing authority will take care of building a new entrance to the park. The day care center would be built on one acre in Drew Park and the closed portion of Matthews Street between Oak Street and the park would be used as a play area.

Two residents of the area appeared to protest the street's closing. Both said they had bought property to have corner lots and that the closing of the street would decrease their value.

A decision will be made by the council after study.

The council authorized the mayor to execute a deed releasing the city's right of reverter on the Fair Grounds property. The property may be needed to reroute Stadium Road across from Carolina Stadium when the stadium enlargement is completed. Two circular ramps at each end of the stadium addition will require extra space on that side of the road.

The council voted to give a 90-day option on four acres in Industrial Park at $7,500 per acre, to the Shared Laundry Committee, which proposes to use the land for cooperative laundry facilities for Columbia area hospitals.

The council approved a one-year lease with automatic renewal privileges between the city and the United Service Organizations Inc. for the USO Building, approved the low bid of $3,663 of the Grinnell Co. Inc. of Charlotte for a Mueller drilling machine and adapters, and approved an agreement between the city and Southern Railway Co. to put a sewer pipeline on railway property in Columbia.

The council acted on these five ordinances:

—Approved on the second reading an encroachment ordinance for Craig T. Baxley to allow a portion of the roof of a building at 1113 Taylor St. to extend over the sidewalk for 24 feet.

—Denied the use of rocks or pebbles in the tree zone of Citizens and Southern National Bank at 1813 Assembly St.

—Approved on the first reading a poured concrete foundation on Assembly street for Davison's proposed parking garage.

—Approved on the first reading a utility tunnel to be constructed in connection with the State Capitol Complex.

—Approved rezoning to commercial uses the area lying east of the eastern boundary of the Northeast Freeway, west of West Avenue and north of Sunset Boulevard. The portion expected to be in the freeway right-of-way will not be rezoned.

Mayor John T. Campbell commended Joe Winter of the city's Urban Rehabilitation department for his efforts in coordinating the Mayor's Youth Committee and the Schlitz camp for deprived boys this summer at Ft. Jackson.

In connection with the Drew Park request, Dr. Chase said the Columbia Housing Authority has secured $400,000 in federal funds for construction of two day care centers. One, costing $300,000, will be at Gonzales Gardens and the other, originally planned for Allen Benedict Courts is now planned for Drew Park.

Plans to put the day care center at Allen Benedict were dropped because of the new Columbia freeway system, which will affect the area, Dr. Chase said.

Funds were unavailable for purchase of another site.

Dr. Chase said the initial request, made to council in May, asked approximately one acre of the eight-and-one-fourth acre park for another facility to cost $200,000.