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## Redevelopment Committee mulls eminent domain

By Dennis P. Hohenberger  
Turley Correspondent

HOLYOKE – The City Council's Redevelopment Committee held a public hearing on the eminent domain or the taken of residential parcels related to a road and intersection improvement project on

Homestead Avenue and Lower Westfield Road.

Big Y Supermarket is proposing to build a \$16 million shopping center on an abutting parcel, formerly Atlas Copco.

City Council Kevin Jourdain objected to the notification requirements for the hearing, saying residents directly impact-

ed were not properly notified by the city. Chuck Murphy-Romboletti, from the city's planning department, said notifications were sent by certified mail.

The city's law department said there is no radius requirement for such notifications. Emil "Bud" and Shelley Schlegel, who live directly across from the pro-

posed development, said they received an e-mail copy of the notification from Ward 5 City Councilor Linda Vacon.

The Schlegels said they did not receive a certified letter from the city about the meeting.

City Engineer Matthew Sokop said the City Council must finally decide granting permanent

and temporary easements before the Massachusetts Department of Transportation send the project out-to-bid.

He said a study showed the area will need "significant improvements" before any major project can move forward like Big Y.

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## FUN ON THE FOURTH



Karen Theriaque and Eric Lukowski, 9, proudly display their patriotic spirit at the city's annual fireworks display. For more photos of the event, turn to page 12.

## Mayor sponsors resolution for lower vehicle emissions

By Dennis P. Hohenberger  
Turley Correspondent

HOLYOKE – Mayor Alex B. Morse, along with mayors nationally, co-sponsored a resolution that calls for the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to introduce new standards that reduce vehicle tailpipe emissions and producing cleaner, lower sulfur fuels.

The resolution was overwhelmingly approved at the recent U.S. Conference of Mayors Annual Meeting in Las Vegas, Nev. Chicopee Mayor Michael D. Bissonette was also a co-sponsor. The conference forwarded the resolution to the President and Congress.

The American Lung

Association (ALA) held a July 2 conference call on the resolution.

While Holyoke and Chicopee have easy access to the regions major highways, I-90, I-91 and I-391, both mayors worry about the harmful emissions the vehicles spew and the overall effects on the region's health.

In a release, Morse said the improved vehicle and fuel standards received widespread support from health and medical groups, like the American Lung Association, major environmental organizations and automobile manufacturers.

He added vehicle emissions contribute greatly to ozone and

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## Missing girl recovered Wednesday

Crews combed the Connecticut for five days

By Kristin Will  
Staff Writer

SOUTH HADLEY – After a grueling five-day search of the Connecticut River, the body of a young female, presumed to be the missing five-year-old who fell into the water Saturday, has been recovered.

Local and state agencies on the river Wednesday located the body 500 yards down-

stream from where the young girl fell into the water, off Cove Island Road, around 3:30 p.m.

No foul play is suspected in this tragic accident, according to the Office of Northwestern District Attorney David E. Sullivan. The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner will determine positive identification in the coming days.

Weeks of rain strengthened the river, which is flowing stronger and faster than usual.

FD1 Firefighter and Paramedic Gene Os called

river conditions dangerous for rescuers.

"The weather conditions, high water conditions and all of the dangers associated with both of those, like logs and debris coming at us in the water," he said, encumbered the recovery mission.

State and local divers had little visibility underwater, just an arm's length, said Os.

Crews concentrated the majority of their search between the point of entry and the edge of the dam.

"It's been hard on every-

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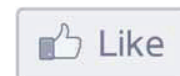


A recovery effort began Saturday for the body of a five-year-old girl who slipped off a Cove Island Road dock into the water Saturday night.



The Holyoke Sun is now on Facebook

Find us on Facebook! Visit [www.Facebook.com/HolyokeSun](http://www.Facebook.com/HolyokeSun) and "Like" us to receive updates on local happenings, breaking news and photos.



# Holyoke Range State Park events

AMHERST - The Notch Visitor Center is located on Route 116 in Amherst and all Holyoke Range State Park events begin at the center.

These programs are sponsored by the Department of Conservation and Recreation and are free and open to the public. For more information please call 586-0350.

**DANIEL SHAYS AND THE HORSE CAVES.** Friday, July 12, a.m. Local lore maintains that Daniel Shays and his band of men sought shelter in the Horse Caves of Holyoke Range during a blizzard after attempting and failing to raid the government arsenal in Springfield. Learn about Daniel Shays and Shays' Rebellion as we hike out and back to the Horse Caves. Wear sturdy footwear and bring water and insect repellent.

**BEGINNING BIRDING.** Saturday, July 13, 10:30 a.m. Everyone who wants to learn the basics of birding is welcome to join in on this beginner's program. We will learn about binoculars, bird guides and bird lists as we go out and test our newly acquired skills.

**LET'S EXPLORE NATURE.** Saturday, July 13, 1 p.m. This family geared program will explore different topics of nature every week. This week's program is titled TRACKING THE WILD THINGS. We will learn about the different footprints animals make, how to find them and then make a cast.

**GEOLOGY HIKE.** Saturday, July 13, 2: p.m. Take a guided hike to the summit of Bare Mountain, stopping along the way to examine the unique geology of the Holyoke Range and to talk about how the range formed

and changed over the past 200 million years. The hike is around 1 mile round-trip over moderately-strenuous rocky terrain, and departs from the Notch Visitors Center. Participants should bring appropriate footwear and plenty of water.

**WILDLIFE PROGRAM: FROGS, SALAMANDERS & VERNAL POOLS.** Sunday, July 14, 11 a.m. Learn about the importance of vernal pools to the life cycles of frogs and salamanders. Then take a short walk out to a vernal pool, grab a net and see what you can catch! We'll look for frogs, salamanders, and other animals inhabiting the pool and talk about their biology and ecology. Participants should bring insect repellent and plenty of water. Waders or rain boots encouraged but not required.

**FAMILY HIKE - NATURE B-I-N-G-O.** Sunday, July 14, 2 p.m. This program will bring families into the forest for a hike and bingo game. Families will be given bingo sheets with objects and wildlife they may see on their hike. The Park Interpreter will take families on a guided hike as they keep their eyes open for the objects on their sheet and race to be the first to get 5 in a row.

**KIDLEIDOSCOPE: CHIPMUNKS.** Monday, July 15, 11 a.m. Introduce your child to nature at this weekly program designed for parents or caregivers and 3-6 year old children. This program will explore chipmunks through an outdoor activity and an art project. Join us for an all-around fun learning adventure! Don't forget to bring a picnic to enjoy after the program!

**EXPLORER'S CLUB.** Monday, July 15, 2 p.m.

Children ages 10-12 can increase their knowledge of natural history by attending this weekly HIKING program. We will take a closer look at nature as we hike the different trails of the Holyoke Range.

**NATURE KIDS.** Tuesday, July 16, 10:30 a.m. Through games, crafts and exploration children ages 5-6 can learn about nature and work towards a nature certificate.

**SENIOR HIKE.** Tuesday, July 16, 1 p.m. Everyone age 55 and older is welcome to join us on this easy paced/easy terrain hike. Along the way we will explore the wonders of nature. Bring water and bug spray. This program will have a duration of one hour.

**NATURE WALK: OUR CHANGING FOREST.** Friday, July 19, 10 a.m. Take a guided walk through the woods. Learn to identify common trees at Holyoke Range State Park by their leaves and bark, and learn about how forests in Massachusetts have changed since European colonization and how they might change into the future. This program is intended for those budding naturalists interested in the basics of tree identification and in the history of forests in Massachusetts. Participants should bring insect repellent and plenty of water.

**WILDLIFE PROGRAM: TURKEY VULTURES.** Friday, July 19, 2 p.m. Join us for a hike up Mt. Norwottuck. At the top, we'll use binoculars to search for turkey vultures riding the thermals and talk about their biology and ecology. Hike is over moderately-strenuous terrain. Bring appropriate shoes, water, insect repellent and binoculars (if you have them).

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On the western-side of the property, few changes will be needed, expect for moving the curb line in.

For the Schlegel's property, though, the city must create permanent and temporary easements, which includes installing a traffic signal, grading a slope and a permanent utility pole.

The Schlegels purchased the property in 1976. Councilor Linda Vacon asked Sokop about "just compensation" for residential owners, and whether such compensation would include right-of-way square-footage. Sokop said the owners will only be compensated for footage deemed private land or land beyond the right-of-way.

Though the Schlegels have maintained both the private and the right-of-way parcels for years, they will only receive an amount based on the square-footage they actually own or around \$1.90 a square-foot.

Sokop said the city is not required to payout for right-of-way.

Jourdain said the affected footage should be considered an easement and not a right-of-way. He said the property owners, particularly the Schlegels, are losing a significant portion of their land, and they are not being justly compensated.

He said personal property interest "rub up against the public good." He wants the two residential owners properly compensated.

Jourdain added that residents deserved better treatment and not "thrown under the bus."

The city's law department said one owner cannot be compensated at a higher rate. The residential owners can enter negotiations after the taken. The compensation consideration falls under the equal protection clause or the Fourteenth Amendment.

Vacon said the equal protection clause was not a "valid argument." She added that commercial projects that abut private parcels are the most "sensitive" projects.

Several councilors had questions on assessments, but City Assessor Anthony Dulude was not in attendance.

Emil Schlegel said he and his wife have some "sore spots" with the project. He said how would someone feel if they owned a car valued at \$43,000, but a buyer comes along and offers only \$19,000. Jourdain later added that the Schlegels should receive a higher square-footage rate or an additional \$3,000.

Shelley Schlegel said she was assured there would be no land taken on their side, but rather the former Atlas Copco property would lose portions.

James Lavelle, of Lower Westfield Road, cited the Kelo v. City of New London Supreme Court decision. The decision weakened private property rights while expanding eminent domain rights for local municipalities.

Rather than take private property for a public good or use, land can be taken if a private project or redevelopment is deemed a benefit to the community. In return, the private property owners must be fairly compensated.

Lavelle said a third construction season has passed with no development in sight. "Let's get the project done," he said.

The committee will continue the public hearing on Aug. 1 at 6 p.m.

## FROM THE FRONT

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body because it's a young girl and everybody's got kids and everyone can relate one way or the other," said Os. "They take it personally."

The girl's family, he said, is what kept them going.



Town Reminder Staff Photo by Kristin Will

**The Environmental Police were among the slew of emergency personnel searching the Connecticut River.**

### EMISSIONS, from page 1

particle pollution and "pose serious threats to public health."

The bad air may increase incidents of asthma, put added stress on heart and lung conditions and, in some cases, lead to early death, he said.

Morse added children, the elderly and persons with chronic lung and heart ailments are most at risk when exposed to harmful auto emissions.

"Emerging research shows that those of who live, work and go to school near major roadways are at even greater risk to the impacts of traffic pollution," he wrote.

Paul Billings, ALA's senior vice president, said the proposal has garnered overwhelming public support. Over 275,000 public comments were filed on the EPA's proposal, with most comments favoring the new standards.

Billings noted recent national polls show most Americans support stronger vehicle emission standards.

If the EPA adopted the new standards, all new vehicles would have to emit lower emissions, while reducing sulfur in gasoline. The reduction in sulfur would reduce harmful pollutants in both new and used vehicles, and would have the effect of removing 33 million cars from the nation's highways.

The new standards also call for further reductions in nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide and volatile organic compounds.

"You just want to bring some closure to the situation," he said. "We do what we gotta do."

South Hadley Police were called to a Cove Island Road home at 9:17 p.m. Saturday night for an emergency rescue.

Extended family had gathered at that location to view a local fireworks display.

An eyewitness on scene reported to police seeing the girl, the youngest in a Californian family, walking on a dock stretching into the Connecticut River. A boat was moored at the end of the dock.

The five-year-old girl fell in the space between the dock and moored boat.

Immediately, several adults dove into the murky waters in an attempt to retrieve the young child.

She could not be located.

Emergency personnel, including a helicopter equipped with a spotlight, were also unsuccessful in locating the girl that night.

Massachusetts State Police and South Hadley Fire District No. 1 were in command of the incident. Fire District No. 2, South Hadley Police, Massachusetts Environmental Police, the Massachusetts Air Wing and state and local dive teams, the Holyoke Fire Department and the Agawam Fire Department maintained a round-the-clock search effort to recover the young girl's body.

"The health benefits of the standards can be achieved for a minimal cost. It is estimated that cleaner gasoline will cost about one cent per gallon more than current standards, according to the EPA and a recent report by the American Lung Association," read the mayor's statement.

Dr. Jerome A. Paulson, of the American Academy of Pediatrics, who joined Bissonnette on the conference call, said the academy feels strongly that the EPA should implement the new emission and fuel standards.

Paulson, who operates the Mid-Atlantic Center for Children's Health and the Environment, said he received a call 15 years ago from a mother who was contemplating building a home near two large interstate highways.

The woman worried if having a home near the highways would be harmful to her children's health. At the time, Paulson told the woman he had some concerns but he lacked the data to support those concerns.

"Now I think there really is quite a bit of data about ozone, particulates and about other air pollutants that all of which would be lessened by the implementation of these standards," he said. "There's a lot of data about exacerbation of asthma and some data even supporting the causal relationship between ozone and asthma."

He added research has shown an association between exposure to air pollution near highways and neurological and cognitive problems connected to Attention Deficit Disorder.