



Dorwood Optimists' proposed safety village . . .

Propose miniature village to teach traffic safety

By Janet Goode
Times Staff Writer

A miniature safety village in which to teach five-year-olds proper traffic procedure could be in operation in Kettering this summer if plans being made by the Dorwood Optimist Club materialize.

The proposal being presented to various governmental and civic organizations by Tom Franier, D.D.S., chairman of boys' work, and Jerry Roberts, club president, is of a village similar to one which has been operating successfully in Mansfield since 1957.

Mr. Frazier said that the Mansfield installation, which is sponsored by the police department and financed by the city, has almost 100 per cent participation by eligible youngsters.

As plans now stand the Kettering safety village would cover an area of about 12,000 square feet, possibly on the grounds of the George L. Ernst Elementary School and beside the Kettering YMCA on Marshall Rd.

It would contain 32 buildings averaging five feet in height and arranged along four blocks. Streets, sidewalks and crosswalks would be painted on the blacktop base.

A traffic signal in the center of the village would control the

pin-sized pedestrians and drivers at the intersection of the two main streets. Stop signs would stand at corners of the secondary street running around the perimeter of the area.

A six-foot fence would enclose the area, and the buildings would be constructed with hinged corners so that they could be stored away for the winter months.

The Dorwood Optimists would start the project reeling with \$2,500 of their own funds, but it is estimated that a total of \$6,000 might be necessary to finance the project. The club hopes to raise the remainder by subscription.

The sales committee, under chairman Jim Kessel, plans to contact every business house in Kettering asking for donations. The committee hopes to interest businessmen in purchasing the miniature buildings and pedal cars which would bear their names. Smaller organizations might purchase traffic signs or make donations for other items.

A tentative schedule calls for seven one-week sessions beginning July 11 and running through August. Classes would run from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Monday through Friday, but the site would remain open from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. so that parents could bring their children to the village for personal instructions.

An accredited instructor would give the children classroom instruction.

(Continued on page two)

Propose village

(Continued from page one)
struction the first three days of the week. The last two days would be devoted to putting the 30 youngsters through their paces in actual traffic situations, with 15 manning pedal cars and 15 on foot at any given time.

Dr. Frazier says that the program would emphasize class work because villages without it have a tendency to degenerate into playgrounds or baby-sitting services. He also voiced the hope that the program, if successful, might be incorporated into the school kindergarten program.

A group of representatives approached the board of education at their March 8 meeting to ask the reaction of board members

to the project and to explore the possibility of using the Ernst School grounds. Although there are some legal problems which would have to be ironed out before the board could give official approval to the use of school property, board members agreed that the idea, in principle, was a good one.

Dr. Frazier said that Police Chief John Shryock, outgoing School Safety Officer Linford D. Houck and new Safety Officer Bob Owens were enthusiastic about the proposal.

The Dorwood group also plans to make a presentation to the Kettering City Council at a March 22 meeting, and to the city Parks and Recreation Board meeting April 7.