

Mayoral Candidates Agree on Issues

By LARRY SCHUMPERT

They are four different kinds of men, the candidates for mayor of Lafayette and West Lafayette, but they sounded like one man Saturday afternoon.

In an appearance before the League of Women Voters the four took turns placing their own expression on issues, but no substantial differences showed up all afternoon. The candidates for mayor, it turned out, are for better land use, improved housing and some movement to a unified form of government in this country.

The League had asked the candidates to address themselves to those three issues in a session at the Trails Restaurant. The candidates were Democrats James Riehle and Harold Mennen and Republicans O. U. Sullivan and Joseph Dienhart.

On the possibilities of Univov here Riehle said his proposal last year to merge Lafayette and West Lafayette governments had not been widely supported. It might

even hurt Lafayette Democrats politically to add all those West Lafayette Republicans, Riehle said, but he still likes the idea.

"I certainly would encourage one countywide park board," he said, and called the Mass Transit Authority a good example of cooperation. But any merger of governments, he added, should follow a referendum.

Sullivan said he wanted a joint effort for one of his pet projects, a continuous park along the Wabash River from Ft. Ouatenon to Prophet's Rock, with camping, hiking and riding areas. And when a third stage is added to the sewage treatment plant, he said, it should be done under a single sewage district.

"I think we will have a single community, Sullivan said, "and we can move towards it now if we wish to do so."

"I, too, am in favor of Univov," said Dienhart. "There is no doubt there is some overlapping of officials here."

"A county unit would be the

most efficient unit of government," Mennen said, "but a great deal of study is needed first."

CODE ENDORSED

Both West Lafayette candidates endorsed a housing code for the city, with Mennen critical of the City Council's delay in doing anything about it.

"I don't want a token ordinance, but a workable one," Mennen said, "with minimum standards for health, plumbing, heat, light and space."

"I assure you," Dienhart said, "we'll have a fair and equitable housing code if I am elected."

Dienhart said the condition of some houses rented to students was "absolutely horrible," and that absentee landlords were largely responsible for "deplorable conditions" in some buildings.

In Lafayette Sullivan endorsed the work of the redevelopment commission and its efforts to get certification from the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Riehle said there wasn't enough enforcement of exist-

ing housing ordinances and not enough inspection, especially of plumbing. He said he backed urban renewal and the use of available federal funds, and that he wanted the city to offer residents more help with curb and gutter work.

Dienhart said of the sewage problem on West Lafayette's northside, "It's absolutely horrible for this to happen to an enlightened community. With all the knowledge we have here, it's incredible that this could happen."

And Mennen said, "We had better take care of what land we have, because there ain't gonna be no more."

PACT 'ABUSES' CITED

During a question period later, Riehle said there had been abuses of the city-industry contract and charged "subsidizing" of some industries.

"I would oppose renewal of the pact," Sullivan said, arguing that much of the reason for its inception had disappeared as school tax rates in the county grew more equal.

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'One's Not Running'

The president of the League of Women Voters, Mrs. Gerold Neudeck, was surrounded by candidates for mayor Saturday at the league's political forum in the Trails. The eager hopefuls crowded around Mrs. Neudeck are (standing) James F. Riehle, Lafayette Democratic candi-

date (left), and Joseph Dienhart, West Lafayette Republican candidate. Seated are Harold Mennen (left), Democrat running in West Lafayette, and O.U. Sullivan, GOP candidate in Lafayette. (Staff Photo)