

Some want road help: Fixing streets is not so straightforward, town attorney says

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WALKERTOWN

Residents of three streets appealed last week for rescue from potholes, but town officials said they would have to learn more before they can promise help.

The residents of Jackie Lane, Chris Drive and Donna Marie Court asked the Walkertown Town Council to pave their streets.

"The road really needs some improvement," said Larry Wilson, who lives on Donna Marie Court. "We have done everything we can do to get the road up to par."

But Town Attorney Steve Garland suggested that because the streets may be private roads, it may be necessary to dedicate them to the town in order for the town to take over maintenance.

Council members raised another issue during their discussion. Because some of the properties on the streets are outside the town limits, the town may need to annex properties to solve the street problems.

"We do not have forced annexation," Mayor Doc Davis told council members and the streets' residents.

Tamra Eccles, who lives on Chris Drive, said she received a petition for voluntary annexation in 2003.

"Our cars drag and bump, even when inching through these holes," she said. "Our children have to dodge these holes up to N.C. 66. Emergency vehicles would have to slow down drastically."

Eccles said that when she bought her house, she believed that the street was publicly maintained.

Larry Bolden, another Chris Drive resident, said that garbage trucks damage the streets.

"The biggest thing is that it devalues the property real bad," he said. "That street was never designed for anything more than an automobile. The big trucks coming in there are not helping the road at all."

Council members discussed the road conditions at a recent work session and said that any properties not in the town should be brought in under voluntary annexation.

The roads "were not done to state standards and the developer is long gone," Davis said.

The town asked Garland to check on the ownership of the streets and to determine what properties were in or out of the town.

In other business, the council scheduled a public hearing next month on the issue of changing term lengths of council members and staggering the terms of the four members.

All of the council members are up for election every two years. If the town makes the change, council members would serve four-year terms, with two council members up for election every two years.

The change would require a transition. In the 2007 election, the top two vote getters would win four-year

terms, and the bottom two among the winners would earn two-year terms.

In the following elections, all terms would be four-year terms.

The change would also give the mayor a four-year term beginning in 2007. The mayor serves a two-year term.

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