



NEWS LOCAL

Red Pine Road gets road upgraded

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Red Pine Drive will be getting an upgrade this fall.

City council approved a resolution Monday that will see Red Pine Drive upgraded to minimum standards required so that emergency service vehicles can travel on it and turn on a 'hammer head' roundabout at the end of the road.

The upgrade will include widening parts of the roadway which are too narrow for fire trucks and rescue vehicles to travel on.

Residents have been lobbying for road improvements for over a decade.

Recent negotiations between the homeowner syndicate, city staff, fire services and the conservation authority have paved the way for the turnaround to be constructed, and the road to widened, so that emergency vehicles can access the area.

In May, Ward 3 Coun. Matthew Shoemaker and Ward 5 Coun. Marchy Bruni moved a resolution asking city staff to report back on options to construct a city-owned and maintained roadway to service Red Pines Drive.

That motion was initiated because building permits were no longer being issued to homeowners on Red Pine Drive because of concern over fire access and the lack of a municipal maintained roadway to service the lots.

It's not the first time the condition of the roadway, and the city's roles and responsibility of the road, have been debated by council. The issue has arisen several times since at least 2002.

In 2007 city council agreed to provide Red Pine Drive residents with annual snowplowing, at an estimated cost of \$4,000 to \$5,000. The decision came after a delegation of residents appeared before city council asking council to maintain the road at its Class B standards and provide snowplowing.

They argued the road is part of the city's grid and should not be held to a different standard than other thoroughfares in the vicinity.

The homeowners, who own the road through a syndicate, had agreed to deed their 66-foot road allowance to the city.

Council had received information about 15 of the then 21 properties are year-round residences and those homeowners pay city taxes "in excess of \$70,000" annually for limited services.

A year earlier, council had rejected a proposal from homeowners on Red Pine Drive that would see the city pay for upgrades on the road needed for emergency, garbage and snow plow services and then add those costs to their property tax through increased assessments.

Prior to that, council received a petition from area residents regarding snow plowing and garbage collection in 2002.

It was believed that the proposal from the homeowner syndicate would result in similar requests from other areas in the city and the city didn't have the budget to do that.

City council also closed that gap Monday by unanimously approving a resolution asking staff develop a policy that specifically deals with the city assuming private roads.

Public Works and Transportation director Larry Girardi told city council that he expects the work to begin this fall on the turnaround. When completed, the turnaround will also be fenced in and marked with signage prohibiting parking, dumping or trespassing.

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