

# Colchester residents seek service for taxation

By DANIEL SCHWAB

An issue regarding private roads brought together dozens of concerned residents of Colchester South Oct. 24, who voiced their concerns to a number of candidates running for Essex town council.

A collection of residents who call themselves the North Crystal Lane Group led the discussion at a crowded JR's Boathouse.

Greg Horoky, one of the group's members, said homeowners living on what they thought were private roads are each paying into the municipal tax levy, which goes towards the public roads budget.

In return, the group is asking for basic services such as snow removal and grading on their road.

Horoky has lived on Crystal Lane in Colchester for almost ten years.

"If we got a basic level of maintenance, we'd be happy," Horoky said. "Because everybody likes where they live."

Horoky said the group, which meets on a weekly

basis, has organized annual parties over the last two years in an effort to raise money for general maintenance. On top of the \$500 raised this year, the group asked all residents on the road to chip in \$20 each for snow removal and grading.

There are 22 homes on Crystal Lane, Horoky said. Many believed they owned the road when they moved in, he said. It was only after a visit to the registry office that they learned the road was owned by the private estate of Raymond J. Marentate, who originally developed the area in the 1930s.

Horoky said the group approached town council two years ago to review the situation.

But group member Walter Mucha, who's lived on the lane for 35 years, is still dissatisfied with the level of taxation and lack of maintenance by the town.

"In the winter the road gets to be a mess," Mucha said. "We're looking for service to represent our taxation."

According to Clerk Jerry Marion, the town owns many

of the roads in the area but has not assumed responsibility for maintain them because they are not up to standards set by the Ministry of Transportation.

Marion was not at the meeting but said it is up to residents on these types of roads to implement proper grading and adequate drainage before the town can provide general maintenance.

During the meeting, several candidates running for council were given the opportunity to speak on the issue.

Ron Rogers, a candidate running for Ward 3 councillor, said municipal funds earmarked for the general upkeep of roads should also go towards maintaining a minimum standard for emergency vehicles.

"Council should look at a revised standard for private roads," Rogers said.

Ward 1 Councillor Randy Voakes said both residents and town council need to work together to come up with a solution.

"The town is supportive of resolving your problem," he said. "We don't dictate to you, we support you."



Ethel Wilson poses with Mayor Ron McDermott at the advanced poll Saturday before casting their votes at Essex Town Hall.

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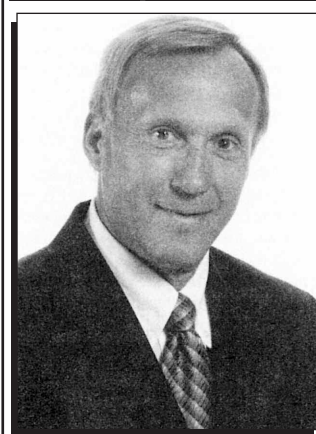
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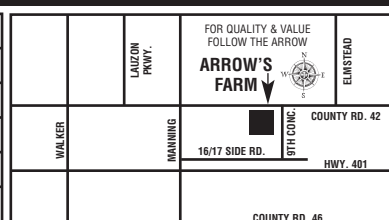
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