

**Road**

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Crown Road - people throw anything into the road just to fill in the gullies."

"It was really bad when we had the last heavy rain," Zuba said. "It's so bad that we're afraid that if the fire company or ambulance came in, the roads would damage their vehicles."

Township and county snowplows don't go into Crown Hill when it snows. The families chip in \$20 apiece to have their roads plowed by a private plow driver.

Zuba uses his own snowthrower to clean the 300 feet of Farm View Drive between West Eighth Street and the end of his property. It takes him half a day.

"If nothing is done, we should hire a lawyer, go to the courthouse and have our property taxes put in escrow until the road is fixed," Zuba said. "You can do this legally, as long as you keep on paying your taxes. It's legal."

Crown Hill resident Joe O'Donnell has complained to the supervisors, the county, the media, to anyone who will listen.

Like other residents, he wants to see the road made passable and maintained.

O'Donnell and other residents plan to "storm" the October 4 supervisors' meeting to try to get the situation rectified.

Unfortunately, nothing can be done until the issue of who actually owns Crown Hill's roads is resolved.

Luzerne County Engineer Jim Brozema said that the county "inherited" Crown Hill's roads by default after a tax sale several years ago.

"This was a clever undertaking, in which someone deeded the whole subdivision, except for certain lots outlined on an attached map, to a corporation," he said. "The corporation then allowed the property to go for tax sale."

No one knew that the subdivision, except for certain lots, was really three roads.

Brozema said that because the roads were described as "parcels of land in Crown Hill Village" and not as roads, his office only found out that the county owned the roads in early summer.

"They aren't officially listed on the county road docket," he said. "They're on a repository list, means that no one officially holds them. Because of liability problems, we can't take care of them until it is determined whose responsibility they are."

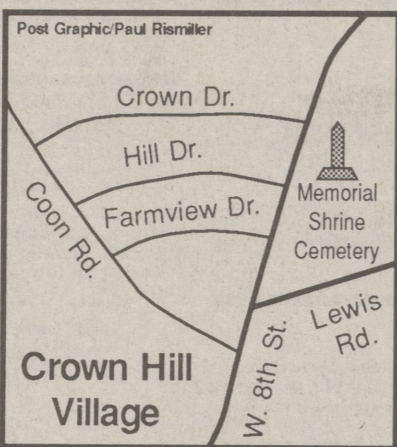
The supervisors say that they will accept responsibility for them when Luzerne County brings them up to specifications.

Brozema said that he is willing to bring the three roads up to "minimum Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) specifications" if the township will accept them after the work is finished.

There is a great difference of opinion between the two as to what these specifications are.

Brozema said that minimum PennDOT specifications are an 18-foot wide gravel roadway, cov-

ered with six inches of crushed stone. Depending on the condition of the roads, the job could cost roughly \$15,000 and could take at least two weeks, he said.



**DISPUTED ROADS** - These three Franklin Township roads in the Crown Hill Village development, Crown Drive, Hill Drive and Farm View Drive, will be a hot topic at the October 4 Franklin Township supervisors' meeting.

Franklin Township supervisor Tim Dymond said that the township's by-laws allow it to accept only paved roads.

The township's minimum standards for local roads are a 20-foot right-of-way and paving which meets PennDOT specifications.

according to township zoning officer Art Owen.

"The county owns the roads. Their problem is to bring them up to our standards. A 16-foot wide dirt road isn't enough," said supervisor and township roadmaster Andy Prebola.

He explained that dirt roads are dusty, requiring the township to apply calcium to them during dry periods to keep the dust down.

"In Crown Hill there are lots of kids," Prebola said. "If they were to fall off their bikes on the road before the calcium settles into the dirt, they could get a nasty burn. Calcium can be very dangerous material."

He added that Crown Hill's original plan called for 50-foot-wide roads, which gives Luzerne County "plenty of room" to pave a 20-foot right-of-way and install drainage work and berms.

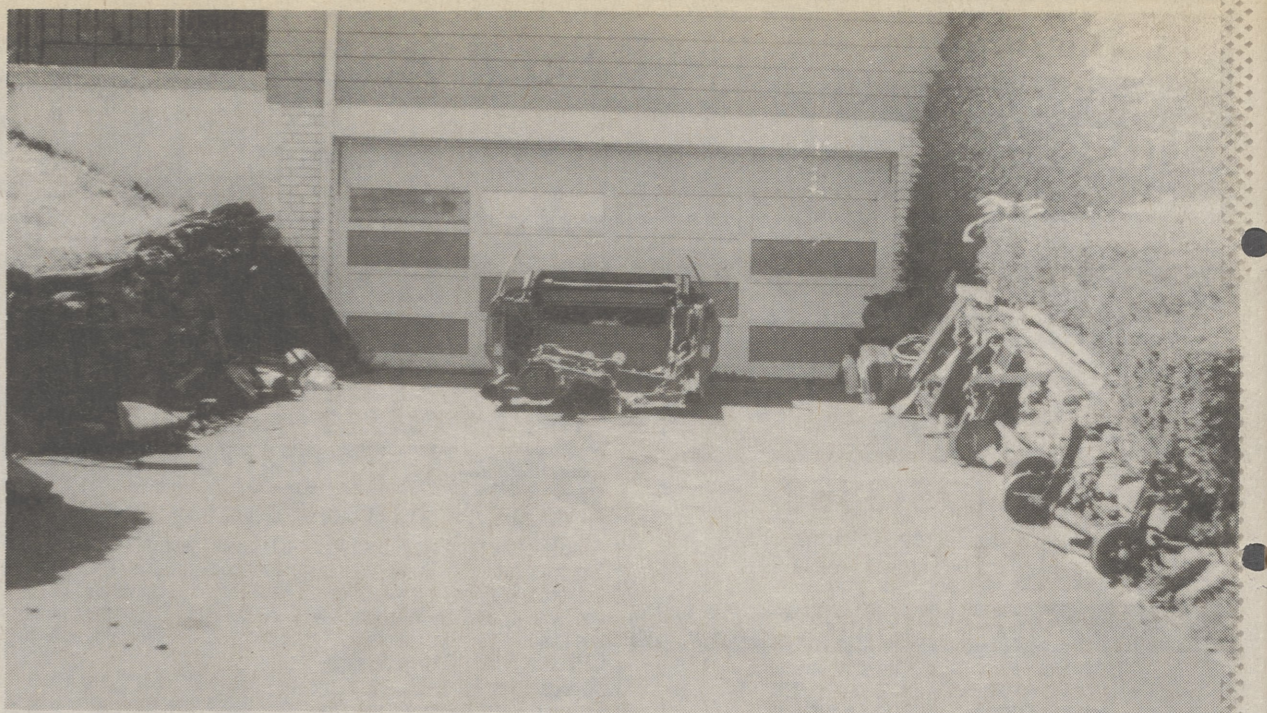
"We're within our rights to ask the county to bring the roads up to our standards," Prebola said. "If they do that, we might accept them. We can't afford to pave them ourselves. It's kind of a ticklish situation."

"We're willing to work with the county on this, but this isn't our fault," Dymond said. "If these are county roads, why are people going after the township?"

"We would be happy with a good gravel road, as long as Franklin township maintains it," Zuba said. "Right now I'll take anything."



**PROBLEM ROAD** - Crown Hill Village resident Walter Baseski and his friend, Lady, show one of the many deep gullies in the development's three roads.



**HOBBY OR BUSINESS?** - Oak Hill residents complain that Kurt Schneider is operating an auto body business at his home, where half a car and various large automotive parts can be seen in the driveway.

**Oak Hill**

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on the roadway in front of Schneider's house.

Sunday, a white Volkswagen Golf was parked in the driveway. No one responded to several rings of the doorbell.

At the vacant Smith residence next door, a rollback tow truck with a green body, a light gray car, a gray van with a crumpled passenger-side door and a light-colored van with noticeable damage to the tops of the driver's side doors were parked under the carport.

"I'm a hobbyist," Schneider said. "I fix cars and drive them. I recently gave a Volkswagen Rabbit that I had fixed up to a preacher from Tennessee whose van had broken down. When I was a junior in high school, I had five cars."

Schneider's wife, Linda, said that she feels that she is being harassed. Other families in the neighborhood have businesses in their homes, some even with signs out front, she said.

Other neighbors also have many cars in their yards; others work on their own cars, she added.

Township supervisor David Sutton said at the September 20 meeting that he had gone to Schneider's home approximately 18 months ago after seeing a car advertised for sale there. "I wanted a car for my daughter, but didn't realize at the time that he was running an auto body business there," he said. "He said that he would give me until a certain date to make up my mind, but after that, he was planning to take the car to an auction."

As a result of the September 20 supervisors' meeting and further investigation, zoning officer Barbara Simms said Monday night that she would prepare a notice of violation.

Zoning hearing board solicitor Jack Haley explained that a notice of violation is the first step; if Schneider continues to operate a business from his home, the matter would go before the district magistrate as a civil com-

plaint. "You don't have a rollback, lots of pieces of cars lying around and dealers' plates for a backyard hobby," Haley said.

If the magistrate finds the defendant guilty, there is a fine of up to \$500 per day for continued violations, Haley said.

An appeal of the magistrate's ruling or further violations would

bring the matter before the Luzerne County Court of Common Pleas to be decided, Haley said.

"It's an unsightly thing to have in a neighborhood," Yoniski said. "The bottom line is that if this kind of thing is allowed to happen, it will increase. You start with one, two or three cars - where's the cutoff point?"

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