

Clearcut

(continued from page 1)

about it," asked Tupper. "But how can this happen?"

According to Len Kozick, Tax Collector and Zoning Officer for Dallas Township, the property was part of what was commonly called the old McHenry estate. For generations the property has been wooded with meandering trails. Kozick said Thomas Dombroski now owns the property.

Kozick said Dombroski isn't required to submit plans to the township to cut down trees, until he wants to either sell portions of the property off or construct something on it.

"He wants to develop it into building lots, he hasn't filed anything with the township," Kozick said.

Kozick said tax maps indicate that Dombroski also owns the township park, but, he said, he didn't feel that could be accurate.

The concerned neighbors say with the trees being cut down, the neighborhood suffers more than just an aesthetic loss. They said for generations children in the area have spent much of their time in the woods riding bikes on the trails and catching crawdads in a stream. Many families enjoyed simply walking on trails under the trees.

Also disturbing to the residents is the resulting devastation to wildlife. At any given time, they said a fawn and doe can be seen wandering around the now-cleared area and hawks circling as they search for their nests.

In addition, most of the cleared area is on the side of a hill at the bottom of which is a stream that feeds into Toby's Creek. The residents raised the concern of erosion from the hill into the stream.

Mark Carmon, DEP spokesperson, said at this point no permits are required from DEP. If at some point the developer needs to go into the stream or build a road over the stream, permits would be needed. He did add that clearing trees so near a stream may require that the developer obtain an erosion and sedimentation plan from the Luzerne County Conservation District prior to clearing.

Such a permit is designed to prevent or minimize erosion into the stream, he said.

"With rain like we've been having they could get soil washing off (the hill) and impacting the stream," Carmon said.

Dombroski said he purchased the nine acres two years ago. He said the property was already divided into nine parcels approximately 100'

".. it doesn't seem like we live in the same place anymore."

Bob Tupper
Sago Street resident

wide by 200' deep when he bought it.

In response to residents' concerns about the trees being cut down Dombroski said, "(That property) has been up for sale for 10 years. If someone wanted to buy it, they could have."

He said after paying taxes and insurance on the property for the past two years, it had become time to do something with it.

"You can't expect people to hold onto land for the birds and the bees," he said.

Dombroski said he cleared the property to get it ready for sale. He said he intends to sell each plot, filled and ready to build on, for \$35,000.

There is a portion of the property from where Route 309 and Sago Street meet, up to the first road off of Sago, that he said is considered a park. Dombroski said there may be one tree in there he intends to cut out for lumber, but the rest he plans to donate to the township. He also said he doesn't intend to cut any trees at the other end of the property, near the township's park.

Dombroski said he has offered the property to a resident of the community for a reduced price and that the price will be effective for any interested person from the community. He conceded that he would perhaps make more money by selling each property individually, but that the cost of preparing the lots for sale is expected to be high.

In the meantime, the group of residents just wants to see the cutting stopped. There are a few trees left at the top of the property along Sago Street and they would like to see them stay there.

Kristy Taylor, who lives across from the property, said she would love to see the land purchased by someone in the community who would return it to the way it was.

"You're looking at it all cut down, but you know what guys? It can be replanted. We can save the stream and we can replant," she told the group of residents.

"Maybe it doesn't look like much to some people, but it was a nice place to go," said Tupper.



Loggers removed lumber from the former McHenry estate along Sago Street in Dallas Township last week. The land has been clearcut in anticipation as sale for building lots.

POST PHOTO/
RON BARTIZEK

Wildlife are displaced when trees are cut

By ERIN YOUNGMAN
Post Staff

DALLAS TWP. — Clearcutting trees affects more than just the view from neighboring picture windows.

"There's a lot more at stake than anyone realizes," said Joe Wenzel, Conservation Officer and Education Supervisor for the Northeast Region of the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

It's a story Wenzel said he's heard time and time again. The clearcutting of acres of trees, the disbelief of the local residents and obvious loss of habitat for the area's wildlife.

"People don't give it much consideration until it happens in their own backyard," he said.

When residents around Sago Street in Dallas Township saw century old trees being cut down on the old McHenry estate property, they said they called just about every agency they could think of to find out if the cutting was legal, from

I've read enough literature to know that the rapid rate of destruction of property is an astronomical figure in PA."

Joe Wenzel, Conservation Officer
Pennsylvania Game Commission

the Department of Environmental Protection to the Department of Forestry.

Wenzel is not able to offer much assurance. "There's nothing we can do as an agency, to stop something like that and there's nothing we can do for the wildlife," he said.

"In Pennsylvania unless there's particular restrictions on the property, these people can do whatever they want to the land."

Residents have said the wildlife is conspicuously displaced and they are alarmed at the sight of large and small animals wandering the area looking confused.

"When someone applies for a

the local ecosystem.

"This happens every day in Pennsylvania. I've read enough literature to know that the rapid rate of destruction of property is an astronomical figure in PA," Wenzel said.

Wenzel remembers when the area that is now the First Union Arena was cleared and four bears that lived there didn't know quite what to do.

He said for some time the bears hung around the work site. He would receive calls from concerned people who asked him if he could relocate the bears.

He would say to them, "What do you want me to do with them? This is their home."

He said just as in the case on Sago Street, most of the time there is no way to move the affected animals.

He said eventually animals will relocate, if they are able to do so. "It's basically move or be eaten," he added.

"It sounds like gloom and doom, and really it is."

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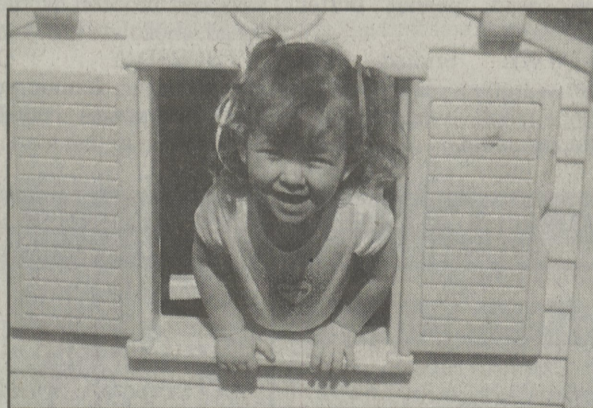
Moore and Wyda married

Hilda Moore, Dallas, and Thomas Wyda, Tunkhannock, were recently married at East Dallas U.M. Church.

The ceremony was performed by Rev. Larry Michael-Rush. An open house will be held August 23 from 2 to 6 p.m. at the bride's home, 1336 Ransom Rd., Dallas.

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