

## HERMITAGE

### Low bidder out, 2nd gets contract

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By Joe Pinchot

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A Hermitage company withdrew its bid for a city stream rehabilitation project after city officials called into question whether it could be allowed to build a project it had designed.

Wallace & Pancher Inc. submitted a bid of \$108,025, the lowest of five, to work on Indian Run from North Hermitage Road between Walgreens and Hermitage Middle School to the west, behind Hermitage Elementary School. The company had performed both functions on a previous rehabilitation of another section of Indian Run.

City officials started looking into whether a designer could also be a contractor, and solicitor Thomas W. Kuster found a law that forbids it, said city Community Planner Jeremy P. Coxe. City officials disqualified Wallace & Pancher, and then the company withdrew its bid, Coxe said.

City commissioners on Wednesday hired the company that submitted the second lowest bid, Environ-Air Tech of Cooperstown, Pa., on a bid of \$142,639, to rehab 1,200 feet of stream. Commissioners also awarded an alternate bid to rehab another 600 feet, bringing the total contract award to \$170,749. Wallace & Pancher had bid a total of \$133,286.

The city has a \$95,000 state grant, a \$19,000 Walgreens contribution and \$135,000 from a bond issue for the work, which had been estimated to cost more than \$230,000. Stream rehabilitation includes excavating the channel so that it meanders and has sloped banks, and adding impediments to pool and slow water and create flood plains. Water-loving plants are planted to hold soil in place.

The city previously rehabbed two other sections of the stream, and the Hermitage School District rehabbed a portion behind its property.