

## HERMITAGE

# Construction nears on widening of Maple Drive

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By Joe Pinchot

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A long-gestating project to upgrade the intersection at East State Street, Maple Drive and Dutch Lane in Hermitage appears to be close to construction. Bids have been opened and PennDOT and the city are working out additional details.

City officials announced in 2006 plans for the upgrade, which includes widening Maple Drive as it approaches the intersection to add a left-turn lane onto State, and received a PennDOT grant of federal money for the project.

"It was a long process of engineering because we had to comply with ever-changing ADA regulations," said Hermitage Community Planner Jeremy P Coxe, referring to the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The project also will include pedestrian landings at the corners with handicapped-accessible curb cuts, short sidewalks, and new traffic signals and crosswalk striping.

PennDOT opened five bids July 15, and Kirila Contractors Inc., Brookfield, submitted the apparent low bid, \$432,747. PennDOT had estimated construction would cost \$480,000. A PennDOT spokeswoman said she thought a contract had been awarded, but referred questions to Coxe. Coxe said he had not been informed of a contract award. It typically takes four to six weeks from a bid opening for PennDOT to award a project, he said.

Construction likely will start in late August or early September, Coxe said. On Wednesday, commissioners recommended that PennDOT hire Herbert, Rowland and Grubic, Hermitage, the project engineer, to inspect construction. Five other companies also submitted proposals. If PennDOT concurs with HRG, the parties will negotiate fees.

The city will pay for 20 percent of construction, engineering and inspection, with PennDOT paying the rest. The total cost is expected to be about \$600,000, with PennDOT contributing \$480,000, and the city \$120,000.