

Will Hasler Valley Road be extended to Church Rock?

Written by By Michael Daly Guest Columnist
Friday, 25 June 2021 05:39



The White Cliffs Mutual Domestic Water Users Association was represented along with several local people in asking the McKinley County Commission for roadway improvements at their June 15 meeting.

There has been a long-term plan to extend White Cliffs Road from Gallup to Church Rock and the City of Gallup several years ago acquired a 120 foot wide right-of-way for the entire project. But the project has not advanced. A three lane road, with one lane in each direction and a center turn lane was suggested.

White Cliffs advocates, noting that the state of New Mexico just acquired what amounts to more than two times the state's annual budget from the federal government for economic development, raised their voices and asked that some of that development occur there. The representative from the water users association also noted that billions of dollars are to be spent by the state and federal governments over the next few years and pointed out that well-organized development plans should receive top consideration.

They asked the County to consider taking the lead to design a three lane road, in conjunction with the City of Gallup, from Ford Drive at the Community Pantry all the way to Church Rock. In addition to the roadway, they asked for further infrastructure development in the White Cliffs area itself.

They reviewed the progress made over the last two decades with an award-winning water supply, a properly located and functioning wastewater system, natural gas coming to the community, and a new 50,000 gallon water storage tank now ready for construction. And they pointed out that residents took the initiative to acquire a continuous 30 foot wide right-of-way on White Cliffs Road to accommodate water, sewer, and natural gas facilities, and they are trying

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to convince their neighbors across the street to also dedicate enough room to allow the County to pave the road.

State Representative D. Wonda Johnson, D-McKinley, San Juan, who represents White Cliffs, discussed her continued support for the water system and strongly encouraged the County Commission to extend Hasler Valley Road to Church Rock, saying it is a needed alternative to the two-lane road that runs by the casino.

Long-time resident Vesta Hasler Henry asked the County to pave County Road 43, Superman Canyon. Then realtor Elizabeth Muñoz spoke about the need for affordable housing and the suitability of the White Cliffs area with its magnificent view of the Red Rocks. A number of other White Cliffs area residents came to listen.

County Commissioner Robert Baca, Dist. 3, said he supported the project and asked if the thought had been to clean up the contamination from the salvage yards. The White Cliffs representative said at this point no thought had been given to that.

Commissioner Genevieve Jackson, Dist. 2, expressed general support for the project.

One of the commissioners asked about the possibility of addressing the subject of speeders on a long straightaway. The commission has taken the request under advisement.

By Michael Daly
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