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Road widening plans raise fears

Residents worried project will decrease property values

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HAMILTON — A truck riding down a steep, slick driveway, out of sight to drivers around the curve, has the makings of a traffic accident.

But that's the way it will be if

Butler County engineers don't modify their plan for widening Cincinnati-Dayton Road, said West Chester Township property owner Dick Clarke.

Plus, Clarke said, the widening will place the property, Clarke Inc. waste hauling at 9640 Cincinnati-Dayton Road, at steeper elevation, diminishing its value.

The county engineer's office, he said, refuses to fairly compensate him for that adverse impact. Neither, Clarke said, is it offering

a fair deal on the 21 feet at the front of his property to be taken by eminent domain to make way for a \$3 million project to widen Cincinnati-Dayton Road to three lanes from West Crescentville Road to West Chester Road.

Clarke has denied the engineer's offer, but the government still has the power to take land for a public use.

"They are creating an unsafe condition," said Clarke, who in 1980 started the business his

son now owns. "The drive that enters into the road will be twice as steep. With the momentum of a big truck, once they break traction, they just keep on sliding."

State Sen. Gary Cates, R-West Chester Township, said the engineers are doing the "minimum" to address Clarke's concerns and appealed to the county commissioners Monday to see what can be done. Cates added it will be difficult for Clarke to move because relocating a waste hauling business would

require unpopular zone changes.

"(Engineers) focus more on the property they are acquiring than the property they leave behind,"

Commissioner Michael Fox said.

The commissioners suggested Cates talk with the county engineer and consider addressing in eminent domain legislation the adverse impact on private property left behind.

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