

WEST LAFAYETTE OFFICIALS HOSTING OPEN HOUSES ON PROPOSED STORMWATER FEE ORDINANCE

West Lafayette, IN – December 12, 2012 – With a proposed stormwater fee ordinance being considered by the West Lafayette City Council, City officials will host two open house events to give residents an opportunity to learn more about the ordinance. Both events will be Tuesday, December 18 in the Council Chambers in City Hall with the first one from 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. and the second one from 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

According to City Engineer Dave Buck, with a daytime and evening opportunity, officials hope a large number of community members will attend to learn more about the proposed ordinance and how it could affect them, if passed early next year.

“If the Council approves the ordinance and a fee is adopted, bills would not start until 2014, giving everyone affected a year to budget and plan for the expense.

“Both open house events will cover the same information where we plan to outline the details within the proposed ordinance and the reasons why a stormwater fee has become necessary. We look forward to answering everyone’s questions,” Buck said.

The proposed fee would apply to all property owners who connect or otherwise benefit from the City’s Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) with the funds collected paying for mandated system expenses.

According to Buck, the City currently is paying for these required expenses with other City funds, but continuing to use those funds will begin to delay capital improvement projects.

“So far, we have been using other City funds to pay for the repair, replacement, planning, improvement, operation, regulation, and maintenance of the MS4 and general storm water run-off management. The proposed fee option of \$8 per month would pay for these federally mandated costs and allow funds for much-needed capital improvements,” Buck explained.

In the proposed plan, each parcel that directly or indirectly contributes to the City’s stormwater system would be charged a fee based on the presence or measure of impervious surface (hard surfaces and surfaces that generate run-off). Impervious areas include but are not limited to roofs, parking areas, private drives and concrete pads. Each parcel or property would be classified as residential or non-residential.

All properties having impervious surface areas within the City limits would be assigned an Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU), with all properties assigned a minimum of one ERU, which equals 3,200 square feet. Residential properties (single-family homes or duplexes) would be assessed a monthly service charge for stormwater service of one ERU, as a flat rate.

Non-residential properties would be assessed a monthly service charge based on the total number of ERUs that encompass the measured impervious surface area. The total ERUs for a property would be calculated by dividing the total square footage of the measured impervious surface area by 3,200 square feet.

City Councilors voted in favor of the proposed ordinance on the first reading at their December 3 meeting. Plans call for the second reading, public hearing, and final vote to occur on Monday, January 7, 2013.

If adopted, funds collected from this fee could not revert to any other City utilities or to the City’s General Fund and may not be transferred for any other purpose other than to pay for the operation and maintenance of the MS4.

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For questions or interview requests, contact Dave Buck at 765-775-5130.