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Phone/Fax:
(217) 283-9348
Email:
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Wednesday, December 4, 2002
Hoopeston's only locally-owned daily news publication

P.O. Box 441, Hoopeston, IL. 60942 **www.justthefacts.net**

Aldermen hear plan for environmental grant application

An environmental study may be done on the former Carnival Video site, along with Baer's Motel and Trailer Park.

The Hoopeston City Council on Tuesday heard a presentation from representatives of Envirogen, a St. Charles-based environmental services and consulting company on applying for an Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Brownfields Redevelopment grant.

The grants are for redevelopment of areas with environmental problems. Money pays for an historic investigation and intrusive action, such as soil and water samples, but does not pay for above-ground problems.

Under Envirogen's plan, the city would pay the company 30 percent of a "worst case" \$50,000, said Jason Minalga, Envirogen environmental specialist. Envirogen would complete the application and submit it to the state for free. If the city gets a grant and turns it down or if one is not awarded, Envirogen would receive no money.

It is only during the historic survey of the property and intrusive action that the company would be paid, Minalga said.

The one-time grant has a \$240,000 cap. The city must pay 30 percent of costs through cash or in-kind contributions, he said.

Services set for boys killed in fire; donations needed for family

Funeral services have been set for two boys who died in a trailer fire Sunday.

A funeral Mass for Michael Escamilla, four, and Jose Villarreal, two, will be held at 11 a.m. Thursday at St. Anthony Catholic Church. Burial will be in Floral Hill Cemetery.

Visitation will be 9:30-10:30 a.m. Thursday at Wolfe Funeral Home, Hoopeston.

The boys were the sons of Jose Villarreal and Mayra Escamilla.

Previous grants paid for only Phase I and II work; however, a change in the law will make the final phase - remediation costs - eligible as well, he said.

The former video store, which had been a gas station, had leaking underground storage tanks. Whether the other properties have environmental problems would be determined during the first two phases, said Mike Monteith of Envirogen.

Before applying, the city must get access agreements from property owners. Community Bank, which owns the former video store, has expressed interest. Permission for the motel and trailer park must be received from guardians of owner Ora Baer.

The council had discussed a similar grant with its engineers Dailey & Associates but did not apply because aldermen were told the cost would be \$2,000 but that amount jumped to \$16,000, said Mayor Chalmers Flint.

The council will vote on the proposal on Dec. 17.

In unrelated action, the council:

- approved resignations of Alderman Don York and plan commission member Dick Smith.
- expressed sympathy to the family of former building inspector Leon Goodrum who died Tuesday.
- learned the city website should be up in two weeks.

A memorial fund has been established at Community Bank. The Hoopeston Multi Agency is also accepting donations of clothing and household items for the adults who lived in the trailer.

Mayra Escamilla wears size 5-6 pants and medium shirts. Estelle Romero wears size 11-12 pants and large shirts. Reyes Mendoza wears size 34 pants and large shirts.

Items may be taken to the Multi Agency, 206 S. First Ave.

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