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Louridine Florek, Owner

Thursday, August 20, 2020

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Building owner dies from injuries, mayor issues emergency order

Mayor Bill Crusinberry announced Tuesday that he has issued an emergency order concerning the former Hoopeston Plumbing and Heating Building at 219 S. Market.

The north wall of the building collapsed the evening of August 1, sending bricks cascading into the alley. Building owner, Brian Suiter, who was working in the building, was injured in the collapse and was taken to Carle Foundation Hospital, Urbana. He died August 15 of injuries received in the building failure, Crusinberry said.

In his order, Crusinberry outlines the building's long history of neglect and subsequent decay and the danger it poses to pedestrian and vehicular traffic. "Due to the apparent instability of the structure, the collapse of portions of the interior, and danger of further collapse, I will not allow city employees or others to enter the building for any reason," the order states.

Crusinberry plans to have the remainder of the north wall pushed into the building to avoid further collapse. "Hopefully, (Mr. Suiter's) family will contact me about what they want to do with that property and we'll go from there," he said.

The state of downtown buildings has been a point of discussion in coffee shops and on social media since the collapse. Ald. Robin Lawson said she has been approached by many residents whose basic question is "NOW are you going to take these down?"

Lawson said residents want the council "take another look at how hard we're looking to get those buildings downtown down." She said she also realizes the city doesn't want to pay for it. "We all know we don't want to pay for it. We know that."

Crusinberry said the issue isn't that the city doesn't want to, but cannot afford to. "It's really easy to say 'Why isn't the city doing something about it,'" he said. "The buildings I've counted right now, we could be looking at over half a million dollars. The funds just aren't there.

Ald. Bill Goodwine said part of the problem is the ease

at which people can purchase buildings at the tax trustee sale. "You pay \$600," he said. "If it falls down, you walk away from it."

Ald. Louridine Florek said that, judging by social media posts, the buildings are a concern. She wondered if the city could set up an account where residents concerned about the buildings could contribute to help pay demolition costs.

Crusinberry said another \$10 per month fee could be added to the water bill to pay for demolition. Resident Jerry Hopkins, at the meeting to address a different building complaint, said if the council approved such a fee, "I'll be back next week and I'll bring 30 people with me."

Crusinberry responded that taxpayers will foot the bill "one way or another."

In other discussion, Crusinberry said the Downtown Motel has new owners, who came to city hall to see if the building had any violations, causing the audience and the council to chuckle. Crusinberry said the new owner probably decided to purchase the hotel based on a picture on the internet from "about 15 years ago," and doesn't show the motel in its current shape. "He also wants us to recommend contractors," the mayor added.

Crusinberry said he was put in contact with a licensed building inspector, who has talked to him about a vacant building ordinance and rental registration ordinance, both of which could help reduce the number of abandoned and dilapidated buildings in the future.

In other discussion, Crusinberry said an engineer kerfuffle will push back work on the Thompson St. resurfacing project.

In July, the council approved a proposal from Donohue & Associates engineering of Champaign to partner with Cummings Engineering Cummings Engineering Corp., of Springfield. Donahue wanted to partner because Cummings has more experience in federal contracts. While Cummings verbally indicated a willingness to partner, the

See MAYOR on other side

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Mayor continued from other side

company chose not to, Crusinberry said.

Instead, Donohue will seek requests for qualifications from engineering firms and the city will choose one, much like it would accept a bid for a service.

The glitch means construction would not begin until early in 2022, he said.

In other business, the council:

- Heard from Ald. Carl Ankenbrand that a final draft of an ordinance, which would allow residents to raise chickens, is completed. It will be posted at cityofhoopeston.com residents may look at it prior to council action.
- Approved not holding bulk garbage day on Saturday, Sept. 5, during the Labor Day weekend.
- Heard from Florek that the splash pad will be open at least through Labor Day weekend, but may be extended beyond that, depending on the weather.

Weather

Sunny today. High 80. Tonight, clear. Low 56. Tomorrow, sunny. High 84, low 59.

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Obituaries

SAVAGE - Marshall Savage, 77, of Milford, died at 2:30 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 11, 2020, at home. Graveside service will be held at 11 a.m. Monday at Floral Hill Cemetery, Hoopeston. Memorials are suggested to donor's choice. Anderson Funeral Home, Hoopeston, is handling arrangements. Condolences may be left and www.anderson-funeral-home.com.

SUITER - Brian C. Suiter, 63, of Milford, died Saturday, Aug. 15, 2020, at Carle Foundation Hospital, Urbana. The family will host a private service at a later date. Memorials are suggested to P.A.W.S. Williamson Funeral Home in Jacksonville is assisting the family. Condolences may be left online at www.Airsman-Hires.com.

Classifieds

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House cleaner needed. A couple hours per week or as needed. Must be dependable. (217) 495-0162

Someone who knows how to work on cars and do handyman work a few hours a week, as needed. Must be dependable. (217) 597-7112

East Lynn Fertilizer is seeking full time and seasonal help. Requirements include at least a Class B CDL and ability to pass a drug test. Call 217-375-4225 or stop by 41284 S Main St., East Lynn, IL for more details.

Part time dishwasher and server positions. Must be available nights and weekends. Pick up application in person at Rossville Family Restaurant.

Full-Time RN, send resume to Director@AutumnFieldsHoopeston.com.

Part-time Maintenance, 12 hours per week. Inquire by calling Autumn Fields Adult Community - Hoopeston at 217-283-2222.

Kitchen and delivery persons needed. Apply in person at Pizza King 111 E Main St., Hoopeston.

Teasdale Latin Foods has immediate openings on 2nd shift in both Distribution and Manufacturing. Pay to be determined based on experience level. Stop by the Human Resources office at 215 W. Washington Street, Hoopeston, for more detail. Please no phone calls.

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