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Just the Facts

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Louridine Florek, Owner

Thursday, December 10, 2020

Hoopeston's only locally-owned daily news publication!

P. O. Box 441, Hoopeston IL 60942

www.justthefacts.net

Panel of experts on fighting property blight discuss issue with Hoopeston City Council

Experts in dealing with blighted properties met remotely with Hoopeston aldermen Tuesday evening to discuss ways the city can fight the problem.

Mike Davis, Central Illinois Land Bank executive director, Brent Denzin, partner in the Chicago-based law firm Denzin Soltanzadeh LLC, and David Biggerstaff, owner of First Home Inspection, of Catlin, urged the council to adopt the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC).

Enacting the code would benefit Hoopeston in two ways: making it easier to get grant money to address blighted properties and also intervene before properties get to the level where legal action - such as ordinance citations - are required.

Davis said Hoopeston is currently being considered for an Illinois Housing Development Authority grant for several blighted properties. Because Hoopeston has agreed to spend up to \$50,000 and Hoopeston Retirement Village Foundation has agreed to kick in up to \$100,000, Hoopeston stands a good chance of getting a grant, Davis said. While that would help the current problem, "Ten years later, you could have another wave," he said, adding funding agencies don't look favorably on that.

Denzin explained that IPMC allows municipalities to have a point of intervention with residents whose property has signs of the beginning stages of blight, such as grass that "looks like a wild wheat field," a roof in need of repair, and others.

A code enforcement officer is able to meet with the

residents, determine their situation and make suggestions, including the possibility of getting a grant to make needed repairs.

Biggerstaff, who will be the code enforcement officer for several Vermilion County communities, said the code is helpful to elected officials, who may have difficulty separating themselves from residents who have deteriorating properties but who are friends and neighbors. Officials develop "blight blindness," he said.

While nuisance ordinances are reactive to existing problems, the IPMC sets a base standard and allows community leaders to be proactive. "Conversations will take care of 70-80 percent of these problems," he said, "but you need tools for the other 30 percent."

Davis said the code allows communities to save

homes. He cited the example of a couple who dies and leaves their home to their children, who don't want the home, don't take care of it and don't pay the property taxes. Rather than wait until the home is falling in, the code, combined with ordinances, can allow a city to take action early on, allowing the structure to be rehabilitated and sold, instead of using taxpayer dollars to demolish it.

Ald. Bill Goodwine questioned the code, asking, "How early does Big Brother step in?"

Denzin replied that, "You're not picking house colors. You're not telling people they can't have a tire swing in their front yard." But a rusted-out car in the front yard may be something the community doesn't want as a standard.

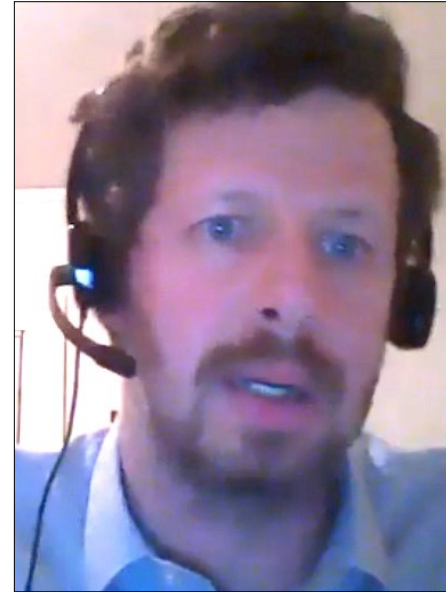
See BLIGHT on other side



BIGGERSTAFF



DENZIN



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Obituaries

BERTRAM - Porter K. Bertram, 79, of Milford, died Friday, Nov. 27, 2020, at Iroquois Memorial Hospital, Watseka. Graveside service will be at 11 a.m. Saturday at Sugar Creek Cemetery, Stockland, with military rites by Watseka American Legion. Memorials are suggested to Milford Fire Department, Milford Christian Church, or to his granddaughter, Megan Bertram. Knapp Funeral Home, Milford, is handling arrangements. Condolences may be left at www.knappfuneralhomes.com.

CAWTHORN - Marian June (Smith) Cawthorn, 90, of Hoopeston, died at 1:15 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 6, 2020, at Carle Hoopeston Regional Health Center. Private family graveside service will be held at Floral Hill Cemetery, Hoopeston. Memorials are suggested to Hoopeston Animal Rescue Team, 901 W. Main St.,

Blight continued from other side

“It’s not the government’s job to step in and tell people how to live their lives,” he said. But at some point, deterioration has to be addressed, again stressing that it would “minimize the burden” on taxpayers.

Goodwine questioned how a property code would work internationally. “That means it’s also written for China, for Afghanistan, for Russia,” he said.

“It’s really been modeled for the American market,” Denzin said, adding the code is a starting point that communities use as a baseline, adding and subtracting parts to make it fit their needs.

Davis said ridding a community of blight is an on-going process. “You don’t go all-out Day 1,” he said.

Briefly

Meetings

Village of Rossville police, health and safety committee meeting, 5 p.m. Thursday, village office. Agenda items include review/approve policies and procedures and discussion on purchasing new vests for full time officers.

Court Dispositions

November 18

Joshua J. Fiala, Hoopeston, failed to appear at initial appearance for theft, found guilty by default, fined \$180; status hearing December 9.

Tyler C. Griffin, Hoopeston, pleaded not guilty at initial appearance for theft; trial December 9.

Hoopeston IL 60942. Anderson Funeral Home, Hoopeston, is handling arrangements. Condolences may be left at www.anderson-funeral-home.com.

MATHEWS - Joann Ruth (Cronkhite) Matthews, 74, of Crawfordsville, Ind., died at 7:35 a.m. Friday, Dec. 4, 2020, at home. Graveside service will be at 1 p.m. Friday at Floral Hill Cemetery, Hoopeston. Face masks and social distancing are requested of those who attend. Memorials are suggested to donor’s choice. Anderson Funeral Home, Hoopeston, is handling arrangements. Condolences may be left at www.anderson-funeral-home.com.

MOWREY - Harriet M. (Callahan) Mowrey, 80, of Stockland, died Monday, Dec. 7, 2020, at Riverside Medical Center, Kankakee. Private funeral service will be held at Milford Christian Church. Burial will

“You slowly ratchet things up.” The first step is the code, which can be followed up with stricter ordinances, rental registration and other steps.

Bill Nicholls, who represents Hoopeston on the land bank board, said it was not until he joined the board that he began to notice blight. “I had blight blindness, too,” he said. He urged the council to use the tool to help fix the problem and not “kick the can down the road like we have.”

From the Blotter

Jordan Davis-Ervin, 29, of Hoopeston, was arrested after police were called at 12:15 a.m. Tuesday the 200 block of North Market for a civil disturbance. Once there, they found a man laying in the road who appeared to have been battered.

Davis-Ervin was located, charged with aggravated battery and taken to the Public Safety Building in Danville to await arraignment.

A **driver’s license** belonging to Damien C. Gray was dropped in the water payment box at city hall. Gray may contact the police station to make arrangements to get his license.

Weather

Sunny today. High 52. Tonight, partly cloudy. Low 35. Tomorrow, mostly cloudy, rain late. High 48, low 39.

For real time Hoopeston weather, visit justthefacts.net/weather/.

follow in Sugar Creek Cemetery, Stockland. A celebration of her life will be held at a later date. Memorials are suggested to Milford Swimming Pool or Mil-

ford Christian Church. Knapp Funeral Home, Milford, is handling arrangements. Condolences may be left at www.knappfuneralhomes.com.

Classifieds

APARTMENTS FOR RENT

Large 2 bedroom upstairs apartment, washer & dryer room, new flooring many updates. \$500 month 217-495-2274

HELP WANTED

Hoopeston Area CUSD #11 has openings for the following positions:

Bus Aide Hours 8:10-9:40 and 11:50-2:40

Paraprofessionals

Applications are available online at Hoopeston Area CUSD's website, www.hoopeston.k12.il.us, or may be picked up at the District Office.

Part time maintenance person for properties in Hoopeston. Mon.-Fri. and on call. 20-25 hours/week, starting at 9 a.m. \$15-\$16 per hour. Candidate must have knowledge in the following: basic construction, HVAC (certification preferred), electrical, plumbing, painting, cleaning. Must have valid driver’s license, auto insurance and reliable transportation; have own tools and pass background check. Send resume to pmeadows@thinkcrestline.com

Full-Fill Industries Henning, IL, is offering many job opportunities for full-time, with a full benefit package, and part-time positions. 1st and 2nd shifts available. Choose the schedule that fits your lifestyle - work 1, 2, or 3 days a week. Candidates must be 18 years old, and you can pick your shift. Machine Operators are needed for 1st & 2nd shift.

We offer a part-time flexible work schedule for Moms & Dads who want to earn extra cash during school hours, with an. 8 am - 4:30 pm schedule to fit the needs of your family.

Please apply on-line at www.full-fill.com go to employment or employment opportunities and apply as indicated. EOE

Driver w/CDL needed. Home every night. Trips within 100 miles of Hoopeston. (217) 304-1943.

Autumn Fields of Hoopeston is looking for CNAs part time hours, every other weekend and shared holidays. Please call Autumn Fields @ 217-283-2222

KS*i* in Cissna Park is seeking a qualified Controls Technician for project site startups and in-field customer training for controls systems. The ideal candidate will possess excellent communication, electrical, technical, and troubleshooting skills. An understanding of PLCs and HMI applications is preferred. Travel is required. Apply online at www.ksiedge.com or send resume to hr@ksiedge.com.

Vermilion County Animal Shelter is hiring kennel workers, full and part time available! Email ksnyder@vercounty.org or visit www.vercounty.org/jobs_general.htm for an application.

Dogtown Heating, Air, & Plumbing is in search of an experienced HVAC technician to help serve our customers in the area. Pay based on experience. Health insurance, Life insurance, and 2 weeks paid vacation. We have a family atmosphere that serves our customers with honesty and integrity. Email brad.dogtown@gmail.com

Mechanic wanted. Experience with heavy truck, construction, and agricultural machinery preferred. Call 217-474-8349.

Cade’s Heating and Air HVAC installer/ service tech. must have valid IL drivers license and EPA freon license. Please send resume to ramcade@frontier.com or 101 E Penn St., Hoopeston IL 60942.

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.

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.

Aquality Solutions is looking for full-time delivery drivers skilled in efficiency, organization, and flexibility. Delivery Drivers will deliver bottled water and bagged salt to commercial and residential customers and must have knowledge or be willing to learn maintenance operations when not driving. Apply in person at 102 N 1st Street in Hoopeston or call us at 855-692-7824.

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3 bedroom 1 bath home, washer dryer room, large yard \$695 month call 217-495-2274

SERVICES

Winter storage for cars, boats and campers. Area completely enclosed. Call (217) 304-0928

SERVICES WANTED

Part time caregiver for elderly man with early dementia. Send resume to P.O. Box 85, East Lynn IL 60932 or email to publish@justthefacts.net.