



# New Castle Crier

The official newsletter of New Castle City

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New Castle, Delaware

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## Voters approve borrowing for stormwater projects in special election

In a special election held October 27, New Castle City voters overwhelmingly supported a measure to borrow funds to access Federal stimulus dollars for three separate stormwater projects. Tallies

showed 386 total votes cast, with 86 percent in favor of the borrowing and 14 percent against.

The total Federal loan amount is more than \$1.3 million for the three projects. The

City will benefit from half of the loan principal to be forgiven and the remaining half paid back at 2 percent interest over a five year period. That means voters approved a loan of a little more than \$660,000.

Another unique position of the current City Council is the intention to repay the entire loan without raising property taxes. Details of that plan were presented before residents at a public information meeting held a week before the vote. That plan includes a partnership to share funding costs between the City and the Trustees of the New Castle Common.

The City also anticipates satisfying two large annual obligations over the life of the loan. That includes a \$100,000 commitment to the New Castle Library capital expansion project and a \$100,000 payment to the Trustees for capital construction of the Public Safety Building.

City officials emphasized the importance of the projects, and that having this funding available under these terms is the best opportunity for badly needed work to be performed. All three projects are aimed at Drainage Improvements and Flooding and Water Pollution Control.

## 9th Annual Spirit of Christmas in Historic New Castle: Saturday, December 12

This year's Spirit of Christmas celebration features:

- private homes in Old New Castle, some dating as far back as the 1700s, and
- some of the finest music Delaware has to offer.

This event is presented by the New Castle Presbyterian Church and the New Castle Visitors Bureau. Doors at the Church open at 10 a.m. Additionally, many historic homes throughout the historic district of New Castle will be open from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The homes, including the Lesley Manor Mansion, will be open and free to the public. The day's celebration is capped off with the annual tree lighting ceremony on the Center Green at 5 p.m. (behind the Town Hall on Delaware Street).

Programs for self-guided home tours are available at the New Castle Presbyterian Church Christian Education Building on East Second Street, beginning at 9:30 a.m. The Spirit of Christmas 2009 will support the Corner House shelter for homeless men, a mission project of New Castle and Calvary Presbyterian Churches and the Friendship House.

Celebrations of Christmas and the holiday season will take place throughout New Castle, including the private homes and museums open to the public and decorated for the season. The Meeting House and Christian Education Building of the 352-year-old New Castle Presbyterian Church, 25 E. Second St., will host musical events throughout the day. Featured will be the fine art photography of Carlo Viola in new sets of greeting cards which will be available for purchase.

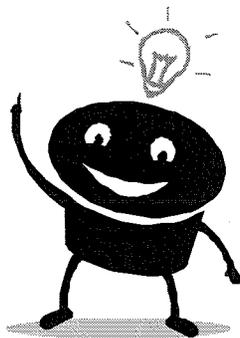
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# New Castle - The First Capital City!

# MSC kicks off "New Castle Cares Fund" with a letter to its customers

The Municipal Services Commission (MSC), the public utility which provides electric and water to properties within the City of New Castle, has teamed up with The Salvation Army to establish a fund to help residents of the City with their electric utility bills.

Letters, along with envelopes in which to place contributions, have been mailed to MSC customers.



*A bright idea!*

The Fund is designed to help those with a financial emergency, the elderly and handicapped, who have limited resources and need help to keep the lights on. The MSC has made a contribution to the fund and will continue

to support it through these tough economic times.

Extra contribution envelopes are available at the offices of the MSC at 216 Chestnut Street.

## Rezoning proposal presented to City Council

At the November Council meeting, representatives of the owner of the property formerly occupied by the Abex company presented a redevelopment proposal. That address is 610 W. 7th St., on the south side of Rte. 9 between Washington Ave. and the Dobbinsville subdivision.

The proposal is to build a 53,000 square foot church and 256 apartments in four buildings (two five stories high and two six stories high), and three retail commercial buildings varying in size from about 2,500 to 4,200 square feet. Also proposed is a development on the River side of the road made up of 30 condominiums.

The City Council did not act on the proposal. Instead, the

City will be engaging in a process to look at this redevelopment area as it has been envisioned in the new Comprehensive Plan. The result will be re-writing the City Code to match the Plan, including redrawing the City Zoning Map. Citizen input will be key in this process. Opportunities for citizen participation will be publicized in this newsletter and in the *New Castle Weekly* newspaper.

## City and Verizon settle on Franchise Agreement

The October issue of the *New Castle Crier* reported that the City and the Verizon company were at a standstill with negotiations of a Franchise Agreement. Such an agreement is required prior to Verizon having the ability to offer television services to customers within the City limits.

Shortly after that article ran, the attorney representing the City in franchise negotiations was contacted by Verizon representatives who reported having changed their position on the one matter which had stalled the agreement being finalized. The final draft agreement was prepared and reviewed by City Council members. At a Special City Council meeting on October 15, the City Council approved the new Franchise Agreement with Verizon.

The City has had in place for some years a Franchise Agreement with the Comcast company to offer cable television services. All City property owners, of course, are free to choose among several options, wired and wireless, for television services.

City Offices Closed  
& No Trash Pickup:  
Thurs., Dec. 24  
Fri., Dec. 25  
Fri., Jan. 1

## *Spirit of Christmas celebration on Dec. 12*

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Other events include hand bell concerts in the sanctuary at 1 and 1:30 p.m., followed by a concert by the New Ark Chorale at 3 p.m. The Celtic Harp Quartet of the Brandywine Harp Orchestra open the day's concerts at 10 a.m., Meeting House.

A Santa's Secret Shop will be available for children to shop and visit with Santa at Velocipede Bicycle Museum on Delaware Street. It is rumored that Santa Claus will also roam the streets as part of the celebration.

The New Castle Visitor's Bureau will sponsor caroling around the town, with various restaurants open throughout the town during the day.

For more information, visitors are encouraged to call the New Castle Presbyterian Church Office at 328-3279.

The next  
regular  
**City Council**  
meeting is 7 p.m.,  
Tues., Dec. 8 at  
Town Hall