



New Castle Crier

The official newsletter of New Castle City

SPECIAL EDITION

New Castle, Delaware

October 2009

PLEASE VOTE! in the City of New Castle SPECIAL ELECTION

Tues., Oct. 27 at the Good Will Fire Co.
(Corner of 4th and South Streets)

Polling Hours: 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

All residents of the City of New Castle who are registered to vote with the Department of Elections for New Castle County are eligible to vote

All voters must present proper ID in order to vote

Absentee Ballots available for residents who cannot appear in person the day of the vote

Absentee Applications & Completed Ballots Accepted at the City Office at 220 Delaware St., as follows:
Oct. 19 to 23, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. & Oct. 26, 8:30 a.m. to Noon (none accepted after this time)

Residents will be asked to cast their votes, either **YES** or **NO**, on the following Ballot Question:

A proposal to borrow funds for Drainage Improvements and Flooding and Water Pollution Control Projects within the City of New Castle

Shall the City of New Castle borrow \$1,322,500, with half of said loan amount to be forgiven upon completion of the projects, made available by the Federal government, as a result of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009? The proposed projects: 1) City-Wide Stormwater Management Facility Retrofit (\$250,000); 2) Washington Park Mitigation, Nutrient Reduction and Habitat Enhancement (\$630,000); 3) Buttonwood Dike Flood Mitigation, Nutrient Reduction and Habitat Enhancement (\$442,500). One-half of the principal (\$661,500) is to be forgiven at the end of construction of the projects, and the other half (\$661,500), plus capitalized interest during construction, will be amortized over 5 years at an interest rate of 2%.

Find out more about the three projects for which funding is being requested

**Attend A Public Information Meeting
Tuesday, October 20 at 6 p.m. at
New Castle Middle School (903 Delaware St.)**

City Charter requires Special Election to borrow funds

The New Castle City Charter requires that the City hold a Special Election in order to borrow funds. The City has an opportunity to borrow Federal funds, which would be a 2 percent, five-year term loan. The money is planned to be used to design and construct three stormwater projects,

for a total of a little more than \$1.3 million. The City will be required to repay half of the amount of the project costs, or about \$660,000. For more information, attend a Public Information Meeting (details above) and see the article with the details of the projects, below.

Flooding and drainage issues would be addressed with borrowed funds

New Castle City residents can help determine how the City chooses to pay for fixing its biggest drainage and flooding problems.

The New Castle City Council proposes to take advantage of \$1,322,500 in funding from the State of Delaware's share of Federal "green" infrastructure

monies, which are part of the stimulus package. The City has targeted three projects to improve local flood protection,
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- ➔ 6:30 & 7 p.m., Town Hall, Tues., Oct. 13, Public Hearing/First and Second Readings to consider an Ordinance to obtain a Federal loan and hold a Special Election to ask voters if they agree that the City shall borrow such funds for stormwater/drainage projects
- ➔ 6 p.m., Thurs., Oct. 15, Police Station (1 Municipal Blvd.) Third Reading and consideration of adoption of an Ordinance to obtain a Federal loan and hold a Special Election to ask voters if they agree that the City shall borrow such funds for stormwater/drainage projects

City weighs options, seeks partnership to minimize tax impact of loan repayment

According to the loan agreement for these projects, the first quarterly payment of principal and interest is due in mid-2011, for about \$35,000. This timing coincides with the end of the

City's three-year commitment to fund \$100,000 per year toward capital improvements for the Library.

The City has also approached the Trustees of the

New Castle Commons requesting that the Trustees participate in funding the projects.

The goal is for this borrowing to have a neutral impact on future City budgets, where the City Council would not have to raise taxes in order to make the loan repayments.

Funds to be used for flood, drainage items

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boost stormwater management, create new wetlands and improve water quality of runoff flowing into the Delaware River from City streets, parking lots, business parks and neighborhoods.

Under this stimulus funding program, the City applied for a \$1,322,500 loan from the State. The State has agreed to "forgive" 50 percent of the loan, basically providing \$661,250 in grant funding to the City.

The remaining 50 percent of the loan would be repaid to the State by the City under a five-year term loan at an interest rate of 2 percent.

Washington Park Flood Mitigation

One of the projects will improve the drainage and flooding woes that have troubled the Washington Park area of the City for more than 20 years. The project includes:

- replacement of the undersized and damaged stormwater collection system;
- removal of overgrown brush and vegetation;
- removal of excess sediment blocking the flow of stormwater in the open channel between the railroad tracks and 7th Street;
- creation of a manmade wetland, which will reduce excess nutrients and settle out excess sediments contained in the runoff.

The cost for this project is estimated at \$630,000.

Buttonwood Dike Flood

Mitigation, Nutrient Reduction and Habitat Enhancement

Another project builds on the City's ongoing efforts to reduce the risks of flooding and drainage problems in the communities located upstream from the Buttonwood Dike. Streets in this part of the City which currently experience flooding and drainage problems during heavy rainstorms include Buttonwood Ave., Arbutus Ave., Meehan Ave., Railroad Ave., Lincoln St., William Penn Ct., Jacquette Sq., Holcomb Ln. and Booker Cir.

This project will provide increased protection from high tide events in the Delaware River. Improvements are planned for the dike and replacement of the tide gate will also occur, with a newly installed, self-regulating tide gate. These improvements will reduce high tides from backing up small streams which serve as the drainage outlets for these communities and areas.

This project will also upgrade and modernize the stormwater management facilities at the Buttonwood and Penn Valley subdivisions. This will be accomplished by creating wetlands to reduce excess sediments and nutrients from runoff.

The cost for this project is estimated at \$442,500.

City of New Castle Stormwater Management Facility Retrofit

The last of the of the three projects includes the maintenance and retrofitting of the existing stormwater ponds within the City to meet expected water quality regulations for nutrient and other pollutant discharge to local waterways and the Delaware River. These ponds and stormwater facilities are located in the Boothurst subdivision, Twin Spans Business Park, next to Amazon.com in the Centerpoint Business Park, Johnsons Way in the Centerpoint Business Park, behind the New Castle Shopping Center and on Lukens Drive in the Riveredge Business Park.

The cost for this project is estimated at \$250,000.

Deadlines looming

The City is holding this vote now in order to meet tight timelines for the Federal funding. The State requires these projects to be designed and ready to go to bid by December. The Federal stimulus legislation requires that these projects be started or under contract by February 17, 2010. This leaves a few short months to complete the needed field surveying, design and engineering, permitting, bid solicitation and contract awards.

Editor's Note: Thanks to Kevin Donnelly, District Coordinator of the New Castle Conservation District, for providing the above project information.

Call City Administrator Cathie Thomas at 322-9812 with comments, questions or to obtain more information.