

Hilbert extends TIF for 'affordable housing'

By Ed Byrne
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HILBERT – The Hilbert Village Board is extending the life of its Tax Incremental District No. 1 by one year, under a provision of state tax increment financing law that lets a district that has reached maturity extend to fund improvements in its housing stock.

At its meeting on Monday evening, the village board passed a resolution that extends the life of the district by one year.

By doing that, the TID will generate an additional \$116,000 of revenue that will be set aside for future use to benefit affordable housing anywhere in the village.

"That's what this resolution does," Village Administrator Dennis DuPrey said. "It extends it for an additional year."

The resolution identifies four possible initiatives to improve the housing stock in the village:

- Creation of a first-time home buyer program to assist qualifying individuals with their first home purchase.
- Creation of a down-payment assistance program to help qualifying buyers purchase a home.
- Creation of a housing rehabilitation program to help qualifying individuals with the rehabilita-



The nameless creek (black line) where Hilbert village crews sprayed Roundup herbicide runs north from farm fields and behind homes on Creek Street. It eventually flows into the Manitowoc River east of Hilbert. A special meeting on Monday will deal with how the spraying was handled. (Submitted photo)

tion of existing "affordable" housing stock.

- Provide financial support for the construction of new affordable

housing.

The resolution defines "affordable housing" as housing that costs no more than 30 percent of the household's gross monthly income.

A household, under the resolution, is an individual and his or her spouse and all of their minor dependents.

"Those are the four things we put in there as far as what we can use those funds for," DuPrey said. "There is no set deadline [for] when we need to use them. They just get put into a separate account and they stay there."

With a lot of older homes, the fund could help fix those homes up. Or it could help people build new affordable homes.

"I think it's a good thing to do because it is within [the purposes outlined in] that statute," DuPrey said. "The TID district as a whole is getting closed early, all the debt is paid off, and we have a cash balance that we have to distribute among the taxing districts."

That balance will be divided among the village, Calumet County, the School District of Hilbert, and the Fox Valley Technical College district.

Weeds be gone

Three village residents showed up at the Monday evening board meeting to express concerns about the Department of Public Works spray-

ing for weeds along a nameless creek on the east side of the village.

The creek runs north from farm fields, under Main Street, and then north and east, going under Irish Road and then past the village's Wastewater Treatment Plant and into the Manitowoc River.

The complaints hit on several issues, primarily that neighboring property owners weren't notified in advance about the spraying with the herbicide Roundup, and that no warning signs were put up after the spraying to alert people.

"It isn't right what happened back there," one man said. Apparently some raspberry bushes on the creek bank were sprayed and killed.

There was also a concern expressed that killing the natural vegetation on the creek bank would encourage soil erosion after rain storms, when the creek swells up. It drains storm water from a large rural area and the eastern side of the village.

Village President Mark Breckheimer called for a special meeting of the Street Committee, which will meet at the village hall at 6 p.m. on Monday, August 17. The committee is expected to meet at the village hall and then go to the site where the spraying took place for a first-hand look.