

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Village Board Considers Special Service Area to Fund Downtown Sidewalk Snow Removal

At their August 16 Board Meeting, Village Trustees initiated the first step in establishing a Special Service Area that would fund downtown sidewalk snow removal.

The Trustees passed an ordinance calling for a public hearing on the proposed SSA. The public hearing will be on Sept. 20 during the regular Village Board meeting. A Question and Answer session for downtown property and business owners is planned for 5 p.m. Sept. 13 at Village Hall.

The Village of Clarendon Hills has funded snow removal for the central business district (CBD) sidewalks and select downtown parking lots since 2000. This was provided as a service enhancement to the downtown, ensuring sidewalks were cleared in a consistent and timely manner while making it easier for pedestrians to access downtown businesses and mass transit.

During the past two budget cycles, however, the Village has carefully evaluated the ability to fund CBD sidewalk snow removal services via the General Fund. As a direct result of the severe economic downturn, the Village has had to look for ways to reduce expenditures and enhance revenue sources where possible. While reviewing the 2009-2010 Budget, the Board approved reducing the scope of sidewalk snow removal as an interim step to control costs. During the 2010-2011 Budget review, sidewalk snow removal services were again identified as a service/cost reduction for the General Fund.

While reviewing the service, the Board was informed that Special Service Area 10, which was approved in 1998 to fund streetscape improvements in the downtown, would be retired with the last debt payment in fiscal year 2012. CBD property owners currently pay an SSA tax rate of \$0.55 per \$100 equalized assessed value, which pays off the debt issued to construct the streetscape enhancements downtown. The property owners' last payment for this SSA will be in 2011.

Retirement of the streetscape SSA provides a funding opportunity for sidewalk snow removal and other downtown beautification costs without an additional tax increase. The Village is proposing to retire the streetscape SSA one year early and replace it with an SSA to fund snow removal at the same rate of \$0.55 per \$100 equalized assessed value. Since the proposed SSA would replace an existing SSA, property owners would not see a tax rate increase. The creation of an SSA would return snow removal to its previous full scope.

The Clarendon Hills Chamber of Commerce generously agreed to sponsor the annual plantings in the downtown planter beds this year because the Village's budget could not accommodate this cost. By creating an SSA for CBD sidewalk snow removal, any additional funds received through the SSA would be used for downtown beautification, such as annual plantings and seasonal decorations.

The creation of an SSA requires a public hearing for consideration followed by a 60-day waiting period. During this time, property owners and electors within the proposed Special Service area may file an objection with the Village. If a majority of electors and property owners object, the SSA will not be established, and could not be considered for a period of two (2) years. The Village would then discontinue providing this service enhancement, relying upon each building/business owner to perform or contract for the removal of snow in front of his or her own property/business. If the proposed SSA is not renewed, the previous SSA for streetscape improvements will expire as originally planned in 2011.

More information about the proposed SSA is also available on the Village's website at www.clarendonhills.us/CBDSSA.cfm. A timeline of the Special Service Area process is below.

Central Business District (CBD) SSA Consideration Timeline

August 16, 2010	Adopt Ordinance Calling for SSA Public Hearing
August 26, 2010	Notice of the Public Hearing published in newspaper
September 2, 2010	Mail the Notice of Public Hearing to the Taxpayers of Record
September 13, 2010	Question and Answer Session at Village Hall (5 p.m.)
September 20, 2010	Hold Public Hearing as Part of the Village Board Meeting
December 6, 2010	Adopt the Ordinance Establishing the SSA (assuming no valid objections have been filed with the Village during the 60-day waiting period)
December 20, 2010	Adopt Ordinance providing for the Tax Levy within the SSA
December 28, 2010	Tax Levy must be filed with DuPage County by the last Tuesday in December

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