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Tuesday, January 09, 2007

Authority advances water project

By Amy Karpinsky, Herald-Standard
10/02/2002

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The Fayette County Redevelopment Authority took action Tuesday to bring public water to 32 homes in a small Springfield Township community that has been at the mercy of Mother Nature for its water supply.

Authority assistant director Andrew P. French said the project will include 13,000 linear feet of water line to households in the Buttermilk Hollow area outside of Normalville. French said the conditions of some of the homes are "pretty extreme" and include contaminated wells. He said in one instance a family had to walk miles to get to a stream for water and in another instance, a woman used rainwater in the evenings to shower.

French said the conditions have been going on for quite some time and were exasperated by last year's drought. The project is being handled by the authority on behalf of Springfield Township and the Indian Creek Valley Water Authority.

The authority voted to award the water system extension project contract to Ritenour and Sons Construction Co. Inc. of Connellsville in the amount of \$334,198.50. The authority awarded the contract based on the recommendation of Bankson Engineers Inc.

Authority executive director Raymond C. Polaski said the 10 bids received for the project ranged from Ritenour's low bid to a high of \$643,838.

During the director's report, Polaski said that there remains a continued interest in the Fayette County Business Park, although he no new information to share.

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The 277-acre park, located on Route 40 in South Union Township, currently is home to a hotel and engineering firm. Two other business, CareerLink and Fayette County Mental Health/Mental Retardation, also plan to move to the site. Because a majority of remaining acreage is located in the state-designated and locally approved tax-free Keystone Opportunity Zone and zoned M-1, light manufacturing, little development can occur outside of manufacturing businesses. A doctor's office/clinic has expressed interest in locating in the park, but Polaski said the only site with enough property is in the KOZ.

The majority of township supervisors have spoken out against rezoning the property, saying it would be unfair to offer a tax break to one business and not others. As a way to resolve the problem, state Rep. Larry Roberts (D-South Union) previously said he would introduce legislation to give municipalities flexibility to change the boundaries of KOZ property.

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