

From: Marty Sullivan <MSullivan@cityofwinterpark.org>
Date: July 30, 2020 at 2:57:41 PM EDT
To: Marty Sullivan <MSullivan@cityofwinterpark.org>
Subject: Millage rates and Orange Avenue Overlay

Dear Winter Park Neighbors,

I am receiving emails regarding the millage rate ceiling and the potential moratorium on the Orange Avenue Overlay. I am responding to all who wrote me in the last few days, with email addresses Bcc.

Here are my responses to millage rates and to Orange Avenue Overlay moratorium. The original email from Peter J. Weldon is accurate but slightly misleading. The original email from Demetree Real Estate is inaccurate and recklessly misleads readers.

Millage rates:

We have not set the millage rate yet. It was last increased during the mid-2000s recession, 13 years ago. Our millage rate ranks us 8th of 12 nearby municipalities, in the bottom third. This increase would place us 6th of 12 (without knowing what increases may happen in other municipalities).

When we set the actual rate, we can only raise millage to the ceiling we have set at the 7/22/20 meeting. If at the 7/22/20 meeting we were to have set proposed rate at existing rate (4.0923), we could not set it any higher at the final meeting, 9/23/20. This potential increase is the rate needed to offset the projected \$3 million shortfall in our City budget. If things get worse between now and September 23, we have this minimal cushion to maintain our City services in conjunction with our reserve fund. Between now and then, significant state accounting numbers will be forthcoming that will help us decide if we can keep the rate the same as before or if we need to raise the millage rate. My vote will be to keep the existing rate of 4.0923 unless the City foresees serious financial trouble.

The primary reason for this small increase is a safety measure in case we need it. My hope is that our pandemic, hurricane season, and economic situation does not require us to use this bit of a safety margin.

“Homeowners Must Help with Shortfall in Winter Park As Commission Votes to Increase Millage Rate for First Time in Over a Decade”

This anonymous email was sent to residents and is inaccurate and recklessly misleading. Among the inaccuracies are the statements:

“in favor of increasing the millage rate in Winter Park for the first time in 13 years, from 4.0923 to 4.5623.”

There is no millage rate increase. Decision will be at the September 23 Commission meeting. See above.

“270-DAY moratorium which could be extended indefinitely on any commercial development within the Orange Avenue Overlay.”

No moratorium is in effect. All properties may be permitted for development now under the existing codes.

“the city imposed the moratorium”

No moratorium has been imposed. A moratorium will be triggered into effect if the court finds in favor of the large property owners who are suing the City. However, property owners still may redevelop under existing codes if this moratorium goes into effect.

I take all responses to my actions seriously, even if I do not know the source. However, by knowing the source I can better evaluate what actions I should take. I ask that the originator, from Demetree Real Estate, contact me so that we can discuss it.

I appreciate your interest in what’s happening in our town, and I ask that you do not hesitate to contact me again if you have questions or wish to discuss these issues.

Marty Sullivan
Winter Park Commissioner, Seat 1

