



Liberty Park Subdivision Water Improvements Proposed Lake Michigan Watermain Service Extension

Q & A

C1 [REDACTED] I'm on the community well. Looking for some clarification on the annexation bit of the water main project, and I have a question about financial assistance. (The neighborhood Facebook group is already buzzing with questions and discussion about it and I'm not sure the information that's being given by some is accurate). My understanding:

Q1 If LP chooses to get the water without annexation, the cost savings on taxes would be minimal, however the cost of the water would be 1.5x what residents pay?

"Minimal" is relative. On the west phase the cost difference for taxes for a \$300,000 home was about \$1,140, but when that is offset by the reduced water rates for intown the next cost is about \$700 (today's rates)

The cost difference between rates (in-town vs out-of-town) is 150%, an estimate of \$400 per year difference.

Q2 We'd still be paying the extra \$ for fire/ems services and have to pay extra if we choose to use the library, park, etc?

Yes, unincorporated parcels remain in the existing Fire SSA.

The fees are extra for Library set to be equal to their assessed tax levy.

<https://westmontlibrary.org/library-services/non-residents/>

Park District - some programming available at non-resident rates.

<https://www.westmontparks.org/fitness-club/membership/>

Q3 If we don't annex now, annexation will happen eventually on an involuntary basis and because it wasn't done during the water main project will cost residents a significant amount of money. If that's the case, how far into the future would an involuntary annexation most likely happen?

Involuntary annexation can only occur when any one of certain triggers are met. This is true today with or without the watermain project. There is no way to predict when that will happen. The comments at the meeting were to reinforce that nothing about the watermain projects prohibit involuntary annexations in the future.

(65 ILCS 5/7-1-13) (from Ch. 24, par. 7-1-13) Sec. 7-1-13. Annexation.

<https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/annexation>

If annexation occurs as part of the project, there are no additional Annexation Petition nor platting costs. If involuntarily annexed in the future, there are no additional Annexation Petition nor platting costs. If requested voluntarily in the future (as with anywhere else surrounding the community), all costs are by the petitioner.

C2 Annexation is a sticky wicket with most of the older residents in LP and can be a deal killer. I want to make sure people have a very clear understanding of the reality of the annexation point.

Q4 If we do move forward, either with or without annexation, what programs or assistance are available for those who are lower income or on a fixed income and won't be able to afford the increased taxes and utility costs?

DuPage County - www.dupgaco.org/community The DuPage County Community Services webpage has resources for residents.

Village of Westmont - none

Q5 I [REDACTED] was wondering if I could get my cost sheet for this possible project.

With a name, address and email address we could deliver independently

Q6 Can you suggest what type of service provider I should contact for an estimate on the plumbing connection from the proposed valve site to my house? I assume this would be outside the scope of a general plumber.

While we cannot make recommendations, there are many plumbers who can handle outside services both sewer and water.

Q7 I understand that if your proposal is accepted the county will get a loan, and will install the water mains, and that the residents of Liberty Park will pay the county for this project over a 20-year period.

I understand that the Village of Westmont will supply the water once the water mains are installed and the individual residents of the East side will pay the Village of Westmont for that water. What I don't understand is how being annexed to the Village of Westmont has anything to do with this project.

[REDACTED] if they're supplying us with a product (water), and we're paying for the product, why do we have to be annexed by the Village and pay taxes for things we don't need? The Village of Westmont is incurring the debt, not the County. The Village of Westmont will not incur debt for the benefit of non-residents.

Even if this were not the case, the fact remains that many Village-wide things (budget, accepting payments, Village Board oversight, legal compliance, etc) are funded by the taxpayers, but help the water system. The Village exists to the benefit of its residents, and having nontaxpayers benefit from the payments made by taxpayers is not in the residents' best interests. Because of that, the Village has a long-standing policy that the Village provides water to residents, and nonresidents who want to become residents.

In the past properties with private wells who wanted to convert to Village water have been annexed into the Village. We recognize that the West side being on a public well is unique (all or nothing as one entity), so they are being offered an exception. However the East side is in the same situation as previous properties, and will be treated the same; if they want to be on Village water, they will need to agree to become Village residents.

The SSA is formed to pay the debt service down over 20 years. It is a property tax and the County Assessor collects it - distributing it to the Village of Westmont (as debtor)

Q8 Living in Liberty Park (East side), I am not a resident of the Village of Westmont. But I do have a Westmont Library card! How can that be? If I want a Library card, I have to pay for it, and I pay what Westmont collects in property tax from its residents to support the library. Again, the Village has a product, and I pay for it. Why not keep it that straightforward?

The watermain distribution system (not "product") is what is being paid for via the SSA.

In the case of the Library, the amount you pay is what you would pay for them if you were annexed. This makes sense because it includes all the centralized services and governance they provide just like a taxpayer would cover. The Library is not saying that nonresidents can choose one specific service the Library provides and only pay for their relative use of that service.

In this one case, the specific service is the water ("Product") and while the majority of that is paid for through usage rates, many centralized services that are funded by taxpayers would not be included just by paying for the water itself. Just like the Library requires the full cost that taxpayers would pay to access all of their services, the Village would require the full cost a taxpayer would pay, which would then provide all their services. This is done through annexation.

Q9 Your estimated cost for "Private Side Services and well abandonment cost is \$6000 - \$8000.

Wow! What's involved in that undertaking?

It is an estimate driven by previous permits issued to others. There is no direct experience by the Village of Westmont with this topic. It is an estimated worst case. Each property owner is encouraged to get their own estimates.

C3 I've calculated the cost of having my own well, and it's \$2040 per year. This includes water softener salt, annual maintenance of my softener and iron filter, In-line water filter cartridges, bottled water, and replacing the well pump every eight years. That's about the same as your "Estimated Parcel Annual Increase With Connection & Annexation - MINUS the Annexation. I think you could present this to the residents of the East side of Liberty park and they'd see that the cost is the same either way, and the question comes down to 'Would you rather have well water or Village water?' That's pretty easy to answer. Nobody's being taken advantage of. If you throw in the annexation by the Village, that's an unnecessary cost that nobody wants.

Annexation is necessary if the Village of Westmont incurs any debt.

Q10 Due to my work schedule I was not able to attend the meeting on 11/14. I was wondering if I could get a copy of the spreadsheet with the taxes that was handed out at the meeting. It could be either mailed or just sent to my email. [REDACTED]

With a name, address and email address we could deliver independently.

