



Legislation Text

File #: 15-0312, **Version:** 1

Resolution to Waive Site Plan Review Fee for the Thurston Pond Restoration Site Plan Petition
The Thurston Pond Restoration Project is a continuation of the restoration of Thurston Pond that began in 2005. A 2005 grant from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) assisted Ann Arbor Public Schools (AAPS), in coordination with the Thurston Nature Center Committee (TNCC), in preparing an engineering plan, obtaining a permit from the MDEQ and doing work to protect the pond and improve the quality of stormwater entering the pond. However, all work that was in the plan was not completed due to the need for additional funds. Additional information about the project is attached.

Late last week, City staff met with Beckett-Raeder, the consultants hired by AAPS to assist the TNCC in the final phase permitting and bidding process. In the course of reviewing the proposal, staff learned that a portion of the proposed work would occur on property owned by the Orchard Hills Athletic Club. After reviewing the proposal with the City Attorney's Office, staff concluded that the natural features ordinance requires a site plan and the wetland ordinance requires a wetland use permit. Both of these actions require City Council approval.

The proposed restoration work will address long-standing drainage and sedimentation issues in the pond and improve the overall health of this natural feature. Staff has identified a schedule that will compress the site plan review, with a goal of bringing the site plan to City Council at the April 20, 2015 meeting. This timeframe will still allow for TNCC and AAPS to finalize bids and begin construction by the target of May 15, 2015.

The amount of staff time reviewing this project will be minimal, and the required submittal fee is in excess of that necessary to cover staff costs. Staff recommends that the site plan fee of \$8,445 be waived. A wetland use permit fee of \$470 will continue to be required.

Attachment: Thurston Pond Nature Area Background

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Sponsored by: Councilmembers Lumm and Westphal

Whereas, Orchard Hills Athletic Club and Thurston Nature Center Committee propose to submit a site plan to the City for the restoration of Thurston Pond;

Whereas, The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality issued a permit for the proposed work in 2009, which will expire in January 2016;

Whereas, The pond restoration work proposed will address long-standing drainage and sedimentation issues in the pond, resulting in a significant benefit to the pond ecosystem and adding to its value as an educational resource and a water quality improvement to the Millers Creek watershed; and

Whereas, The Planning and Development Services Unit has done a preliminary review of the proposal and has indicated that review time for this site plan would be minimal because of the nature of the changes being proposed;

RESOLVED, That City Council reduces the Thurston Pond Nature Area Site Plan petition review fee by \$8,445 to a total of \$470, the fee for review of a wetland use permit, as long as the petition is received by the Planning and Development Services Unit within 30 days of this Resolution.