

Merchantville to award pipe contract

A Haddonfield company will be paid \$85,000. The work, postponed for a year, should start in March.

By Amy Zurzola
INQUIRER CORRESPONDENT

MERCHANTVILLE — The borough is poised to give the go-ahead to a project designed to solve years of flooding on Glenwood Avenue — almost a year after the work was supposed to have been finished.

Mayor Patrick Brennan said the Borough Council was ready to award a contract for repairs to storm drains and pipes to VSP Inc. of Haddonfield at tomorrow night's meeting.

The \$85,000 contract will cover the relocation of two storm drainage pipes installed more than 50 years ago along the 200 block of Glenwood Avenue to the intersection with Holly Road, said Frank Seney, the Remington & Vernick engineer handling the project.

The old, 18-inch pipes will be replaced with 27-inch ones that should be able to handle the amount of water that pours down the street during rainstorms, Seney said.

More inlets will be added to the intersection to catch the rainwater, which for years has flooded into a pool of water that swallowed cars,

ruined lawns, and earned the name "Lake Glenwood."

"The pipes were clogged, and they're in poor condition," Seney said. He said that although the project would involve digging up most of that block of Glenwood Avenue, it probably would not require the shut-off of the residents' water.

Because one of the pipes that will be replaced belongs to Camden County, the county will pay \$30,000 of the bill. An additional \$45,000 will come from a state Department of Transportation grant, and the borough will pay the remainder.

The work, which Seney said was scheduled to begin in March and should be complete by the end of April, comes in the nick of time. The original county grant money expired at the end of September, but because bids on the project came in over the budget, no contract was awarded. Residents had previously been told that the work would be completed last summer. The borough applied for an extension to the grant while continuing to search for lower bids. The extension will expire Jan. 31.

There was some question among borough officials about whether the money would be usable at all because the contract will not go into effect until 21 days after it is approved and published, Brennan said.

That means that if the council approves the contract tomorrow, work could not begin until at least Feb. 13, almost two weeks after the grant expires. But Borough Solicitor Timothy Higgins said the contract need only be awarded, not underway.

"The ordinance will be passed but not effective, so we really don't anticipate a problem with that," he said.



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