



CITY OF WASHINGTON, ILLINOIS Public Works Committee Agenda Communication

Meeting Date: June 6, 2022

Prepared By: Jon Oliphant, AICP, Planning & Development Director
Dennis Carr, PE, City Engineer

Agenda Item: Codifying Downspouts and Sump Lines Setback

Explanation: The City has historically required that downspouts and sump drain lines be setback at least five feet from property lines. However, no specific City Code language references this setback. Staff recommends codifying this to assist with the enforcement. Chapter 96 (Nuisances) does prohibit the connection of footing tiles or downspouts to the sanitary sewer system.

Some neighboring municipalities have codified language to require a minimum setback. Many of these set 10' as the minimum while a few others have 15' as the standard. The City of Bloomington has a 15' front and rear yard setback but also has language that allows its City Engineer to waive the setback where it is determined that such a connection "will not cause or contribute to surcharging of the City's storm sewer system" and that the connection "is properly maintained by the applicant or his successor in title." The topography of each property contributes to the potential for stormwater absorption and it may be wise to consider adopting language that offers some discretion for a setback reduction or waiver where a downspout or sump line may not cause a public health and safety issue.

Fiscal Impact: While there would be no City expenditure, there would likely be some property owners that would incur minimal expense to move their downspouts or sump drain lines back to conform with whatever standard is adopted.

Action Requested: Staff seeks feedback on a possible setback for any downspouts and sump lines and would recommend 10' as the minimum for front and rear yards and 5' as the minimum for side yards should there be interest in adopting a standard while also allowing for discretion for the setbacks to be reduced or waived should they not negatively impact the public's health and safety in the opinion of the City Engineer. Based on that direction, a future code amendment ordinance would be drafted and brought to the City Council for adoption. This would likely be placed within Chapter 96 of the City Code.