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News Release

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Subject: Oil/gas drilling
moratorium

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City of Southfield continues moratorium on oil and gas extraction and mining operations in the city

(SOUTHFIELD, Mich.) – Recent media reports have resulted in questions about the City of Southfield’s position regarding oil and gas exploration. These questions arose because Jordan Development filed an Application for drilling in the City on November 4, 2015. This Company is an oil and gas exploration company based in Traverse City. They applied to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) for a permit to drill an exploratory well on the grounds of Word of Faith International Christian Center. This Application was filed with the MDEQ without any prior discussion or approval from the City. The City of Southfield has opposed this Application and it violates the Moratorium that has existed for some time.

City’s Objections

The city of Southfield objected to Jordan Development’s Application based upon the following:

1. Drilling is not a permitted use in the R-2, Single Family Residential zoning district in which the subject property is located.
2. There is currently a Moratorium in effect through April 28, 2016 prohibiting drilling or mining in the City of Southfield.
3. This Application, if approved, would have an adverse impact on the public health, safety, and welfare of this Community.
4. The Application is incomplete and ambiguous.
5. There are potential issues in terms of the City’s Woodlands and Wetlands.

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City of Southfield oil/gas drilling moratorium, *Continued*

There will likely be other considerations, however, the City can't possibly fully address all the matters until this Application is fully analyzed and evaluated. Oil and gas exploration is a serious concern and a major topic of discussion not only in the city of Southfield and Oakland County, but throughout the entire southeastern Michigan area.

Drilling does bring risks of spills, accidents and pollution. It also has an adverse effect on property values of the surrounding areas and financially impacts residents. There is also a risk to the health, safety and welfare of our residents and property owners, which is why the issue of drilling is so significant and cannot be ignored.

Background

The Southfield City Council has a Moratorium in place that prohibits any oil and gas extraction or mining operations in the City until April 28, 2016.

Since 2014, the Legal and Planning Departments have done significant research. The Planning Commission held a public hearing related to this item on September 30, 2015, and a favorable recommendation was made to the Council. At the City Council Committee-of-the-Whole Meeting on October 5, 2015, an update was presented to Council and a request for an additional 180 day Moratorium was recommended by staff to allow for further research. The Council was supportive of the additional 180 days and also supported moving this item forward to the October 19, 2015 Regular Meeting Consent Agenda for approval. A Resolution was then approved to impose an extended Moratorium for a period of 180 days from October 31, 2015 to April 28, 2016.

The city of Southfield Planning and Legal Departments have been preparing a new Zoning Ordinance relative to oil and gas extraction and mining operations, including hydraulic fracturing or fracking operations, within the City. The City will have a new Ordinance in place before the Moratorium expires in April, 2016.

The City is committed to act in the best interest of its residents and business owners, and will keep the public updated as new developments occur.

If you have any questions, or concerns, please e-mail those to the Planning Department at contactplanning@cityofsouthfield.com.

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