



SUNDAY POST-DISPATCH

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WEBSTER GROVES

‘WE’RE CREATING AN ON-RAMP’



DAVID CARSON, POST-DISPATCH

Webster Groves Community Land Trust board member Bob Powers repairs the floor at a house on Pinetree Lane that the Webster Groves Community Land Trust is renovating on Friday.

Costs for tornado consultant top \$10M

City officials moving to end contract early

BY AUSTIN HUGULET
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

ST. LOUIS — Top city officials are moving to spend \$2.6 million more on one of their primary tornado recovery consultants even as they move to end its contract early.

The city’s mayor, comptroller and aldermanic president voted late Friday afternoon to increase the city’s contract with California-based Tetra Tech to \$10.6 million, more than double the amount originally approved last year.

At the same time, the three — who comprise the city’s top fiscal body, the Estimate Board — set an end date in mid-August, cutting short an agreement originally set to run through 2028.

The contract was supposed to help with the administrative side of post-tornado demolition and home repair work.

But in recent weeks, officials have grown increasingly concerned about rising costs. Jay Nelson, chief of staff of Aldermanic President Megan Green, said it appeared Tetra Tech had been doing its assigned work, but the bills kept getting higher and higher. At least some of the costs are expected to be reimbursed by the federal government or the state, but officials couldn’t say how much.

“We didn’t know when it was going to end,” Nelson said.

The tornado response has already proven one of the new administration’s toughest challenges.

Officials, including Spencer, have pledged a robust recovery. But initial spending has moved slowly. Just over a year after the tornado hit, only a small number of demolitions and initial repairs have been completed. And now, as the effort enters its second year, officials are raising concerns about spending on consultants and moving to bring at least some key work in-house.

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Group aims to offset high home prices

BY COLLEEN SCHRAPPEN
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

WEBSTER GROVES — The unassuming three-bedroom house on Pine Tree Lane, built just after World War II, may soon have a function beyond providing shelter.

It is an entryway, the owners hope, into this affluent, artsy municipality — and the first home in what could become a network of reasonably priced options.

The Webster Groves Community Land Trust, a nonprofit that

“This first house is an inflection point. We have, essentially, proof of concept.”

Laura Arnold,
Webster Groves Mayor

bought the snug 1,200-square-foot brick bungalow in March, plans to sell the house this summer at a below-market price while

retaining ownership of the land.

The effort, catalyzed by an anonymous donation and countless volunteer hours, began eight years ago with the intention of bringing in moderate-income residents who have a connection to Webster Groves. It is the only such effort in the St. Louis region, though dozens of cities nationwide have launched similar projects.

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McCloskey again taking Jan. 6 clients

‘Anti-weaponization’ fund lured him back

BY JACOB BARKER
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

On April 10, St. Louis attorney Mark McCloskey told his clients he no longer could be their lawyer as they sought compensation

for the federal charges against them.

Those clients, hundreds of people who stormed the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, already had been pardoned by President Donald Trump in one of the first acts of his second term.

McCloskey had become a conservative celebrity after brandishing a rifle on his Central West End lawn as Black Lives Matter

protesters marched by in 2020. By April, he and another lawyer, Peter Tickin, a friend and former classmate of the president, had spent more than a year trying to get the government to do one better for the president’s most loyal supporters: Pay them.

“I have contacted every significant member of this administration, from the cabinet level on down, including numerous U.S.

Senators, Representatives, the Chairman of the Republican Party, etc., to try and obtain a voluntary means of compensation without effect,” McCloskey wrote in the April letter to the Jan. 6 defendants. “Due to personal reasons, I am unable to continue the fight at this time.”

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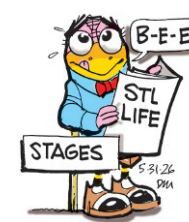
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Weather

Plan your week: For a 5-day weather forecast for our region as well as the national outlook, please see **PAGE B11**

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