

Residents can discuss joined governments

Committee to hold last meeting on merger of Zionsville, townships

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December 13, 2007

The final meeting of the Communities of the Zionsville Area for Better Government Committee is tonight, giving local residents an opportunity to weigh in on what form a consolidated government might take.

The meeting starts at 7 p.m. at Zionsville Town Hall, 1100 W. Oak St.

Earlier this year, Zionsville and Eagle and Union townships formed the reorganization committee to discuss possible consolidation. The committee's recommendation is expected in mid-December.

Gene Thompson, committee chairman, said he expects the committee to agree on a reorganization plan summary tonight, then hone it over the next few weeks.

"Since there may be multiple options available, we would like to receive comments from the town and township officials before making a final recommendation," he said. "We believe that a brief period of dialog will greatly contribute to a more workable final plan."

After the plan is created, it will go before the Eagle and Union township boards and the Zionsville council. If all three bodies vote in favor of the plan, it could be put before the voters in a referendum as early as May, although the plan may not be implemented for several years.

Thompson has called the consolidation a way to make government more transparent while getting rid of unneeded levels of redundancy. The committee has made it clear there are no plans to change an expanded Zionsville from a town to a city.

Thompson said he expected voters to be most interested in how they will be represented by a new town council and other boards. During the last meeting, the committee discussed the idea of making current Eagle and Union trustees Judith Essex and Candace Ulmer members of an expanded town council.