

Brunswick considers impact fees again

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BRUNSWICK -- The Brunswick City Council is revisiting the concept of impact fees for future development and could decide the issue in April.

Tuesday's meeting was the second time the issue has come before the council.

A few months ago, the council directed TischlerBise, a Rockville consulting firm that focuses on planning, to draft projected impact fees. The council instructed the firm to draft the projected fees without including Brunswick Crossing, a housing development being built on the west side of Brunswick. Fifteen hundred homes are planned.

TischlerBise's first study contained some cost estimates that included Brunswick Crossing, so the firm revised those estimates.

The study recommended that each single family home built in Brunswick have an impact fee of \$1,634. Multi-family units would carry an impact fee of \$1,122 each.

Impact fees cover increases in police, parks and municipal services.

Brunswick Crossing residents will be subject to a special tax district to pay for the increase in parks, police and municipal services the development's residents will need.

Each new resident of Brunswick, for example, is projected to cost the city another \$262 over the next five years for park amenities. The impact fees for parks has been calculated to cost \$1,021 per single family house and \$701 per multi-family housing unit.

The estimated impact fee of police services is \$306 for each housing unit, single-family or multi-family. The impact fee on municipal services is forecast to cost \$307 per single-family unit.

Brunswick's population was 6,152 according to the 2008 U.S. Census estimate. That is expected to go up to 6,379 in 2010, and 12,346 in 2028, after Brunswick Crossing's expected completion.

"We felt there was some misunderstanding where we were going to go with this," said Mayor Carroll Jones, commenting on the consultant's original figures that included Brunswick Crossing houses.

Councilman Jeremy Biser restated his opposition to Brunswick Crossing's exemption from impact fees. The special tax district does not restrict where the money is spent unless the council votes on where it should be spent. Impact fees must be spent on increases in specific services.

The council plans to have another public hearing on the fees next month before voting.

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