

City Planning Commission Puts Brakes on Roadway Impact Fee Study, For Now

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(New Braunfels, TX) -- The City Planning Commission is proceeding slowly, as they question City Staff about many aspects of the 2013 Roadway Impact Fee Study; including the very need to have that fee in the first place.

At yesterday's meeting at City Hall, the Commission decided not only to table the issue for now, but to set up a special meeting on Sept. 10th to look at the issue even further.

Jeff Whitacre is the Project Manager for Kimley-Horn (the Consulting Engineer for the City). Whitacre says the Roadway Impact Fee basically means new development pays for the impact that the new growth will have on existing roadways.

During yesterday's meeting, the Commission questioned city staff about what percentage of the fees collected went to roadways, and if the program was really worthwhile.

Cory Elrod, Chair of Planning and Zoning says most of the members of P&Z weren't here for the original 2007 study, so for many of them, this has been a learning experience; and they chose to move slowly in the hopes of getting it right.

City Staff was also asked to investigate what would happen if they eliminated the loop holes originally given as incentives. For instance, churches, the Creekside movie complex, and the new hospital at Creekside were all given waivers from the Roadway Impact Fee as an incentive to move into the area.

Whitacre told the Commission that City Council has approved the maximum allowable rate. So now it's up to the Planning and Zoning Commission to suggest which options will best suit the City, and then make those recommendations to City Council.