

Board Puts Impact Fees On Back Burner

By Eric Beidel

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Loudoun County will not follow in the footsteps of Stafford and create an impact fee to pay for transportation projects anytime soon.

County supervisors had a short, blunt conversation about the topic during a Transportation and Land Use Committee meeting Monday night.

"This whole subject has turned out to be a total waste of time," Supervisor Jim Burton (I-Blue Ridge), who does not serve on the committee, said.

In 2006, the previous board of supervisors established policies stating that the county "will implement" impact fees for the rural and transition policy areas. The fees can be charged against new development to pay for road improvements that benefit the new development.

Impact fees are charged to developers and builders. However, those costs generally get folded into the price of a new home, so homeowners pay for the fees. Currently, the county secures contributions from developers for roads, schools and other facilities during the rezoning process. Proffer values can exceed \$20,000 per home. However, homes and subdivisions built by-right without a rezoning-projects mainly in the rural or transition areas-do not pay proffers.

Stafford County implemented impact fees in 2003 and has collected more than \$2 million for road improvements near new development. Most other jurisdictions surrounding Loudoun have resisted the fees.

Loudoun County staff estimated that it would take \$200,000 initially in local tax funding just to get an impact fee program off the ground. This and the uncertainty of a bill carried over to the 2009 General Assembly session have county leaders wary of impact fees. The bill in question could eliminate cash proffers and put more emphasis on the use of impact fees to fund road improvements.

The Land Use Committee also resisted the idea of creating an Urban Service Transportation District, which would allow the county to charge impact fees against public facilities outside of the district, specifically in agricultural areas. This measure would require the county to assume control of road maintenance in the district, something handled now by the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Reader Comments

The following are comments from the readers. In no way do they represent the view of Leesburg Today.

Total Comments: 2 comment(s)

BTO wrote on **Apr 30, 2008 7:28 AM:**

" Think outside the box. Increase the fees for zoning, grading, building, and final occupancy permits. Go around the obstacle and surround the enemy !!! "

alby wrote on **Apr 29, 2008 10:29 PM:**

" I don't understand why the County is involved in any road projects. Roads are the domain of VDOT. Any money spent on roads comes from the VDOT budget which is funded by my state taxes. If Loudoun County spends money on roads, then technically I'm being taxed twice for the same thing. 1 by the state to fund roads and 2 by the county to fund roads.

This madness has to end. Either the State or the County pays for road projects. But not both. "

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