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Glendale mulls impact fee

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GLENDALE – It's no coincidence that Glendale Village Council is considering charging a new fee for development, before a piece of real estate changes hands and becomes home to a 1,500-unit retirement community.

The village could collect at least \$1.4 million if the deal between Landmark Baptist Church and Erickson Retirement Communities is finalized and impact fees are okayed by the Village Council when it meets on Jan. 7, 2008.

If passed, an impact fee of \$1,750 per dwelling unit would be charged on all new residential and business development, said Village Administrator Walter Cordes.

The retirement community would be built along Interstate 75 on 100 acres of land; 60 of which are in Glendale and 40 in Evendale. As he understands it, 800-1,100 units are planned to be built in Glendale, Cordes said.

The impact fee would apply to those units, but outside of that the impact fees would have little effect, because Landmark's property is just about the only undeveloped land left in the village, said Glendale Councilman Bill Aronstein.

A number of communities have implemented or discussed charging impact fees or something like them in Greater Cincinnati, including Hamilton Township in Warren County this year. In states like Florida and California they are much more common.

"Unlike many of the communities (who have impact fees), we are not a community where there is tremendous pressure for development," Aronstein said. Impact fees also will preserve Glendale's ability to be a community without an income tax, one of the few left in Greater Cincinnati, Aronstein said.

He said he believes council sees the impact fee as a reasonable request. The fee would be used to maintain and upgrade village infrastructure like roads, the village's water service and treatment facility, sidewalks and other quality-of-life services, Cordes said.

The money could be used to decrease railroad noise for residents and businesses near the tracks – a hot issue in the village – to create "quiet zones."

If Erickson moves into Glendale, the village's population would grow by a third, adding an estimated 900 residents.

"The (existing) residents shouldn't have to pay for needed improvements," Cordes said.

Steve Montgomery, an Erickson representative working on the Glendale project, said he could not speak directly about the Glendale project, but said a fee is "reasonable" if it's necessary to support infrastructure improvements. Erickson is paying an impact fee per unit for a community that will open soon in Hilliard, Ohio, near Columbus.

If the plan with Erickson falls through, Cordes said the village will talk with other developers who offer projects that are compatible with Glendale's personality.

“We don’t want a big box entity, you won’t see a Wal-Mart or Meijer,” Cordes said.

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