



Kaneland fees upset Realtors

By Leslie Hague | Daily Herald Staff

Published: 12/7/2007 12:15 AM

Several Realtor groups are asking the Kaneland School District to repeal its impact fee system, saying it unfairly taxes new homeowners.

The fee system goes against Illinois law that states new development should only pay for the impact created by that development -- not more, according to a letter from the Aurora Tri-County Association of Realtors, the Realtor Association of Fox Valley and the DeKalb Area Association of Realtors.

"We feel they missed the mark on a couple of things," said Susan Gorrell, government affairs director for the Illinois Association of Realtors.

Included in the group's six-page letter are concerns that residents in senior living subdivisions would be taxed extra beyond their property taxes, even though they don't have children in school, and that there is not a legal precedent for taxing for operational expenses.

Gorrell also pointed to studies that showed impact fees are passed along to homeowners.

Kaneland's assistant superintendent for business, Tom Runty, said the district had met with minimal resistance with developers over the fees.

"By and large, our developers understand the impact their developments have," he said. "If (the Realtors) are concerned about affordable housing, they could do something real about it and drop the price."

Seven towns within the Kaneland district signed an intergovernmental agreement which set the same impact and transitional fees for each town in July.

That was necessary so developers wouldn't play towns off of each other, school officials said.

The Realtors' letter asks the towns involved to repeal their ordinances and for the district to redo the process. It also asks that the district refund fees already collected or hold them in escrow until a new system is established.

The district is still looking into the letter, and plans to meet with town officials next week, Runty said. From preliminary discussions with local attorneys, they believe the system's reasoning is valid, he said.