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Bigger fees for new homes, businesses OK'd by Lebanon

By Daniel Wells

Staff Writer

Wednesday, May 23, 2007

Lebanon City Council approved new fees that city officials say will charge developers for the impact new homes and businesses have on the city's parks and roads.

The fees are based on a study by Bethesda, Md.-based TischlerBise and include: • Raising the city's park fee from \$450 for each residential unit to \$1,142 for each single-family unit and \$836 for each multi-family unit. New business will not pay the park fee because they don't add demand to the city's parks.

- Creating a transportation impact fee of \$233 for each single-family unit and \$163 per multi-family unit.

- Business developers would pay a transportation fee based on the type of project and its square footage. Wal-Mart would have paid about \$120,000 if the fee had been in place when its Supercenter was constructed last year.

Developers are required to pay both fees before the city issues building permits.

Councilman Matt Rodriguez voted against two pieces of the legislation — one that sets up the collection procedure and another that raises the park fee — before voting yes on the transportation fee, which passed 6-1.

Rodriguez said raising the fees is not fair to developers with projects already underway.

"It revamps the rules half way through things," Rodriguez said. "It's almost like rewriting the rules of a baseball game in mid play."

Councilman Jeff Monroe voted against both fees and the procedure to collect them.

Mayor Amy Brewer and council members Jeff Aylor, James Norris, Ben Cole and Charleen Mehaffie Flick voted yes on all of the legislation.

The Home Builders Association of Greater Cincinnati executive director Dan Hendricks warned the fees could drive developers out of Lebanon and recommended that city officials look at other ways to pay for infrastructure.

"This is not meant to hurt the home builders," Cole said. "People want to move to Lebanon. I think they'll continue to want to move to here."

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