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Commission to reconsider impact-fee rollback

(Last updated: February 23, 2008 4:38 PM)

By
JASON WITZ

Staff Writer

Like most of his colleagues, Charlotte County Commission Chairman Tom D'Aprile wanted to help smaller builders when he voted to roll back impact fees.

But the experiment has been deemed a failure by officials, who will now revisit the decision Tuesday.

"I told them this would happen," said Commissioner Adam Cummings, who voted against the rollback last October. "We created a multimillion-dollar headache when the board lowered the impact fees."

The commission reduced the fees to the 1997 rates several months ago with the hope it would stimulate local building. The trial period was supposed to last until October.

However, the decision resulted in "unintended consequences," as the county would lose millions in funding for future improvements.

The issue came to a head last week when several commercial developers attempted to finalize their agreements.

The agreements stalled when the commission learned how much they would have to credit the companies for fixing problematic intersections.

D'Aprile said the rollback was never intended for large developers.

"I'm not very happy with this whole thing," he said. "What I had in mind when I did this was to help smaller business — not the big companies."

The commission will have a public hearing before considering any action on the impact fees.

If D'Aprile had his wish, he would still allow the rollbacks for small builders — the reason he voted to switch it in the first place.

"I really don't want to roll them back," he said. "I'm going to try and find a way around this thing so we can keep it for the smaller guys."

You can e-mail Jason Witz at jwitz@sun-herald.com.

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