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## Butler ponders traffic fee

BY AMANDA CHRISTMAN (STAFF WRITER)

Published: February 7, 2010

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Butler Township may create a new advisory committee that would be tasked with establishing a traffic impact fee for new residential and commercial development.

Township engineer Joseph Calabrese said information is still being compiled on the traffic impact advisory committee.

The township planning commission showed interest in serving on the committee at its Tuesday meeting.

Calabrese said planning commission members can serve on such a committee but, according to state law, 40 percent of the advisory group's members would have to be involved in real estate in Butler Township.

The township supervisors would appoint members to the committee. It would follow strict guidelines set by the Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Code, which details the process municipalities have to take to enact a traffic impact fee.

The first step, Calabrese said, is forming the advisory committee by resolution. Then the township would hire an independent group to perform a traffic study in a specific area of the township. A fee would be established based on that information through an ordinance. He said there is grant money available to fund the study.

Calabrese said the process is complex and the study itself will take 18 months. However, once the committee is created, it can set an interim traffic impact fee.

Calabrese said there are about 60 municipalities in Pennsylvania that have the ordinance. Butler would be the first in Luzerne County to enact one.

The idea resulted from a meeting with township officials, local developers, the Greater Hazleton Chamber of Commerce and CAN DO.

The township has individual agreements with developers so road improvements can be made when traffic is increased due to development.

The study, Calabrese said, will look at state Route 309 between South Main Road and West Butler Drive. Right now certain spots on Route 309 are congested with traffic, he said, and something will have to be done to improve the road in the future.

Calabrese said there are several larger-scale residential developments planned for that stretch of road and a lot of undeveloped commercially zoned land.

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Report

## State police investigate shots fired at West Hazleton apartment building

State police are investigating a shooting in West Hazleton Borough early Monday morning. Shots were fired around 3:30 a.m. into an apartment at the corner of Fifth and Broad streets, according to the Standard-Speaker news parnter SSPTV/News 13. No one wa

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## Drums attorney set to challenge Eachus

A Drums attorney announced Monday that she will run as a Republican and challenge House Majority Leader Todd Eachus for his 116th Legislative District seat in the state House of Representatives. Tarah Toohil, 30, will kick off her campaign at an event T

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