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## City Commissioners Support School Impact Fee Increase

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PLANT CITY - City commissioners approved a resolution last week to support the Hillsborough County Commission's proposal to increase school impact fees.

Mayor John Dicks cast the only no vote because the increases in Plant City wouldn't be phased in, as they would be in other parts of Hillsborough.

The county commission plans to phase in the increases through May 1, 2008. The Greater Plant City Chamber of Commerce recommended - and city commissioners agreed - to eliminate the phase-in period in the city and implement fees Nov. 1 if county commissioners approve the raise in fees for new homes.

If the county commission approves the proposal July 19, impact fees for a new single-family, three-bedroom home in Plant City would go from \$196 to \$3,880 starting Nov. 1. In the rest of the county, the increases would be phased in, with \$1,000 charged starting Nov. 1; \$2,000 on May 1, 2007; \$3,000 on Nov. 1, 2007; and \$3,880 on May 1, 2008.

"It's such a huge jump," Dicks said. "It's \$4,000 for an average house. I have a reluctance for the one lump sum."

Ray Reyes

## Shriners' Bally Hoo Bash, Nightshirt Parade On Tap

TAMPA - If ballyhooing and parading around in your nightshirt appeals to you, you might want to join the Shriners tonight.

While ballyhooing is not a well-defined activity, officials for the Shriners think most folks will get the point.

About 2,500 Shriners, in town for their annual convention, are expected to join the Shriners Bally Hoo Bash and Nightshirt Parade that will begin next to the Marriott Waterside and wind its way to the Channelside district. Ballyhooing starts about 7 p.m. and the parade will follow about 8 p.m.

The night parade will travel along St. Pete Times Forum Drive to Channelside. This is the first time the nightshirt parade has been held outside, so Shriners officials aren't exactly sure what to expect.

The public is invited to both watch and participate in the parade, which the Shriners hold each year in the town where they hold their annual convention.

Channelside and St. Pete Times Forum drives will be blocked for about an hour from 7:45 until 8:45 p.m.

A staff report

## New Middle School Planned Near Citrus Park Elementary

TAMPA - Citrus Park Elementary could receive a middle school neighbor by the 2008-09 school year, as soon as an elementary school it is housing vacates.

The Hillsborough County school district will open Deer Park Elementary in portables behind Citrus Park Elementary in August. Deer Park's permanent school, built to relieve crowded Mary Bryant Elementary, will not be ready until next year.

Once Deer Park students move into their building on Citrus Park Drive, the school district plans to remove the portables and begin construction on a new middle school.

If the plan goes forward, Middle School RR, its temporary name, would draw from Farnell, Walker and Martinez middle schools and open in August 2008.

Courtney Cairns Pastor

## Town House Developer Returns To Original Plan

TAMPA - A developer has withdrawn a revised plan to build seven town houses in favor of a version approved last year by the Tampa City Council.

Some South Seminole Heights residents, however, say the project is unacceptable for an area of single-family homes.

In May, the council postponed a vote on North Bay Associates' new plan for the vacant site at 610 N. Bay St., which included tweaks for balcony overhangs and the location of air-conditioning units. The city's construction services department had questioned those items, prompting North Bay to return to the council with the revised design.

Residents at the May council meeting said the town houses would not meet residential design standards created in 2001 for South, Southeast and Old Seminole Heights.

Michael Horner, a consultant for North Bay, said the original project followed those guidelines. He said recently he anticipates filing for construction permits within weeks.

Kathy Steele

## Proposals Due Today For Laura Street Work

PLANT CITY - The city expects to receive proposals today from consultants to help develop plans for improving the Laura Street area.

The plans will include streetscaping portions of Laura Street, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and a couple of other streets.

The Laura Street area was a vibrant neighborhood that had declined until the city began making improvements in recent years, including by opening the new Samuel W. Cooper Park, encouraging affordable housing and planning the restoration of the historical Bing rooming house.

Dave Nicholson

## PASCO

### Controlled Burns Scheduled For 500 Acres Of Preserve

The Southwest Florida Water Management District will set controlled burns during July and August on the Conner Preserve about five miles north of Land O' Lakes.

About 500 acres will be set ablaze in small parcels as part of routine maintenance of land the district manages.

Prescribed burns are conducted only when weather conditions allow. District crews make every effort to ensure that smoke doesn't affect homes or highways, a news release said, but motorists should be careful if they see smoke near roadways.

Call (352) 796-7211 or, toll-free, 1-800-423-1476.

A staff report

## Wiregrass Submits Plan For New Retail Hub

WESLEY CHAPEL - Wiregrass Ranch's developers have submitted plans outlining the design for the project's retail hub, which is known as the Shops at Wiregrass.

The Pasco County Development Review Department is reviewing the plans, which detail how The Goodman Co. of West Palm Beach and Forest City Enterprises of Cleveland will build their open-air "lifestyle center" plaza.

The designs envision most of the 800,000-square-foot plaza arrayed along both sides of a semicircular drive on the north side of State Road 56.

The project depends on Pulte Home Corp. extending State Road 56 east from its dead end at Bruce B. Downs Boulevard. Plans for the extension are under review.

The plaza will be anchored on its southwest by a JCPenney department store, which opened in October. The only other announced tenant, Dillard's department store, will be the second anchor. The plaza's third anchor is unidentified.

Plans also focus on the construction of three new buildings. Two of those buildings will be attached to the east side of JCPenney.

A third will be built nearby on the east side of the semi-circular drive. The new buildings will total nearly 50,000 square feet.

Kevin Wiatrowski

## POLK

### Deputies Participating In Traffic Safety Campaign

BARTOW - Polk County sheriff's deputies will be out in force this summer reminding motorists to drive safely and obey all traffic laws.

The Summer H.E.A.T. (Heavy Enforcement of All Traffic) Campaign is a reminder to motorists that driving while impaired, not buckling up, or speeding is a forecast for disaster, officials said.

"Summer is a time for families to enjoy travel and fun together. But no matter what the destination is, buckle up, secure children in their safety seats and never, never drink and drive," Sheriff Grady Judd said in a written statement.

Polk deputies are working in conjunction with law enforcement agencies throughout the state, and in partnership with the Florida

Department of Transportation, in the safety campaign.

Dave Nicholson

## HERNANDO

### State Lawmaker Russell Is Teetotaler, Not DUI Suspect

BROOKSVILLE - Republican State Rep. David Russell says he's proud to be a teetotaler. He then was surprised Thursday when reporters called his office to ask whether he had been arrested Wednesday night for drunken driving.

It turns out that a David Russell was, in fact, arrested for DUI in Weeki Wachee late Wednesday, but a clerk at the Hernando County Sheriff's Office mistakenly put information of a third David Russell, this one with the same birthday as the state representative, on the Web site, according to Deputy Donna Black.

"Let me tell you how much I have in common with the guy that was arrested last night: we both drive," Russell, the Brooksville lawmaker who represents District 44, said Thursday morning.

The sheriff's office has nine David Russells in its database, which is filled not only with suspects but also with victims, witnesses and complainants, among others, Black said.

Tony Marrero

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