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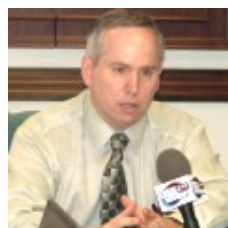
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Posted Thursday, March 2 at 2:58 PM



Jerry Weitz

City council watching for impact fee proposal

By Jerry Gunn

GAINESVILLE - Gainesville's impact fee consultant hesitated Thursday morning on announcing the proposed maximum impact fee for the city at City Council's work session.

Jerry Weitz and City Planning Director Kip Padgett said a better time would be the 5 p.m. Impact Fee Advisory Committee meeting at the Community Service Center.

"Tonight we will discuss the maximum eligible impact fees and also the consultant will give a recommendation on what he thinks the impact fee should be," Padgett said.

Weitz told Council still to come are public hearings and state and city approval with the fees possibly ready to levy on new builders by early summer.

Weitz advised having the fees in place in time for the beginning of construction of the mammoth Mundy Mill residential development which the city annexed and rezoned last year.

Weitz said in Gainesville the impact fees would be a significant funding source to offset the cost of new growth on Parks and Recreation and Public Safety.

Mayor Mark Musselwhite said he does not want impact fees as a possible stumbling block to new industry and commerce.

Musselwhite said fees paying for parks and recreation could be levied on new residential development.

"On Parks and Rec., it could be residential only, but on police and fire for public safety, it cannot be, it has to be across the board," Musselwhite said.

Musselwhite said that would give cities without impact fees on industry an advantage over Gainesville.

DIRTY GATEWAY

Gainesville City Council member Myrtle Figueras said she wants the Highway 129 Task Force re-activated and re-focused on bringing economic development, but before that can happen, she said the Athens Highway corridor needs a major clean-up.

"I'd like for Code Enforcement from both the city and county to get together to make sure we can clean up the area," she said.

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Figueras said Highway 129 is one of Gainesville's main gateways, but right now it is a dirty gateway.

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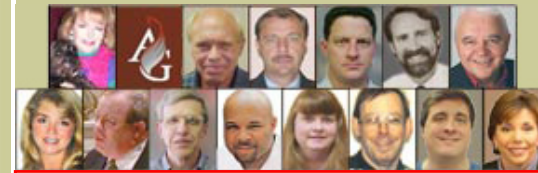
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