

Council to mull cost to connect: City impact fees could reach \$4,000

By Greg Layton, Milford Chronicle

MILFORD - The cost of connecting to Milford water and sewer might soon rise from \$500 and \$600, respectively, to \$4,000 altogether, said Milford City Manager Richard D. Carmean.

The result could be hundreds of thousands of dollars more to maintain city infrastructure, which might soon have to bear the pressure of thousands of new users.

But no one should fear that thousand-unit developments such as Simpson Crossing in south Milford could owe millions of dollars more than their builders expected.

Mr. Carmean said the city already requires developers to pay for and build their own water and sewer systems whenever possible, so Milford City Council will probably devise a formula that reduces developers' connection fees by the amount they invest in infrastructure.

Milford City Council must schedule a workshop to debate the proposed fee increase before placing it on a council agenda for approval.

Mr. Carmean said the fee increase would not affect developers' projects at the time the city approves them but at the time construction begins.

Warnell property rezoned

During a public hearing on Monday, Milford City Council approved rezoning about eight acres behind McCoy Street.

The property, owned by Joseph Warnell, was zoned for industrial use but may now be used for residential construction.

Mr. Warnell, who owns the buildings now used by Clariant, said he has owned the property for about 20 years, expecting to put industrial facilities on it, but decided that the land should be protected because it sits along Deep Branch, a clean tributary of the Mispillion River.

"To me, this is an upgrade and enhances the value of my property," said Mr. Carmean, who lives nearby.

Part of the property lies outside of Milford city limits and the city would have to annex it before Mr. Warnell could proceed with his plan to build eight homes there.

He said he is in no hurry, however, because children use a ball field on the property and he feels they should be able to use it for the next five years.

Cascade coming

Milford City Council also approved the use of 19 acres on Airport Road, now owned by Ralph and Clara Fry, for the construction of an 82-home development called Cascades.

Although the city's zoning ordinance would allow 193 homes on the property, Lacrosse Homes, a developer, plans to limit its subdivision to 82 homes, said Zachary Crouch, an engineer for Davis, Bowen and Friedel.

Karen Emory Brittingham, Milford city planner, said the city's departments have reviewed the plan and voiced no objections.

The development, which would sit next to Milford Crossing, would contain five acres of open space and the people moving into it could pick almost any size and style home they wish, said Karen R. Barnes, a Lacrosse representative.

The developer would pay for the construction of lacrosse and soccer fields at the Greater Milford Boys & Girls Club to be built nearby, she said.