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Cumberland eyes traffic impact fee

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Evening Sun Reporter

If Cumberland Township officials approve a new traffic-impact-fee study, developers will pay more than \$2,000 per new residential unit in most parts of the township.

Cumberland began the process to implement traffic-impact fees in early 2005 and was one of the first municipality in Adams County to do so.

In order to levy fees, the supervisors must follow the procedure set forth in Act 209, a state law passed in 1990 that allows municipalities to charge for the improvements made necessary by new homes or businesses. The procedure includes an 18-month-long study process for the township to determine where improvements will likely be needed and how much they will cost.

Straban and Mount Joy townships are also going through the process to charge impact fees.

The two studies released recently as part of Cumberland's effort – the roadway sufficiency analysis and transportation capital improvements plan – call for improvements at seven intersections and two road segments.

There will be a public hearing later this month for people to comment on the study, which estimates the township will need \$9,877,00 to accommodate traffic from growth in the township up to the year 2015. The report calls for the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation to contribute \$3,577,542 – or 36 percent of what's needed for the improvements, and developers to pay \$6,299,458 – or 58 percent – in impact fees.

The developers will be charged according to how many new trips their projects will generate per day. For residential units, that's usually one per unit, and for businesses, the amount varies based on how many vehicles will likely come through. For the northern transportation service area, it'll be \$2,159 per trip, and in the southern, it will be \$2,210 per trip. Parts of the township will not be affected.

Additionally, the township and PennDOT will have to pay \$888,000 to keep the level of service the same because of more traffic generated through the township from growth elsewhere. Cumberland will be responsible for \$602,667 and PennDOT for \$282,333, the report said.

Since last year, developers have been paying \$1,000 per unit – the state standard for the period during which the traffic study is completed. Once the supervisors adopt the studies by ordinance, the larger fee will take effect. The studies can be modified periodically if the supervisors so decide.

The study was completed by consulting firm McMahon Associates Inc. of Mechanicsburg. It was based on a land-use assumptions report that estimated there will be 1,116 new homes in the township by 2015.

Contact Meg Bernhardt at mbernhardt@eveningsun.com.

IF YOU GO

What: Impact fee public hearing

Where: Cumberland Township building on Route 116

When: Tuesday, June 27 at 7 p.m. A supervisors meeting follows immediately afterwards, where the supervisors could approve the studies.

Who: Open to the public.

FIX 'EM UP

The report lists seven intersection improvements and two road segment improvements made necessary by growth in Cumberland Township in the next 15 years:

1. Chambersburg Road and Herrs Ridge Road: Add left and right turn lanes on the southbound approach of Herrs Ridge Road and east and westbound on Chambersburg Road.
2. Fairfield Road and Park Avenue: Install a traffic signal and "signal ahead" signs.
3. Fairfield Road and Blackhorse Tavern Road/Breams Hill Road: Install a traffic signal.

4. Emmitsburg Road and Ridge Road: Install a traffic signal.
5. Emmitsburg Road and Barlow-Greenmount Road: Install a traffic signal and add a southbound left turn lane and northbound right turn lane.
6. Taneytown Road and Route 15 southbound ramps: Install a traffic signal and add a westbound left turn lane on Route 15, and a southbound off ramp on Route 15.
7. Taneytown Road and Route 15 northbound off ramp/Solomon Road: Install a traffic signal and realign the Route 15 northbound off ramp, install a westbound left lane on Solomon Road and an eastbound left turn lane on the Route 15 off ramp.
8. Widen two road segments – Chambersburg Road between Herrs Ridge and Belmont roads; and Emmitsburg Road between Ridge and Barlow-Greenmount roads. Roads will be three lanes plus shoulders with one travel lane in each direction and a continuous two-way left-turn lane in the center.