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Habitat for Humanity appeals \$29,000 county fee for ReStore project

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Habitat for Humanity says it should not have to pay \$29,000 the county says it owes because of additional traffic it expects the nonprofit organization to generate when it adds improvements to its existing ReS operation in Templeton.

The nonprofit, whose operation involves recycling materials from landfill says it cannot afford the fee, and hints in an appeal letter that the cost might delay or even kill its plans.

The county Department of Public Works says that according to its form the tax is both fair and necessary.

“Payment of a road impact fee is an essential component of meeting th county’s transportation needs and mitigating the proposed project impa according to a staff report from Glenn Marshall, development services engineer.

“Granting this appeal would set a precedence (sic) that could result in substantial loss of road improvement fee revenue in the future,” Marsh wrote.

Road impact fees, established in 1991, are the county's way of getting money up front from developers whose subdivisions are going to have profound effect on traffic. The county also collects fees for other endea that might cause traffic, such as building a secondary dwelling.

According to figures from 2008, there had been 27 appeals of fees for residential construction. Of those, supervisors denied 23.

The county has heard 7 appeals by nonprofit organizations, five of then from Templeton, according to the Department of Public Works. It waive appeal for a library, adjusted two for churches and one for a post office and denied a church appeal and two earlier requests by Habitat for Humanity.

The Board of Supervisors will referee the current appeal during its mee Tuesday, which begins at 9 a.m. at the new County Government Cente 1055 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

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