

## News Features

- Write the Editor
- Headlines
- Business
- Calendar
- Community
- Editorial
- Now Playing
- Obituaries
- Police Report
- Readers Forum
- Senior Slant
- Sports Briefs
- The Public Eye
- Weekly Cartoons

## OC Today

- Ocean City Today
- Ocean City Digest
- Cable Channels
- Get A Media Kit
- Suscribe
- E-Mail Us

## School impact fees possible in Worcester

**Christine Cullen**

Staff Writer

(Nov. 4, 2005) Developers of residential properties take note: it might soon cost even more to build new homes and condominiums in Worcester County. A study on school impact fees ordered by the county commissioners was accepted, and the fees are now one step closer to becoming a reality.

In June, the county retained the fiscal, economic and planning consulting firm TischlerBise to analyze potential impact fee funding to meet the demands generated by new development for public schools. Paul Tischler, president of TischlerBise, presented the firm's findings to commissioners at their Nov. 1 meeting, and the commissioners voted unanimously to table legislation on the impact fees and hold public hearings on the issue.

Impact fees are one-time payments used to construct system improvements needed to accommodate new development, and they represent new growth's fair share of capital facility needs. The school impact fee is only imposed on new residential development, is assessed per housing unit and is collected when building permits are issued to developers.

According to the study, the maximum supportable impact fee for a single-family house is \$5,942; for moderate intensity multifamily buildings with 2-19 units, \$2,514 per unit; for high intensity multifamily buildings with 20 or more units, \$355 per unit; and for mobile homes, \$3,471.

Tischler made it clear these assessed fees will only pay for additions and renovations to the actual school buildings, "the bricks and mortar" and do not include teaching or administrative costs. He noted that the assessed fees, which are only the highest feasible amounts and will not necessarily be the amounts adopted, are based on school cost factors, the levels of service provided by each school and the number of students per housing unit in the county.

Commissioner Bud Church raised the issue that many properties in the county are purchased as seasonal homes or by retired people who do not have children in school. That, Tischler said, is why the assessed fees are much lower than those in other counties with larger urban populations.

"If there are a lot of houses without pupils, then the pupil generation rate will be much lower," resulting in lower impact fees, he said. The pupil generation rate for single-family homes is 0.214 students, whereas in more suburban areas that figure would be closer to 0.5, Tischler said.

The current high building costs have an effect on the impact fee, Tischler said, since they make school construction more expensive. If they go down in the future, then the impact fees could decrease, and those who had already paid will receive a refund.

"If construction costs were to go down, then of course the impact fee could be lowered," he said.

Commissioner Virgil Shockley raised the question of waivers or exemptions for builders of affordable housing. Tischler noted that for every housing unit that does



## Features

- Write the Editor
- Headlines
- OC Today Photos
- Business
- Calendar
- Community
- Editorial
- Now Playing
- Obituaries
- Police Report
- Readers Forum
- Senior Slant
- Sports Briefs
- The Public Eye
- Weekly Cartoons

[More Stories](#)

## Hotels & Real Estate

### Hotel Reservations

Check In:

Check Out:

Adults

### Real Estate Listings

Choose Location:

Price Range:

from:

to:

[More](#)

not pay the full amount, the county would have to make up the difference.

“For every dollar you don’t make of the \$5,900, that comes from the general taxpayer” Commission President John “Sonny” Bloxom clarified.

[Go Back](#)

Real