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Shiloh, O'Fallon schools test cities on impact fees

BY ALIANA RAMOS
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Superintendents from Shiloh and O'Fallon school districts spoke to city officials from both municipalities during separate meetings Monday about adopting school impact fees.

Under the proposal, developers who build new homes and apartments in the Shiloh-O'Fallon school districts would be charged an impact fee that ranges from \$281.66 for a one-bedroom apartment to \$3,504.51 for a five-bedroom, single-family detached home.

The money collected from these impact fees would go toward site and construction costs for the schools, which include any additions, building and purchase of land, said Jennifer Filyaw, superintendent of Shiloh School District 85.

"Our schools are growing," said Filyaw, who spoke during a presentation at the Shiloh village meeting and later at the O'Fallon City Council meeting.

O'Fallon Township High School District 203 officials expect student enrollment to grow to more than 4,500 in 15-20 years. The high school is already filled beyond capacity. The school currently has about 2,250 in a building designed to house about 1,900, according to information released by the school.

The fees were determined by a study commissioned by the school districts, based on the value of the land in the district in proportion to the maximum amount of students per acre allowed by law.

Other school districts in the metro-east have also proposed impact fees. The Edwardsville, Triad and Highland school districts have asked Madison County to impose a fee on the building of new homes in the unincorporated areas of their school districts.

So far, only Edwardsville's fee has been approved by a city government. Edwardsville's fee requires builders to pay \$2,000 for a two-bedroom home and about \$3,000 for a five-bedroom home. Each district is likely to have different rates.

Both Triad and Highland are seeking approval from their city governments and the county simultaneously.

Although the O'Fallon Township High School District 203 and the Shiloh school boards both approve resolutions for school impact fees within the past two months, only the municipalities that the school districts serve have the authority to impose the fees.

So far, the city of Fairview Heights, O'Fallon and the village of Shiloh have received letters about the impact fees, said Superintendent Russell Clover of the O'Fallon Township High School District.

Shiloh Mayor James Vernier said no action would be taken by the Village Board Monday in order to give trustees a chance to look over the documents.

Fairview Heights Mayor Gail Mitchell said Monday he received a letter from the school district but had not yet had a chance to take any action.

O'Fallon Mayor Gary Graham said the impact fees will be discussed at the next community development committee meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for Nov. 14 at 6 p.m.

In other business in O'Fallon on Monday, the City Council approved the hearing officer position. The hearing officer will replace the zoning board of appeals.

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