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Developers to see higher impact fees in Pine

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 By Sandy Trozzo

Pine supervisors Monday approved an ordinance that raises the fees under the Transportation Improvement Program from \$948 to \$1,300.

Commonly known as an impact fee, the charge is paid by developers for each morning and evening car trip generated by the proposed development, said township manager Cheryl Fischer. For example, if a traffic study determines a housing plan will generate 30 car trips each morning and evening (or 60 trips a day), the developer would pay \$78,000 in impact fees.

Raising the fee was recommended by an advisory council that conducted a public hearing on the ordinance March 14; it was last increased in 2000.

The new rate does not apply to plans that have already received final approval.

The ordinance passed 4-1 with Frank Spagnolo, a developer, opposing it.

"It is a tough time in this township," he said. "The majority of people want to go to Butler County."

Mr. Spagnolo said building permits in Cranberry and Adams, for example, are "off charts" compared with permits in Pine.

"Any time you add more costs, you're limiting yourself," he said.

But Scott Anderson, assistant township manager, said Cranberry and Adams have comparable impact fees, as do neighboring Richland and Marshall.

"You're competing on a level field," Supervisor Phil Henry said.

Money from the impact fees go into a restricted account and can be used only for transportation improvements, Ms. Fischer said. For example, impact fee money will be used to upgrade the intersection of Pearce Mill Road and Route 910, she added.

In other business, supervisors approved a conditional use for the second phase of Wexford Self Storage at Route 910 and South Chapel Drive. An 18,400-square-foot facility is planned.

Supervisors also approved upgrading the township's phone system at a cost of \$9,660, and approved a franchise agreement with Armstrong Cable. The cable agreement was negotiated with Marshall, Bradford Woods and Richland.

All were approved 5-0.

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