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Kane may freeze impact fees

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February 8, 2009

By **KARRI E. CHRISTIANSEN** For The Courier-News

Kane County Board members are expected Tuesday to approve a one-year freeze on impact fees in an effort to combat the poor economy and to help jump-start real estate growth.

Members of the board's executive committee recently discussed the possibility of holding impact fees at their current level for one year. An impact fee is a charge on new development to pay for the construction or expansion of off-site capital improvements that are created by and benefit the new development. The fees are charged to developers as a way to recoup money for a development's impact on roads, parks and schools.

Kane County adopted its impact fee ordinance in 2004. Impact fees are collected on a yearly schedule, with payments determined by a multiplier. The multiplier is determined in part by the number of vehicle trips generated on a weekday during peak hours of traffic, the average trip length in miles and the cost of building one mile of road.

Officials had planned to increase that multiplier by 8 percent, starting July 1, 2010, according to documents provided by the county. However, because of the weak economy, poor housing sales and the slow-down in development, county officials are considering nixing the planned hike.

"With the economy being what it is, we thought it was the least we could do," Kane County Board Chairman Karen McConaughay said of the proposed fee freeze.

County board members are expected to approve the freeze at their next meeting scheduled for 9:30 a.m. Tuesday at the Kane County Government Center in Geneva.

Some committee members did express concern about how the impact fee freeze would affect the county's revenues. McConaughay said revenues are coming in below what was projected for this year's budget, but officials won't know exactly how much less revenue is coming in until the end of the county's first quarter.

"We may have to make budget reductions," McConaughay said. "It is likely by the end of the first quarter we will have to make budget cuts."

The county already has a put a hold on any new hires, with certain exceptions, such as the

sheriff's department and replacements in certain offices. In fact, board members are expected to approve on Tuesday plans to fill a vacancy in the civil engineering department left open by an employee who took a job elsewhere.

Board members also are considering hiking fees in the circuit court clerk's office for things such as marriage licenses and other documents in an effort to bring in more money.

The 'Yes We Can' Multiplier

From TPR: The Public Record

Kane County Board Controversy | Bonnie Lee Kunkel, Gerry Jones on Asking Questions

From OpenlineBlog.com

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common sense clarence wrote:

If there are any merchants under Kane County jurisdiction who don't shovel the sidewalk in front of their place of business I would suggest an ordinance and fine for not shoveling. It only makes common sense that walkers should not have to walk in the street in front of a merchants place of business simply because they refuse to shovel the sidewalk.

2/9/2009 5:25 AM CST on suburbanchicagonews.com

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