

## Popular Zephyrhills flea market trying to resolve fee dispute

By [LAURA KINSLER](#) | The Tampa Tribune

The owners of a popular flea market say they're working with city officials to resolve a dispute over unpaid fees that have the city threatening to shut down the market.

The city council is scheduled to vote at its Jan. 10 meeting on whether to revoke the conditional-use permit for the Patriot Flea Market because the owners failed to meet a Nov. 1 deadline to pay nearly \$20,000 in transportation impact fees.

"That revocation is not going to happen," flea market owner Carl Hill said. "We're going to meet all of their demands."

The flea market, on Chancy Road about 2 miles east of U.S. 301, is a destination for hundreds of shoppers every Tuesday and Thursday. It's housed on land that was developed for a future industrial park.

"We've been in a recession for three years," Hill said. "And, unfortunately, we built that industrial park just in time for the recession. The city was generous enough to let us run a flea market there so we'd have some income to help with the mortgage."

The city granted a conditional-use permit to Hill and his business partner, Paul Corriea, in November 2009 to operate a flea market on part of the industrial park for six months of the year, up to four days a week. But one of the conditions was that they would pay their transportation impact fee within a year.

Corriea wrote a letter to City Manager Steve Spina saying he misunderstood the terms of the agreement and thought he could pay the fee in monthly installments of \$1,000.

Some city council members seemed inclined to make an exception for the owners because of the down economy, but Spina warned them against it. He said the last time the city agreed to let a developer postpone paying his impact fees, he ended up suing the city and ultimately paid nothing.

Hill said he and Corriea would pay the fee in full before the meeting. "We don't have any intention of letting the deadline pass," he said. "We still plan on building an industrial park at the site when the economy turns around, and those fees will be credited toward our first building."