

Impact fee decision pushed back

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By: Ann Forte

RALEIGH -- After members of Raleigh's Planning Commission discussed the possibility of raising impact fees for nearly half an hour, members decided to wait before making a decision.

"We want to see Cary. We want to see Durham," said Brad Mullins, who is a member of the planning commission.

Mullins and the other commission members want to compare Raleigh's fees to those of neighboring cities and towns.

"I certainly think we need more information before making a decision," Mullins explained.

The proposal in front of the commission would double impact fees, which are fees developers have to pay for any new construction. The money goes toward things such as roads and parks.



Raleigh Planning Commission

"For a major expansion that's going to generate new traffic or for new homes that are constructed in the area where there's not modernized infrastructure to handle the growth, that's what those fees pay for," said Eric Lamb with Raleigh's Public Works Department.

Under the proposed increase, impact fees for an average single-family home would go from \$1,200 to \$2,500. The city estimates that the increase would generate an additional \$7 million to \$8 million for the city.

"We are talking about increasing and increasing fees to make roads wider and wider and grow further and further, and we need to make a recommendation as to whether that's a wise course of action," said Bonner Gaylord, another member of Raleigh's Planning Commission.

Several City Council members support raising impact fees, but many residents do not. Several spoke out against the increase at a public hearing last week.

"We need a lot more information, and rather than put it to the text change where it would be just a few of us," said Planning Commissioner Member Dennis Davis, "I think the whole committee needs to hear it at one time."

The Planning Commission of the Whole will take up the issue when it meets April 1. The matter could go before the City Council as soon as the middle of April.