

# Evening Sun

## Straban adopts traffic impact fee

By MELODY ASPER

Evening Sun Correspondent

Thursday, March 10, 2005 -

Developers in the fastest-growing areas of Straban Township will pay a new traffic impact fee adopted by supervisors Monday night.

And once a study of development's impact on township roads is complete, the fee could increase and the areas where the fee is collected could expand.

Straban supervisors' unanimous vote to impose traffic impact fees comes less than a month after their neighbors in Cumberland Township decided to impose a \$1,000-per-lot traffic impact fee on developers and initiate a traffic impact fee study.

In Straban Township, the fee will be based on the peak hour trips the project is expected to create into and out of the development.

The result will be a \$1,000 fee per home in a residential development, said John Yacapsin, a general manager with McMahon Associates, the firm hired to perform the traffic impact fee study in Straban. The fee would be higher for projects expected to generate more traffic, such as a bank or department store, he said.

Impact fee revenue would be used for traffic improvements linked to development and the need for township roads to handle more traffic.

"This is a win-win situation," supervisor Troy Martin said. "As a township, we looked at this pretty hard, and this puts the financial responsibility of improving the roads on the developer, not out of the taxpayers' pockets."

Martin said the impact fees can be used to make road improvements that are not in the immediate vicinity of a development.

"Sometimes, developers will only improve the roads right at their subdivisions," Martin said. "This allows us to go farther down the road and make improvements where it is needed. For example, if there is an intersection a half-mile from a development, the impact fees could be used to improve that intersection."

Straban Township is one of the fastest-growing municipalities in Adams County. Two projects alone, Gettysburg Commons and one proposed by Snyder Developers, would bring more than 3,000 new homes to the township.

Gettysburg Commons is an 1,800-home retirement community planned for 650 acres between routes 15 and 394 and Hunterstown Road. Snyder Developers hope to build 925 townhomes and 400 single-family homes on about 900 acres along Red Bridge Road.

Greater Gettysburg Development Co. has not submitted preliminary plans for Gettysburg Commons and, as a result, will have to pay traffic impact fees if the project proceeds, said Robert Coleman, Straban's zoning and code enforcement officer.

Snyder Developers has submitted preliminary plans for three of the five phases in its project and will only be required to pay traffic impact fees on the portion of the project not covered in the plans already submitted, he said.

For now, developers in four areas will be required to pay the new fee. Those areas include: Route 30 from one end of the township to the other and the area within one mile on each side of Route 30; all land within a two-mile radius of Hunterstown; the area of Old Route 15 between the Distelfink Restaurant and Weaner Road; and land adjacent to parts of Old Harrisburg Road.

McMahon Associates, which has an office in Harrisburg, will be paid \$77,000 to conduct the study, which could take as much as a year and a half to complete.

Working in conjunction with McMahon Associates will be an advisory committee consisting of volunteer members appointed by the supervisors. Members include Barbara Baker, Alan Zepp, Roy Weaner, Robert McIlhenny, Dan Sieg, George Chorba and Riley Redding. The latter three are businessmen involved in the building industry.

The final study could alter the areas in which the fee is collected. And if the final study results in a lower fee, the township will have to refund the difference to developers. For that reason, the township is setting the money collected aside until the study is complete, Coleman said.