

**CAMDEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PUBLIC HEARING ON DEVELOPMENT IMPACT FEE ORDINANCE
THURSDAY, MAY 15, 2008 5:00 PM
COUNTY ANNEX, 107 GROSS ROAD, KINGSLAND, GEORGIA**

The Camden County Board of Commissioners held a public hearing on the Development Impact Fee Ordinance on Thursday, May 15, 2008, at 5:00 p.m. at the County Annex, Kingsland, Georgia.

Present: Chair Preston Rhodes; Vice-Chair Katherine Nisi Zell; Commissioner David L. Rainer; Commissioner Stephen L. Berry; Commissioner Charlene Sears; County Administrator Steve Howard; County Attorney Brent Green; and County Clerk Jodi Gregory.

Chairman Rhodes opened the public hearing at 5:00 p.m., delivered the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Planning and Development Director Loretta Hylton-Riggins reviewed a comparison chart showing the cities impact fees and the proposed impact fees for the County, pointing out that the County's plan does not include fees for water and sewer.

Bill Ross, the County's consultant from Ross+Associates, explained the next steps in the process; adoption of the Capital Improvements Element and adoption of the impact fee ordinance. Mr. Ross also stated the two big issues facing the County were the consideration of impact fees as a funding strategy, which shifts the tax burden, and at what level does the County want to charge.

Keith Post, President of the Board of Realtors, advised the Board that although the National Realtors Association opposes impact fees altogether because they deter development, at the local level the Board of Realtors could support the fees if they were collected specific to development, credits given to contractors, collected only at the point realized, and exemptions were allowed for affordable housing. He further stated the local Board of Realtors would not be opposed to the fees if they are judicious and graduated.

Bill Gross, W. H. Gross Construction Company, advised he was a part of the Impact Fee Advisory Committee, and he briefly gave an overview of the committee's finding. Mr. Gross stated the committee recommended a residential graduation over a four year period of 40%, 60%, 80%, and finally 100%, beginning January 1, 2009. The recommended commercial graduation was 20% over the next four years without any increase. He said the graduation would allow for public awareness and planning, current economic conditions, and the competitiveness of the surrounding counties. Mr. Gross further stated that he believes the fees are necessary with the amount of projected growth, but fees should be graduated in.

Commissioner Berry asked the Impact Fee Advisory Committee member, who were present, if they had a problem with the way the current scheduled is laid out. Those

members responded that they did. Commissioner Berry asked what would be an alternative.

Debbie Jones stated the biggest concern is that not enough public notice has been given prior to the implementation of the fees. She is also concerned with the commercial aspect of the ordinance stating Camden would be competing with Glynn County, who is offering incentives.

Mrs. Riggins explained that exemptions are set up for commercial, economic development, and such is addressed in the ordinance.

Fire Chief Dennis Gailey addressed the Board stating that Mr. Ross has done a great job with coming up with the numbers and should address the Board regarding the methodology.

Mr. Ross stated the future needs of the County were determined. Then, the costs of those needs were determined. Next, the future costs were estimated. Then, how much could be paid for with impact fees was determined. Mr. Ross stated if the maximum amount is collected, the impact fees would off-set taxes by 1.27 mils on property taxes. It basically comes down to collecting impact fees or increasing property taxes.

Ed Levy stated graduating impact fees over time would stimulate growth.

Corey Dawson asked what are the County's plans for water and sewer, to which Commissioner Berry stated these fees are not for water and sewer, but fire, court and police services.

Mr. Gross stated he believed it was time to look at the County entering into the cities with service agreements to eliminate some of the duplications of services. He believes services agreements, coupled with impact fees would be more agreeable.

Commissioner Rainer agreed with Mr. Gross and stated that he did not have a problem with a graduated schedule for the fees.

Commissioner Berry asked about the possibilities of negotiating fees. Mr. Ross said that was not permissible and recommended the Board adopt a fee schedule they are comfortable with.

There was further discussion among Board members and audience members regarding the need for more public awareness and implementation of the fees on a graduated basis. It was the consensus of the audience members that a graduated scale would be best.

Chairman Rhodes closed the Public Hearing at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Preston Rhodes, Chairman

Jodi Gregory, County Clerk