

This Won't Hurt



Ray Brock clamps on a newly inserted navel ring at Body Jewels, a body piercing and tattoo shop at 143 E. Franklin St. Brock, a 23-year-old native of Sampson, has more than 15 piercings on various parts of his body.

Orange Residents May See Hike in Impact Fee

BY ROCHELLE WILLIAMS
STAFF WRITER

Building a new house or even renovating an old one next year could leave residents and developers owing Orange County \$250 more than this year if the county commissioners decide to raise the existing impact fee.

A bill on Monday's commissioners' agenda proposed that the \$750 impact fee be raised to \$1,000.

The impact fee was created a year and a half ago to assist Orange County's overcrowded, underfunded school system in coping with new families moving into the area and bringing additional children to the school system.

"Every new house brings one new family and an increase in children," said Verla Insko, former county commissioner. "New developments translate into more children in our already overcrowded school system. If the new residents do not pay an impact fee, then current residents will be stuck with the costs."

Opponents of the increase include the parent watchdog group Putting Children First and the Home Builders Association of Durham & Chapel Hill. Opponents suggest that instead of increasing the residential impact fee the county commissioners should look at alternative ways of raising revenue for the county school system.

Woody Claris, president of the Home Builders Association of Chapel Hill, is against impact fees in all cases.

"We at the Home Builders Association are against impact fees because there is a question of constitutionality and practicality," Claris said.

He said impact fees were unconstitutional because they enforced discrimination against residents with less money.

"The impact fee is the same across the board," Claris said. "Someone who buys a \$10,000 house has to pay the same fee as someone who buys a \$1 million house. This discriminates, and it deters those with less money from buying houses."

Claris also said the impact fee would be impractical because it would take years before enough money could be raised to build a new school.

"The overcrowding of Orange County schools is a problem that has been developing for years," he said. "Charging new residents \$1,000 is a drop in the bucket and will not raise the millions of dollars it takes to build a new school."

The commissioners should find alternative ways to raise the money that are constitutional and practical. Charging new residents is like putting a Band-Aid on a gash.

Claris suggested that the commissioners impose a tax on the entire community and dispose of the impact fee.

"The schools are the responsibility of the whole town not just people moving in," he said.

The Orange County District School Board is also opposed to the increase. "We would like the commissioners to look at alternatives to increasing the impact fee," said Larry Haverland, Orange County school board vice chairman.

Haverland said getting more businesses to come into the area was one alternative to the impact fee because it would increase the tax base and generate money that could go to county schools.

"Everyone should invest in their community, but residents should not have to pay a fee just because they want a new house," he said.

County Commissioner William Crowther said he understood the school board's concerns.

"I am not opposed to raising the fee, but I would like to see the fee spread over all forms of development," Crowther said. "Not just residential areas."

He said the commissioners would probably look into alternative means of revenue and conduct another public forum before coming to a decision. He said the flat fee would remain the same throughout the county until a decision was made by the commissioners in May.

BSM Officers Elected for Next Year

BY ADAM GUSMAN
UNIVERSITY EDITOR

The Black Student Movement elected officers for next year in a runoff election March 23.

The top vote-getters for executive positions in the original election on March 16 met in the runoff.

■ Ladell Robbins, a sophomore from Fremont, was elected president of the organization. Robbins served as treasurer of the BSM during this school year.

■ Michael Barbee, a junior psychology major from Morrisville, and Merald Holloway, a junior from Reidsville, were elected co-vice presidents.

■ Lavena Coley, a freshman from Greensboro, will serve as the group's secretary. Coley, who is a business administration major with a concentration in accounting, had been involved this year with the BSM Gospel Choir and with informing students in the residence halls about the organization's upcoming events.

■ Luchara Sayles, a freshman from Ayden, was elected treasurer.

■ Michelle Johnson, a senior from Raleigh, was elected parliamentarian. Johnson, who is a communication studies and African-American studies major, was a member of the BSM's central committee during her sophomore year.

Johnson said she thought Robbins would do an excellent job as BSM president. "I've worked with Ladell, and I can see that he is a very dedicated individual and very forthright, yet tactful," she said. "He's almost like new blood; he's got an energy and a vigor that will invigorate the organization as well as the executive committee."

Barbee agreed. "He (Robbins) was treasurer for the past year, and he did a real good job. His platform was all reasonable goals, nothing too unrealistic."

Barbee said he would attempt, as co-vice president, to increase the BSM's influence on campus in the upcoming year.

"Basically, it's going to be another rebuilding process, trying to get the BSM name back to where it should be, where it was about three years ago," he said.

"Last year, we had a membership goal of 600 and got about 500. I think 600 would be a realistic goal for the upcoming year." Coley said she had run for secretary because she wanted to help the BSM in any way she could. "We just try to address unity among black people, trying to get membership up, and we try to inform the campus about what's going on."

Johnson said her role was more than being responsible for maintaining order at meetings and educating members on the proper use of parliamentary procedure.

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(as of March 27, 1995)

Thanks to everyone who has participated in our Senior Gift Campaign thus far.

To date we have raised nearly \$10,000 from members of the Class of '95. We have also received a great deal of support from Senior parents. Through our combined efforts the CareerSearch program will be available in Hanes Hall in the next few weeks.

If you haven't had the opportunity to become part of this class effort--it's not too late! We need as many Seniors to contribute at any level before we graduate. Throughout Senior Week (April 3-7) there will be many opportunities to give your gift at any of the Senior sponsored events.

If you have any questions, contact Donna Sigmon at 962-2012. Thank you and remember that your support is vital to our success!

Rob Killough and Sanjay Premakumar
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