

# Land annexation OK'd for townhouse project

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The village of Round Lake on Monday annexed land for a 223-unit townhouse development despite the objections of a school district over the impact fees being collected.

Ryland Homes' proposed Emerald Bay subdivision, located at the northeast corner of Route 120 and Wilson Road, was annexed into the village by a 4-1 vote.

Trustee Bob Del Prato voted against the annexation due to a change to the allowed commercial uses for land along Route 120 that was not in the original proposal. Trustee Brian Brubaker abstained from the vote.

"Our C-2 zoning (designation) is clear, well-written. We hold everyone else to this zoning except this guy," Del Prato said. "Now he does this, at a staff level and tells us it's a deal-breaker, take it or leave it. I say leave it."

The subdivision is an integral part of the village's plan to attract commercial and retail uses to the Route 120 corridor because Ryland will pay to extend the village's sewer and water service to that area.

Mayor Bill Gentes has stated that unless the village stakes its claim to that area, specifically the Synestvedt property, the village of Volo could step in and build homes on the property. Last week the village heard a proposal for the Synestvedt property which would include a significant portion of retail development, along with a residential portion.

But Big Hollow school district Superintendent Ron Pazanin told the board that the impact fees that are being assessed to Ryland, \$720 for a two-bedroom unit and \$900 for a three-bedroom unit, are too low and said his district would start educating the projected 51 students from the development at a deficit.

Pazanin said it would cost the district \$327,369 to educate those students in the first year with only \$291,615 in tax revenues to pay for it.

"From Day 1 of this project the school district is in a deficit. This project does not pay it's own way, even in the first year," he said. "That deficit, is just going to get bigger and bigger, and bigger."

But trustee Jerry Shaw blamed Big Hollow officials for failing to negotiate the fees and instead relying on the village to intercede.

He also said the school district will ultimately benefit by the additional commercial development the sewer line extension is expected to bring.

"We all want to support the schools, we all want to see the proper impact fees done, but you have to negotiate that back and forth," Shaw said. "They may lose out now, but they're going to win in the end."

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