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## S.U. supervisor opposes zoning change for tax-free section of business park

By Amy Karpinsky, Herald-Standard  
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**A**lthough one of the South Union Township supervisors is open to the suggestion of changing the zoning on the tax-free section of land in the Fayette County Business Park along Route 40, another supervisor is dead set against it.

Supervisor Thomas Frankhouser said changing the zoning from manufacturing to business on the Keystone Opportunity Zone property is against his principles. He said it isn't fair to grant tax-free status to a business when businesses across the street are paying taxes. The temporary tax exemption on the KOZ property expires in 2013.

The issue surfaced after Fayette County Redevelopment Authority Executive Director Raymond C. Polaski sought to have the property rezoned to allow a doctors office/clinic to be located in the KOZ. Since South Union Township handles its own zoning, the supervisors will have the ultimate say in the zoning decision.

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While Frankhouser claims there are other business zoned parcels where the doctor's can locate, Polaski said the only parcel large enough to hold the development is located in the manufacturing zone. Polaski said the clinic needs four acres. Currently, 170 of the 277 acres in the business park are zoned manufacturing and are located in the tax-free zone. Because the size of the KOZ cannot be changed, the only option is to change the zoning to allow other types of businesses.

Supervisor Robert Schiffbauer earlier said that he would be willing to change the zoning if the business would bring a substantial number of jobs to the park and make a sizable capital investment. He also said the supervisors could accept

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money, in lieu of taxes, that could be used for road improvements.

The third supervisor, chairman Rock Coville, could not be reached for comment.

Frankhouser said he was initially against the KOZ, but was sold on the manufacturing zone when it was thought that an interchange of the Mon/Fayette Expressway would be constructed nearby. He said bringing in manufacturers would have been a nice concept if it happened.

However, he said putting businesses in a tax-free zone simply isn't fair.

"It's not meant to be that way," Frankhouser said. "It's not what the KOZ was meant to do. Putting in a factory with 100 new jobs, that's different."

Polaski claims that if the zoning isn't changed, growth in the business park will cease. Currently, a Super 8 Motel and the Terry McMillen Engineering firm are up and running and ground is expected to be moved soon for a Fayette CareerLink Office and the Fayette County Mental Health/Mental Retardation Agency. Those businesses are all located in the business zone that is taxable.

Schiffbauer said the supervisors shouldn't take too hard a position that could end up with them having 166 acres of vacant property in 11 years. Frankhouser sees the situation differently. He said it really doesn't matter if nothing is built on the manufacturing zone because there has been nothing there for 200 years.

Frankhouser said if the businesses really want to build in an area, they will. "If they want to come, they're going to come," he said.

Polaski said various designations have been made in different KOZ areas and he is simply asking that the supervisors zone the area to keep with the development that is currently occurring. Numerous restaurants, gas stations, the Uniontown Mall, retail businesses and car dealerships are located along the road near the business park.

In addition to the 63.57 acres of the business zoned area and the 169.47 acres of manufacturing zone in the KOZ, the park includes 15.5 acres zoned R-1 residential and an additional 11.37 acres are zoned B-1 general business.

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