

■ LOCAL

Economy influences town planning issues

By KEVIN HUELSMANN
JACKSON HOLE DAILY

The Jackson Town Council is slated to take up issues today that could help chart the course for how it deals with development in the poor economy.

During two meetings, councilors will discuss whether to allow changes that might attract buyers to a mixed-use development and whether to implement deadlines for stalled projects.

Councilors will first discuss how best to deal with stalled projects during a meeting scheduled for 3 p.m. today at Town Hall, 150 E. Pearl Ave.

"The discussion was prompted by the lack of follow-through on some projects that are now sitting idly," Principal Planner Jeff Noffsinger said. "We wanted to see if we needed some clarification of what's allowed in our [land-development regulations] for projects that are just hanging out there."

Noffsinger said planning staff wanted the council to consider whether the current process needed to be better defined.

"A regular [final development plan] approval is still somewhat ambiguous," Noffsinger said.

At their 6 p.m. meeting, councilors will also consider whether to allow 10 units included in the Pearl at Jackson development to be sold as rental units.

The planning commission approved the request on a 4-1 vote earlier this month.

Initially, the 10 units were to be sold only as long-term residential units, but the developer requested the change to allow for some flexibility for potential buyers.

Final plans for the development were approved in March 2008. Those plans included 15 residential units — two affordable units, three employee units and 10 free-market units.

The economy will also be the subject of a financial review slated for the council's 3 p.m. meeting.

COUNCILOR GOES BEFORE BOARD

Jackson Town Councilor Greg Miles will go before his fellow councilors during a meeting today for a request to change an affordable housing requirement on a project of his.

In 2005, the town approved Miles' proposal for a nine-unit planned-unit development on South Millward Street.

As part of the approval, the town stipulated that a unit on one of the lots be maintained as a rental with a fixed rent that the Teton County Housing Authority would buy after five years.

Miles said the cabin is "an older structure and is not up to code." He is requesting that he be allowed to switch the deed restriction to a two-bedroom, one-bathroom condominium that he would remodel and put up for sale in the first months of 2010 for \$181,800.

Miles' request is expected to go before the council during its 6 p.m. meeting.

— Kevin Huelsman

Sales tax revenue has come in about 5.5 percent below what was budgeted. If the trend continues, town financial staff predicts there will be a gap of about \$565,000 in the town's budget at the end of the fiscal year, which ends June 30.

During previous interviews about falling sales tax revenue, town officials said they would probably have to decide whether to make additional budget cuts or supplement the falling revenue by dipping into the town's reserve funds.

An agenda for today's meetings and staff reports for each item are available at www.ci.jackson.wy.us or at Town Hall.