



Valley Advocates for Responsible Development

Looking Toward a Hopeful Future

This is my last time writing as Executive Director for the VARD newsletter. In November I am stepping down as ED in order to care for a new addition to our family. I believe this time of transition for me and my family mirrors a time of transition for Teton Valley.

It's been a stormy season in Teton Valley this year with a changing political climate and a new approach to managing our community's growth. As autumn approaches I see signs of this period of social upheaval coming to a close. On August 27, the Board of County Commissioners voted unanimously not to rescind the Planned Unit Development ordinance, an issue that had become hotly contested. Instead, the commissioners worked together and found a solution that rose above the rhetoric while addressing an important growth challenge. It is an encouraging sign that the commissioners, and by extension the community, are not so divided that they are unable to work together for clean water and air, wildlife, the unique natural beauty we are blessed to have around us, social equity, fiscal responsibility and all the other things that lie close to the heart of every citizen of Teton Valley.

Our last newsletter focused on examples from other communities of solutions to common growth challenges similar to those that Teton Valley is facing. Our goal was to demonstrate that the issues we face are neither unique nor insurmountable.

It's clear that the Teton Valley community wants to address our growth challenges. In this issue we have tried to pictorially render our valley and some of the challenges we are facing, and, yes, surmounting. We have identified a variety of community issues and actions that have been taken recently to address them. Some issues – such as solid-waste disposal – can be addressed immediately; other issues – such as habitat protection, adequate community services or workforce housing – may require more of a concerted, long-term effort in order to properly resolve. The more efforts individual citizens make to become conversant with our regional challenges and

involved in community decision-making, the more chance we have to be the authors of our own destiny, rather than merely ruled by chance and the whims of the national and international markets.

By the time this newsletter comes out, our last year of participating in Old Bill's Fun Run will have come to a close. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who showed their support for VARD again this year. Old Bill's 2007 has caused me to reflect on two things.

First: the amazing number and quality of non-profit organizations we have is a testament to our community. It is truly astounding

to look at the number of people committed to volunteering and working for the greater good in areas like enriching our children's learning in private and public schools, improving pathways infrastructure, helping conserve valuable lands for habitat and agriculture, protecting our water resources, search and rescue, family safety, the arts, recycling...to name a few. Teton Valley is a community to be proud of and a valuable place worth the hard work.

Second: this was the last year for Teton Valley, Idaho, to participate in Old Bill's through the

Community Foundation of Jackson Hole. I think it is a very hopeful sign that Teton Valley is pulling together to strike out on its own with a greater sense of ownership in order to ensure the essential work of our non-profit community. We are a changing and evolving community, and while we doubtless will encounter more bumps in the road, together we can ensure a harmonious and prosperous future.

It's been an incredibly rewarding experience leading VARD over the past year plus – thank you all. I couldn't leave my position in better hands than with Sandy Mason serving as interim Executive Director. Of course I will continue to be active in VARD and in Teton Valley and very much look forward to seeing you around...

—Kathy Rinaldi, Executive Director



Teton Valley is a community to be proud of and a valuable place worth the hard work.

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Take a Peek at our Centerfold!

In the centerfold of this edition of the VARD newsletter, we've tried to show some of the many faces of growth in Teton Valley. Our intention is not to provide a comprehensive inventory of growth and land use, but rather a pictorial reference with the goal of empowering citizens to engage in the sometimes boring, sometimes overwhelming, area of land-use planning. We hope you feel compelled to take the plunge into some of the details of local land use, because how we shape the landscape today will be felt in our daily lives and for many generations to come.

A glossary of terms is provided in the map's lower right corner to define some of the recurring themes and technical jargon.

Much of the jargon relates to different planning tools: the comprehensive plan, the capital improvement plan and the projected land use map. Ultimately, however, these are merely tools which are not useful unless we put them to work. Reliable tools are essential in order to produce a good product: in this case fair, consistent and predictable decisions. But the quality of the product also depends upon the skill of the person wielding the tools. Good decision-making requires not only clear

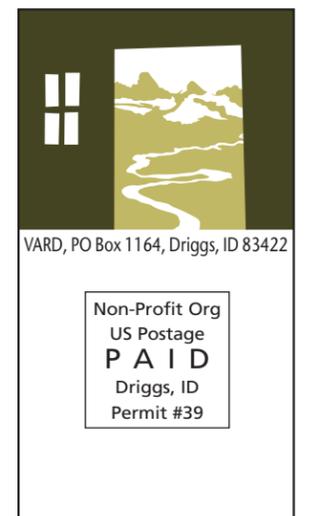
and consistent polices and codes, but also decision-makers who have the gumption and tenacity to implement them.

A good decision involves careful interpretation of the comp plan and ordinances, drawing on the input from various agencies such as the Department of Environmental Quality and Idaho Fish and Game, data and studies specific to a piece of property, listening to the concerns of neighbors, and keeping in mind how each piece fits into the big picture of the ecosystem and the community.

As the county grapples with an overwhelming number of development applications and a restrictive timeframe for processing them, we need to get comfortable with a more in-depth process if we want quality decisions and results on the ground. On August 27, 2007, the Board of County Commissioners did just that and sent a clear directive to require more comprehensive development applications – something that has not been a part of the decision-making culture up to this point.

Some developers may find this unfair, but most responsible developers recognize that a more thorough process protects

their investment. Others may call a more thorough process expanding government bureaucracy, but the alternative is chaotic development with no checks and balances to protect – among other things – water and air quality, small-town character, economic prosperity, public safety and ultimately the common citizen. All of these are critical to a healthy and vibrant community and things we believe are worth standing up for. **VARD**



TETON RANGE FACES OF TETON VALLEY GROWTH



WILDLIFE CORRIDORS

ISSUE: Historically wildlife travels to different areas for different seasons in search of water and food. New developments are changing and sometimes blocking wildlife corridors and migration routes.

ACTION: Directive to address conservation and protection of natural resources and important habitat in PUD.



PUBLIC ACCESS

ISSUE: Historic access to public lands and waterways threatened by development and because county not able to maintain certain accesses.

ACTION: Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)



SCHOOL FUNDING AND TEACHER SHORTAGES

ISSUE: Growth is resulting in crowded classrooms and outgrowing of existing facilities. Teacher shortages due to high cost of living.

ACTION: School superintendent has asked county to help ensure developers pay towards impact on school system. Thus far, developers have been asked for voluntary contributions. More consistent system needs to be put in place to ensure fairness in process.



COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE

ISSUES:
HOSPITAL—growing needs and staffing and funding challenges
SHERIFF'S DEPT—understaffed and underfunded
PLANNING & ZONING DEPT—overburdened and understaffed
SEWER—capacity and expansion issues

ACTION: CIP and Directives will help better manage growth so that infrastructure improvements keep pace with demand.

GRAND TARGHEE

ISSUE: Expansion of Grand Targhee impacts Teton Valley—for example, fuels real estate boom, increases traffic, serves as economic engine. Has potential to be catalyst for positive growth and to leverage better development in Idaho.

ACTION: Decision-making power in Wyoming, little influence from Idaho.



ROADS

ISSUE: Lack of funding and heavy traffic leads to poor maintenance, repair, dust and safety issues.

ACTION: Capital Improvements Plan and possible impact fee for development truck traffic.

SOLID WASTE/LANDFILL

ISSUE: County landfill reaching capacity and, until recently, out of compliance with state regulations.

ACTION: Transfer station with recycling facilities being constructed. Recycling will reduce volume of waste that county pays to transfer to regional landfill.



AIR QUALITY

ISSUE: As traffic increases air quality becomes a concern, particularly given the topography of the valley. Another air pollutant is dust from construction.

ACTION: Encourage ways of reducing traffic such as interconnected pathways, public transportation and reducing the length and number of car trips by concentrating development near the cities, all of which are comp plan policies.



AFFORDABLE HOUSING

ISSUE: Booming real estate market and market for expensive vacation homes squeezing out the working class

ACTION: Housing needs assessment plan complete. Housing authority being formed.

EXAMPLES OF POSITIVE EFFECTS OF GROWTH

LOCAL ECONOMY \$\$\$

Plentiful construction jobs and real estate boom benefiting some, but longevity of boom in question with downward turn of home mortgage market nationwide. New commercial growth in Driggs & Victor very promising. Driggs examples: mixed use, smart-growth-oriented development 300 Main, new development slated for Main Street, Little Avenue developing with attractive local businesses.

CULTURAL EVENTS

- Music on Main
- Fourth of July festivities
- Arts events and classes
- Author events
- Poetry nights
- Growing number of athletic events: running, skiing, biking, etc
- County Fair



FAIR & CONSISTENT DECISION-MAKING

ISSUE: Without more clear policies and codes, developers are left guessing what the community wants, and without a legal mechanism for making developments pay for their impacts on community services, developers are left guessing about what "voluntary" donation is required.

ACTION: Directives are an attempt to get P&Z and BOCC on same page in order to ensure a fair and consistent process for developers and the public.

DRIGGS



TRAFFIC

ISSUE: Increased traffic and heavy truck traffic associated with construction are damaging roads and also leading to safety concerns, noise and pollution, especially in downtown Driggs.

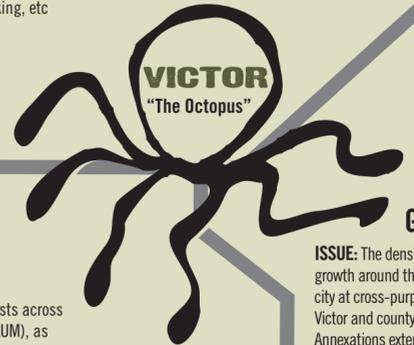
ACTION: City of Driggs is pursuing option of routing truck traffic away from Little Ave, where foot traffic is important for local business. How we can pay for roads is a question that the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) will help address.



COMMERCIAL ZONING/ GROWTH

ISSUE: Commercial/industrial zone requests across county but no Projected Land Use Map (PLUM), as required by state law, to guide such decisions.

ACTION: PLUM has languished in P&Z for the last year. Clarion looking at PLUM.



VICTOR GROWTH

ISSUE: The density and design of growth around the edges of the city at cross-purposes with the Victor and county comp plans. Annexations extending out in "tentacles." Victor has identified county densities in the PUD as particularly problematic.

ACTION: County and Victor P&Zs to work together to come up with negotiated impact area. County working to improve the PUD with Clarion's help.

TETONIA



SURFACE AND GROUND WATER QUALITY

ISSUE: Vulnerable to contamination from runoff and inappropriate concentration of septs without study of cumulative impacts to area.

ACTION: Groundwater Protection Ordinance passed by the county in November 2006. Directive to protect ground and surface water.



COST OF SERVICES

ISSUE: The county is short on funds to cover essential county services such as the sheriff's department, partially because of the state-mandated 3% property tax cap. The county relies on one-time developer donations to help cover costs.

ACTION: A consultant has been hired to draw up a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) which will project future county needs and costs and how they can be funded.



MEANINGFUL OPEN SPACE

ISSUE: Lack of direction in the PUD ordinance and from decision-makers about what constitutes meaningful open space.

ACTION: Directive to guide placement of open space to protect natural, scenic and other significant features as per the comp plan.



HABITAT LOSS

ISSUE: Development encroaching into sensitive wildlife areas such as riparian areas and wetlands.

ACTION: Directive to give careful consideration to habitat while reviewing PUDs, as per the comp plan.



APPROPRIATE RURAL DENSITY

ISSUE: Thousands of new lots are being created, spread out across the rural parts of the county with effects on rural character, open space, habitat and agriculture. This land-use pattern is also the most expensive in terms of the cost of providing essential community services.

ACTION: Directive to concentrate higher density towards the cities, consistent with comp plan. Removed density language from comp plan.

BIG HOLE MOUNTAINS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

BOCC: Board of County Commissioners for Teton County, Idaho

Clarion Associates: A professional planning firm hired by the county to help evaluate county land-use codes.

CIP (Capital Improvement Plan): Identifies and addresses needs for public infrastructure, including roads and public facilities, with regards projected growth. Can be used to identify possible funding mechanisms, including impact fees. Commissioned June 2007

Comprehensive Plan: The comprehensive plan is a vision document for how a community wants to grow. It consists of policies in different categories such as Land Use and Economic Development. Decision makers are supposed to make decisions in keeping with the vision of the comprehensive plan. The county ordinances are the means by which to enforce the county comprehensive plan.

Directive: On August 27, the BOCC drew up a list of directives to guide decision-making at both the P&Z and BOCC levels until further planning tools can be put in place. The directives were based on input from Clarion Associates that the current comp plan and ordinances could be enforced more strictly to hold developments to a higher standard.

P&Z: Planning & Zoning Commission, an advisory board to the BOCC which is charged with carrying out planning as well as review and make recommendations on development applications.

PLUM (Projected Land Use Map): a map, required by state law, that shows suitable land uses for a jurisdiction, such as Teton County, which can be used to guide future zoning decisions. Pending.

PUD (Planned Unit Development): A form of planned residential development that concentrates buildings on one or more parts of the site allowing the remaining land to be used for recreation, open space, or preservation of environmentally sensitive areas.



Valley Advocates for Responsible Development

MISSION: To advocate for the private, public and civic actions that will result in the responsible development and sustainable use of natural resources (water, land, wildlife and air) in Teton Valley.

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M-TR 9:00am-4:00pm
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VOTE in the Teton County recall election & your city general election

WHEN—

Tuesday, November 6, 8am-8pm *or* vote using an absentee ballot. Anyone can vote absentee for any reason. Absentee voter information is provided below.

WHERE—

If you vote on election day in the county special (recall) election the locations are as follows: Victor precinct will vote at the Fire Station, Driggs precinct will vote at Driggs City Hall and Teton precinct will vote at the Teton Fire Hall. To verify your precinct call the county clerk or check the map under "November Recall Election" at www.tetoncountyidaho.gov. City residents will be able to vote in their respective city elections at the same time.

WHAT'S BEING DECIDED?

At the county level there is a ballot measure to decide whether or not to recall the two county commissioners elected last November: Alice Stevenson and Larry Young. On the ballot you have the choice of voting "For recalling..." (you want the candidate in question to leave office) or "Against recalling..." (you want the candidate in question to finish their term).

Driggs residents will be voting on whether to renew the .5% municipal tax that goes towards roads improvements in the city. Driggs is holding an uncontested election to elect two council members for four-year terms. Dan Powers, who currently sits on the council, and Colin Dye are the candidates.

Victor is electing two council members for a term of four

years. There are four candidates running for the two seats: Grant Thompson (incumbent), Jeff Secrest (currently on Victor P&Z), David Bergart and Scott Fitzgerald.

Tetonia is electing a mayor for a term of four years, one council member for a term of four years and one council member for a term of two years. Current council member Rex Jardine is running uncontested for mayor, and the two uncontested candidates for council are Mitch Smaellie and Dee Cullum.

REGISTER TO VOTE—

You must be a resident of the state of Idaho and Teton County for at least 30 days to vote. To vote in a city election you must reside within the city limits. You can prove your residency by showing an Idaho driver's license or ID with your current physical address, or any utility bill or lease showing your name and local physical address, and a picture ID. If you have any questions about residency call the county clerk.

Pre-register to vote by 5pm October 12, 2007, at the clerk's office in the county courthouse. From October 13-November 5, you can register in the courthouse but must vote in the county election at the same time. The clerk will give you a copy of your voter registration to take to vote in your city election, if applicable. You can also register to vote on Election Day at the polls.

ABSENTEE BALLOTS—

Apply to vote absentee either in person or in writing at any time. For the county recall election, absentee voting in person at the courthouse will be available mid-September through Monday, November 5, 5pm. To get an absentee ballot, submit an official absentee ballot request form (available from the courthouse in person, by mail, fax or online at www.IdahoVotes.gov). Mail-in requests must be received no later than October 31, although you should take into account the time that it will take to receive and return your ballot by mail. Absentee ballots must be received by November 6, 8pm.

To obtain an absentee ballot for a city election, the dates and requirements are the same except that you need to make your application in writing to the city clerk in your city. In-person absentee voting in city elections prior to Election Day will take place in the city hall. Call your city hall for hours.

Teton County Clerk office..... 208-354-2905 ext. 5
Driggs City Hall 208-354-2362
Victor City Hall..... 208-787-2940
Tetonia City Hall 208-456-2249

For forms and voting information, go to idahovotes.gov. **VARD**



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Thank You Old Bill's Fun Run Donors!

We would like to say a heartfelt thank you to all of you who have once again, or for the first time, given to VARD through Old Bill's Fun Run. Although we do not have final numbers at this time, we have been gratified by the response so far. Thank you for your support of VARD's work, which focuses on the importance of managing growth in order to ensure our community's long-term economic vitality and to preserve clean water, clean air, wildlife habitat, our small-town character and many other assets that give us our outstanding quality of life here in Teton Valley. **VARD**

Mad Hatter Party set for Friday, Nov 9

It's never too early to start planning your hat creation for the Mad Hatter Party! If you haven't yet made it to this annual event you've been missing out. Join us this year on the evening of Friday, November 9 for an array of delicious appetizers, wine, beer and soft drinks and a great demonstration of creativity as participants vie in several hat award categories. Tickets are \$25 per person or \$40 per couple. For more information, look for our ad in the *Teton Valley News* in the weeks leading up to the event. See you there! **VARD**

Get Involved • Become a Member TETON VALLEY NEEDS YOU!

name _____
address _____
city _____
state _____ zip _____
e-mail _____

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS
Member..... \$25-\$49/year
Supporter..... \$50-\$99/year
Friend..... \$100-\$249/year
Patron..... \$250-\$499/year
Sponsor \$500-\$999/year
Benefactor \$1000+/year

Members will receive meeting invitations, regular newsletters and e-mail updates.

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM AND YOUR CHECK TO: **VARD** P.O. Box 1164, Driggs, ID 83422

VARD IS A NONPROFIT 501 c3 ORGANIZATION. DONATIONS ARE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE.