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October 11, 2006

Working class input needed on housing plan

By Kara Fox

Sierra Sun, kfox@sierrasun.com

October 10, 2006

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Anecdotes abound of locals moving from Tahoe due to rising housing costs and the inability to afford the quality of life the North Shore provides. The developer of one proposed workforce housing project is seeking input from individuals directly affected by the housing shortage.

Pacific West Communities, the Mourelatos family, and the Workforce Housing Association of Truckee Tahoe are sponsoring a public meeting Wednesday to hear about the experiences and housing needs of area employers and employees.

"I do think it is too expensive in Tahoe for a three-person family," said James Purthill, who, with his wife and newborn, recently moved from Kings Beach to Nevada City because of housing costs. "We were not ready to leave the basin so soon ... If there were some kind of affordable housing, we would have been able to stay."

Wednesday's meeting will also provide information about Vista Village — formerly known as Cedar Grove — that the Mourelatos family seeks to build on a 12-acre parcel they own off National Avenue in Tahoe Vista.

A focus group made up of adjacent property owners and others met three times this summer to discuss the project, which is currently in the regulatory processes of Placer County and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency. The official name change went into effect this summer, and the developer is now looking at how many for-sale and for-rent units to include.

"We need people who don't normally go to meetings to get in touch with the decision-makers and say 'I matter. I work in this community and I need a place to live,'" said Andrea Clark, vice president of special projects for Pacific West

Communities, which built Gray's Crossing and the Alder Drive affordable housing projects in Truckee.

In addition to the developer and WHATT, Plumas Bank and the town of Truckee will be on-hand to provide resources to potential homebuyers and renters of the proposed project.

Alex Mourelatos, who has worked for a few years to get an affordable housing project off the ground on the North Shore, said he wants to get input from the people who would live in the housing development.

"We need these people to get out and get involved to help influence bringing affordable housing in the basin," Mourelatos said.

CHECK IT OUT

Vista Village public information and outreach meeting
Wednesday, Oct. 11
Kings Beach Elementary, 8125 Steelhead Road
6 p.m.
Child care and translators available

- Record Courier
- Tahoe Bonanza
- Tahoe Daily Tribune
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