



Courtesy of the Aptos Chamber of Commerce

This artist's rendering of the Aptos Village plan was released to the public earlier this week.

Aptos Village plan on track

Construction could begin by 2011; artist's rendering released to public

By C.J. CANNINO
FOR THE REGISTER-PAJARONIAN

The plan to turn part of Aptos Village into a mix of residential and commercial living now has a image to go with it. The village plan, which has been eight years in the making and has a price tag of \$40 million, is on track, according to Aptos Chamber of Commerce co-executive director John Hibble.

"We just have to get the building permits now," Hibble said.

An artist's rendering of the village was released to the public earlier this week, following its submittal to the county by the developer, Barry Swenson Builder in Live Oak.

Now, the plan to create the urban living space must be approved by the Santa Cruz County Historical and Planning commissions and the county board of supervisors.

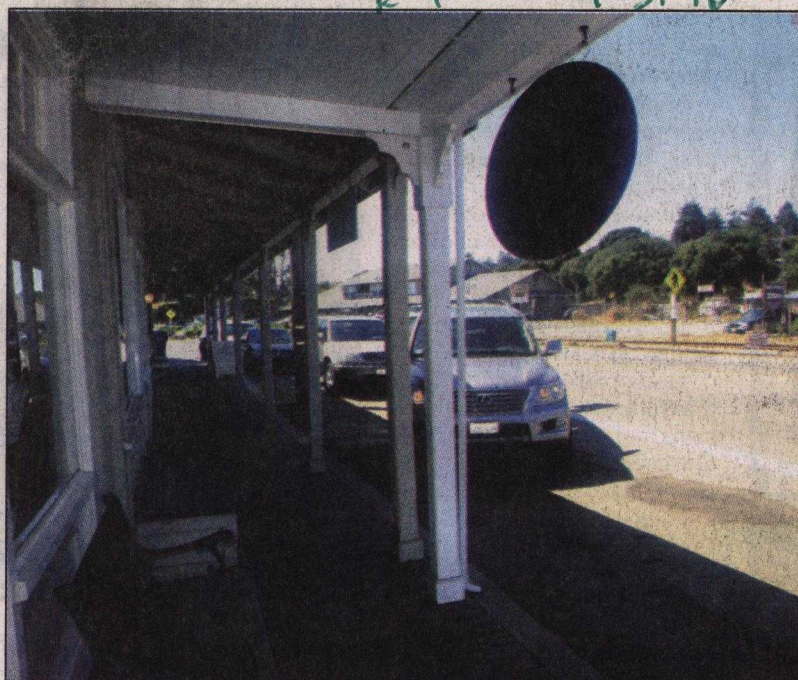
Principal architect Matthew Thompson, who has been on board with the plan since its inception, says construction could begin by 2011.

"This has been a challenging project," Thompson said.

What made the Aptos Village Plan unique, he said, was maintaining a traditional village atmosphere while also incorporating commercial and residential use.

The 130,000-square-foot village will consist of 63 housing units with about the same amount of commercial space, including outdoor dining areas and storefronts. It also includes a large green area that will serve as the heart of the village.

"People are looking for a walkable community," senior county planner Randall Adams said. "That's the trend now."



Tarmo Hannula/Register-Pajaronian

Planners hope to maintain the small-village appearance of Aptos, which boasts a wood sidewalk and plenty of early-day architecture.

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Adams said he was impressed with the community's dedication to the village project.

"There has been a lot of public input, that's a wonderful thing," Adams said.

Hibble said that the main portion of the existing village on Soquel Drive — including the historic Bayview Hotel — will remain the same, but some of the antique structures will be relocated. The new village will be located in the empty space behind the Bayview Hotel. The entrance to the village from Soquel Drive will be between Aptos Station Shopping Center and the Bayview Hotel. Parking for the village will be behind the buildings.

"Nothing will get torn down," Hibble said. "Soquel Drive will pretty much look the same."

Barry Swenson Builder vice president Jesse Nickell said the Aptos project is progressive, with many details included to make it both environmentally friendly and traditional.

"The village has narrow streets and wide sidewalks with the storefronts opening up right on the sidewalks," Nickell said. "To me, the theme is 'Mayberry R.F.D.'"

The developer explained that there's a state-of-the-art water filtration system with organic grasses to reduce the storm runoff in the nearby creek.

According to Nickell, Barry Swenson is financing the bulk of the development, while the county paid for initial planning studies.