

# Springs

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"I want to see these projects instead of the Fairmont," Hays said. "It just kills me to see the Fairmont on the list (of projects)."

Michele Heston, a spokesperson for the Fairmont, said the application was for signage and lighting at the Big 3 Diner at the corner of Highway 12 and Boyes Boulevard, and said the resort hasn't spent the funds yet.

And, Heston added, the county asked the resort if it wanted to apply for the funds.

"We have a vested interest in this area," Heston said. "This is where our colleagues live and their children go to school."

"We've worked really hard on the stewardship of the financial viability and growth of the area," she continued, adding that the resort has worked on being a good neighbor and keeping the neighborhood safe.

Al Lerma, the county's redevelopment associate, said he visited many of the businesses Hays pointed out. "I've had contact with at least five of the properties," he said.

Lerma said he and others have gone door-to-door, trying to talk with building owners and leaving flyers with them. "Some have said, 'we're just not interested,'" he said. "Others are having financial problems."

He said the agency put on a similar workshop in the Russian River Redevelopment Area and had a good response.

Ellen Conlan, another committee member, wanted to know if there was

anyone on the loan/grant committee who makes a decision on whether or not an applicant property is blighted.

Hays reiterated her earlier statement saying, "I don't want to see money spent on the Fairmont. The Fairmont has so much money ...," she said.

Committee member Kara Reyes wanted to focus the agency's outreach on specific properties.

While not disagreeing with Reyes, William Murray said, "Most of the people who applied are financially savvy and are taking advantage of the program."

Under the terms of the three-tiered program, applicants can apply for three-year forgivable loans for up to \$5,000; five-year forgivable loans for up to \$15,000; and commercial rehabilitation 20-year, non-forgivable loans up to \$100,000. Along with the loans, applicants can also receive design help.

Currently, 27 property owners have applied to the program, including two who have applied for \$100,000 loans (Mary's Pizza Shack and M&R Partners); two at \$75,000 (Farmers Insurance and Mike Larbre Automotive) and one at \$41,000 (Arroyo Veterinary). The other 22 applied for loans between \$2,000 and \$15,000 with five of the projects complete.

So far, the applications total \$663,000 with another \$82,500 in design fees. The committee agreed to put another \$500,000 into the pool, although Hays said she would be more

# It costs agency to get on Supes' agenda

When the county's Redevelopment Agency makes an appearance before the Board of Supervisors for the three project areas (the Springs, Russian River and Roseland) it oversees, it tries to group requests because it costs them money - about \$1,000 a pop.

On two different occasions at Thursday's Springs Redevelopment Advisory Committee meeting, John Haig, the county's redevelopment manager, told the panel that it was easier and less costly if it asked for, as an example, the \$575,000 for the facade improvement and commercial rehabilitation program instead of making three requests for smaller amounts.

"We incur about \$1,000 cost each time we go to the supervisors," he told the panel.

Friday, Haig clarified his remarks saying the agency is funded on a cost recovery basis instead of being part of the county's General Fund.

"When we go to the supervisors, we have a review by the county counsel and a review by the CAO," he said. "Plus, you have staff time sitting at the (supervisors) meeting waiting to make the presentation."

Haig said the agency tries to group requests so it makes one appearance instead of two or three - at \$1,000 apiece.

"This doesn't come without expense," he said. "But we're trying to be as economical as possible. We want to avoid taking a project multiple times."

comfortable if there was less money in the pool "We might be more careful about where it went," she added.

But John Haig, the county's redevelopment manager, told the committee that even if there's a 10 percent or 20 percent fallout rate, the agency would run out of money in the current pool. And he pointed out that it costs the agency \$1,000 every time it goes before the Board of Supervisors (see related story).

The committee decided to go along with agency staff and passed a recommendation 5-0 to put

another \$575,000 into the facade improvement and commercial rehabilitation program.

# Service

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A majority of residents in Sonoma work in the services industry, making up 50.9 percent of the work force. Retail trade was the next most popular industry, making up 14.4 percent; followed by real estate and finance at 8.3 percent; construction at 6.4 percent and manufacturing at 5.3 percent. Despite a thriving wine industry, only 0.8 percent of Sonoma city residents work in the agricultural industry.

Providing no indicator of what was to come, 2007 also saw the highest median price of Sonoma homes in the decade, topping out at just under \$700,000. In 2009, that figure dropped to \$400,000, the lowest since 2001. Compared to the rest of the county, homes in Sonoma still range on the pricey side, making the town the fifth most expensive place to live in Sonoma County.

Home sales seem to be bouncing back, with a 14.2 percent increase in sales from the historic low in 2007. There is still a ways

to go to return to the level of home sales seen in the early part of the new century, which ranged between 600 to 700 homes sold annually compared to 400 to 500 today.

Residential housing vacancies are also at an all-time high, from about 6.4 percent in 2000 to 9.9 percent in 2009. Predictions don't expect that figure to rebound significantly in the next 5 years.

When it comes to spending money in Sonoma, retail goods make up the biggest proportion of consumer spending at \$135 million in 2009. That was followed by shelter at \$93 million, \$25 million for food at home and \$21 million for health care.

While the total taxable sales in Sonoma fell by 1.1 percent between 2007 and 2009, Sonoma is fairing better than the rest of the county, which saw an average drop of 6.5 percent during the same time period.

See the report at [www.sonoma-county.org/edb/city\\_reports](http://www.sonoma-county.org/edb/city_reports).

# Sarandon

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action star Bruce Willis. The festival has also paid tribute to the likes of John Lasseter, Robin Williams, Danny Glover and, most recently, Lauren Hutton.

The 14th annual Sonoma International Film Festival will consume the Valley April 6 to 10, bringing a long weekend of unique independent films and parties that overflow with food and wine.

"From the launch of the UFO sidebar to the film 'Acts of Godfrey' to a Brit-

ish black comedy spoken entirely in verse, the festival's programming will be filled with surprises," said Program Director Cevin Cathell. "The documentary category is so strong this year, we have moved the doc screenings to the larger capacity Community Center."

The festival received more than 600 submissions from 14 countries as well as pulling films from some of the top festivals around the world, includ-

ing the 2011 Sundance Film Festival, for a menu of about 90 short and feature length films. The films are shown at venues all around the Plaza, ranging from the historic Sebastiani Theatre to art films shown at the Sonoma Valley Museum of Art.

This year is all about documentaries, which range in topics from "Deeper," about snowboarders who travel the globe searching for the highest and most remote peaks to ride; to "Death By Medicine," a dark look into America's pharmaceutical companies.

The films are created by first timers and seasoned directors, of which 200 are expected to attend. One of those filmmakers will be Juanita Wilson, named a Variety magazine Top Director to Watch in 2011, who's film "As If I Am Not There" takes a critical look at the war in Bosnia of the 1990s. Actress Jennifer Siebel Newsom, wife of California's Lt. Gov. Gavin Newsom, presents her first film as a writer and director - the documentary "Miss Representation" about how objectification holds women back professionally and politically, which features interviews with Sen. Dianne Feinstein, Condoleezza Rice and Katie Couric.

In between screenings, the festival includes lavish, wine-soaked parties with tastes of the best Sonoma has to offer.

Festival passes range in price, offering entrance to everything from a single film to an all access pass.

For all the details, visit [www.sonomafilmfest.org](http://www.sonomafilmfest.org).

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Notice is hereby given that Bank of Marin, 504 Redwood Boulevard - Suite 100, Novato CA 94947, has filed with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation an application to establish a temporary branch location to be located at 255 West Napa Street, Suite P, Sonoma, California 95476.

Any person wishing to comment on this application may file his or her comments in writing with the Regional Director of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation at its regional office, 25 Jessie Street At Ecker Square, Suite 700, San Francisco, CA 94105, not later than March 22, 2011. The nonconfidential portions of the application are on file at its regional office and are available for public inspection during regular business hours. Photocopies of the nonconfidential portion of the application file will be made available upon request.

Published pursuant to Section 303.7 of the rules and regulations of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

Peter Pelham  
EVP & Director of Retail Banking

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