

## **Real Estate in the News - January 2019**

*Compliments of the Aspen Board of REALTORS® A rundown of government and business activity over the last month, focusing on issues and items that are of particular interest to the Real Estate community*

### **Aspen**

#### ***Boogie's Building Gets the Wrecking Ball***

Now under the ownership of New York-based developer Thor Equities, which bought the building for \$27.5 million in May 2015, the Boogie's building faces an overhaul that includes the removal of the atrium and a complete remodeling, the Aspen Times reported. The project has an evaluated cost of \$4.8 million and includes a full interior remodel of 15,728 square feet of space, according to building department records. The building lease is already accounted for, with an art gallery set to take the space.

#### ***Restaurant Row Building Sells for \$14.8 Million***

An Aspen native and a group of Florida investors are the new owners of the Katie Reed Plaza — home of Rustique Bistro, Meat and Cheese and other businesses — after acquiring it for \$14.8 million on Jan. 4, the Aspen Times reported. The historic cottage structure was included in the deal that also came with the Katie Reed Building at the corner of Hopkins Avenue and Monarch Street. The plaza was built in 1995 and is one of Restaurant Row's corner anchors. The seller was Katie Reed Building LLC, a group of investors controlled by Aspen law firm Garfield & Hecht PC. One of the new owners, Jimmy Marcus of Aspen, said the main building is wearing down and needs to be renovated.

#### ***Aspen City Manager Steve Barwick Resigns***

Aspen City Council asked for and received the resignation of longtime City Manager Steve Barwick in mid-January, the Aspen Daily News reported. Council met in executive session for a half hour after a session was called to jump-start Barwick's annual performance review, following a series of high-profile controversies connected to the city administration that resulted last month in the resignation of assistant city manager Barry Crook. These involved a "mobility lab" experiment planned for next summer and a dispute with the housing authority over its role in a city-subsidized housing project.

### **Snowmass**

#### ***The Collective to Turn into Discovery Center***

A new ice age discovery center for Snowmass' Base Village is at least two years from opening its doors, with 2021 targeted as the facility's debut in the lower level of The Collective building, the Aspen Daily News reported. SkiCo owns the adjacent 99-room Limelight Hotel and sees the museum with renewed enthusiasm from a resort operator's perspective and is spearheading the project to transform it.

The Collective opened its doors in December but for temporary uses including a holiday market and for community purposes such as children's activities and arts events. The discovery center will need at least 18 months for fundraising, planning and other development work and SkiCo's invigorated role comes from jump-starting an attraction that could add to its offerings in an increasingly crowded ski resort marketplace.

## **Basalt**

### ***Basalt May Have Over-collected on Property Tax***

Basalt officials said that they recently detected an error in the town's property tax rate-adjustment system relating to compliance — or the lack thereof — with the state's Taxpayer Bill of Rights, or TABOR, the Aspen Daily News reported. The upshot of the technical issue is that some \$2 million in property tax revenue collected over the last four years may have to be returned to taxpayers unless Basalt voters approve a ballot question in November that authorizes the town to reset the millage rate and forgive the error.

What is known is that there will be several more community meetings and official discussions on the topic over the coming year. Contracted auditors and others in town government failed to recognize the problem after its inception in 1994 when town voters agreed to "de-Bruce" — the informal term for loosening restrictions set forth by TABOR — a 1992 state constitutional amendment that places limitations on government taxation.

### ***SkiCo Applies for Housing in Basalt***

Aspen Skiing Co. hopes to take a bite out of its affordable-housing needs by spending \$15 million to build a 148-bedroom project in Willits Town Center, called the Willits Workforce Housing Project the Aspen Times reported. The company officially submitted building plans.

The company has a contract to purchase vacant land known as Block 9 at Willits. That property is along Willits Lane and flanked by a vacant lot purchased by the Steadman Clinic to the east and the future home of The Arts Center at Willits to the west. The site is perfect for high-density housing because residents can walk two blocks to a major bus stop on the Roaring Fork Transportation Authority system and they are surrounded by services ranging from grocery stores to numerous bars and restaurants.

## **Carbondale**

### ***Trail Work A Collaborative Effort on Red Hill***

A collaborative effort among multiple community stakeholders will result in three new trails and safer trail access at the Red Hill Recreation Area, the Sopris Sun reported. The partnership between the Town of Carbondale and the Carbondale-based Aspen Valley Land Trust (AVLT) started with an effort to acquire and permanently protect a 25-acre parcel of land at the base of Red Hill.

Two of the three trails are completed. The first is a hiker-specific trail, for foot traffic only. This trail is named "Ruthie's Run" in honor of Ruth Brown. The second is a shared-use trail, for

hikers and bikers. The third trail is bike-use only. It is a down track directional biking trail, now partially completed at 972 linear feet.

### ***Former Woodbridge Realty Owned Must Repay \$1 Billion***

The Securities and Exchange Commission that a Florida court has ordered former Carbondale homeowner Robert Shapiro and the company he once ran, Woodbridge Group of Co., to pay a combined \$1 billion in restitution to victims of a real estate Ponzi scheme that sent ripples through the Roaring Fork Valley, the Aspen Times reported.

The ruling approved judgments against Woodbridge and its 281 related companies to make \$892 million in repayments for ill-gotten gains. The court also ordered Shapiro, the former CEO and owner of Woodbridge, to pay a \$100 million civil penalty and to disgorge \$18.5 million plus \$2.1 million in prejudgment interest. Shapiro once lived at Aspen Glen; Woodbridge developed high-end properties in the upper and lower Roaring Fork Valley, as well as other parts of Colorado and California.

## **Glenwood Springs**

### ***Sales Tax for the Streets Going to Voters***

Glenwood Springs city council voted to approve putting before the voters this April a 0.75 percent sales tax proposal with a 20-year sunset and bonding capacity to fix city streets, the Glenwood Springs Post Independent reported. Additionally, should the city complete the anticipated work before the tax actually sunsets, the tax would subsequently end too.

## **Pitkin County**

### ***Mini Music Festival Coming to Buttermilk***

The base of Buttermilk Mountain will host a new music festival in April to celebrate the ski area's closing, the Aspen Daily News reported. The event, called the Après, will feature performances by Umphrey's McGee on Friday, Apr. 5, followed by two nights of performances by The String Cheese Incident on Saturday and Sunday, April 6-7.

### ***Intercept Lot to Get an Upgrade***

The intercept lot at Brush Creek Road and Highway 82 will get a \$4 million facelift including new bathrooms and expanded paved parking thanks to a \$1.9 million grant awarded to up valley governments through the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP), the Aspen Daily News reported. Improvement plans call for paving and striping the existing unstriped recycled asphalt spaces behind the existing paved parking, security lighting, permanent bathroom facilities with flush toilets to replace porta-potties and additional landscaping.

### ***Winter X Games Gets a 5-Year Extension***

X will mark the spot at Buttermilk for the next five years, as ESPN and Aspen Skiing Co. announced their intention to continue hosting the premier extreme sports event until 2024, the Aspen Daily News reported. The first Winter X Games was held here in 2002 and at the end of the contract it will have been held at Buttermilk for 23 consecutive years.