



# THE TAOS NEWS

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## Review process to speed up P&Z

By Andy Dennison  
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A new layer of review in Town Hall likely will save time at the town's Planning and Zoning Commission meetings, regularly four or five hours long, and move applicants more smartly through the per-mitting process. Details remain to be worked out but Jack Clough, the assis-tant town attorney, has been named administrative hear-ing officer for land-use cases only. The town's Land Use Development Code includes such a position but lays out broader powers than Clough will initially have.

Jim Thompson, chairman of the planning commission, told The Taos News that the move would "give us more time for planning," on such issues as an in-the-works compre-hensive plan and translating the SmartCode ordinance into practical terms.

Commission hearings have gotten long, said Town Manager Daniel Miera, even on fairly routine matters.

"P&Z should deal with larg-er, more substantive issues," he said. "This will make things more efficient for the constitu-ent and us internally."

Clough said he will open public hearings to take evidence and testimony from land owners seeking minor variances, such as fence height, and special or conditional use permits, because the issues are clearer in the code.

After a period of time, his responsibilities may be expanded.

Clough has held a similar position for the Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission, and recently completed a refresher training course in Reno, Nev.