

El Dorado Beach face-lift about to commence

By Kathryn Reed

A reunion is how some people described Wednesday's groundbreaking ceremony of the multi-million dollar Lakeview Commons project in South Lake Tahoe.

Missing, though, were key people who had an early vision to keep the 56 acres of prime real estate that straddles both sides of Highway 50 for the people. It started with D.L. Bliss and was carried on by the Lake Valley Foundation in the 1920s. This land is deed restricted when it comes what can and cannot be done with it.



What El Dorado Beach will look like in summer 2011.
Rendering/RHAA

"We could not do this project today if we had to buy the property," Ray Lacey, California Tahoe Conservancy deputy director, told *Lake Tahoe News* after the Aug. 4 event.

His agency has allocated \$6 million to the project that will be built in phases. The first phase will get under way next week at El Dorado Beach.

Others missing from Wednesday's festivities included Dennis Machida. He was at the helm of the CTC when the idea of creating what is now called Lakeview Commons started percolating in 2004. The following year he died at age 58 of a heart attack.

Deb Vreeland, the project manager through the planning phase, has since relocated to Montana. Several people bestowed high praise upon her.

More than 50 people turned out on this bluebird day to reflect on the process, the future and above all to prove projects in South Lake Tahoe don't all get stalled or sit on shelves as planning documents.

Manuela Anne King, vice president of Royston Hanamoto Alley & Abey – the landscape architects, spoke of all the things people talked about wanting in the more than 30 public meetings that were conducted.

Many are being incorporated into the project:

- Beach access for everyone
- Improved crossing at Highway 50
- Non-motorized boathouse (which will be LEED gold)
- Better, more convenient restrooms
- New picnic tables

"I feel this project accomplishes the major goals put out there by the community," King said.

Besides the aesthetic improvements, the terraced seating and new vegetation will help with erosion control, which is all about the clarity of Lake Tahoe.

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