

Opinion: Placer County wrong to oust supervisor from TRPA

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A push to allow developers to “clean up” eyesores in Lake Tahoe has left a black mark on four of the five Placer County supervisors' voting records.

Recently, four members of the board voted to oust Supervisor Jennifer Montgomery from the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency because she didn't vote in step with other supervisors.

The issue at hand: allow developers to take over run-down buildings, clean them up and possibly make them bigger.

This is done through tourist-accommodation unit transfers. The transfers include hotel, motel and vacation rental rooms that developers can buy the rights to from existing projects in the Lake Tahoe area.

Supervisor Kirk Uhler said the board looks at the transfers as a way to encourage the retirement of old units that have no erosion controls and are causing problems with lake clarity.

The idea is a good one at first glance. Lake Tahoe is a magnet for outdoor recreation enthusiasts year-round and fixing up old motels helps make the jewel of the foothills shine even brighter.

But a problem surfaces when developers can take what was once a small motel and turn it into a much larger one. One consequence is more traffic in an area that is already fairly congested.

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