

# Pier installation signals start of Tahoe Beach Club

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – Not wanting their permit to become invalid, Tahoe Beach Club developers decided to create even more phases for the multimillion dollar project at the end of Kahle Drive in Stateline.

Putting in about 60 feet of what will be a 159.6-foot pier this fall and adding the remainder next year satisfies the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency's stipulations that movement on a project must begin within three years of the permit being issued. Had the developers – Tom Castaneda and Bob Mecay – not put in the floating pier this fall, it would have meant starting at the very beginning with the permitting process.

That would have been a costly endeavor – time-wise and financially.



The floating section of the Tahoe Beach Club pier was installed this fall.

Photos/Kathryn Reed

After all, five agencies were involved in the pier – TRPA, Douglas County, Nevada Division of Environmental Protection, Nevada Division of State Lands, and the Coast Guard.

Three engineering firms had to witness the pylons being put in to make sure the soil wasn't disturbed in a manner that would stir up the sand and be bad for Lake Tahoe. Some who witnessed the installation said a person walking in the water would have kicked up more sand.

The pier, when complete, will have a price tag of about \$400,000 – with a substantial portion of that figure involving the permitting process.

Castaneda and Mecay wanted the entire pier to be floating, but said TRPA rules no longer allow that to happen because with the dock abutting the shore it could present erosion concerns.

The Tahoe Beach Club pier brings the number of floating docks on Lake Tahoe to 19. The 275-foot one at the Hyatt in Incline comes all the way to the shore.

“New engineering designs will allow us to lower and raise the entire 100-foot second section,” Castaneda said. “We will do that two to three times a year so that it is at the same level of the floating pier. Then there will be an adjustable ramp between them.”

Walking on the Trex platform it's hard to know it's floating because of the stability. Steel sits on top of the floats.

With waves several feet high a couple weeks ago, the dock's stability passed Mother Nature's test.

The end of the floating section is 36-feet-long – twice what the walkway is. This is so larger boats could dock to pick up residents for excursions.

## **The main project**

While the economy has stalled Castaneda and Mecay's plans to remove the mobile home park and replace it with 143 high-end housing units, they see a ray of light in the financial world.

"The financial investment atmosphere is a lot better than a year and two years ago," Castaneda told *Lake Tahoe News*. "We would like to lock up some construction financing. I would safely say next year and then begin the project."

This would be the first multifamily residential property built on the shores of Lake Tahoe in nearly 30 years.



Tom Castaneda and Bob Mecay are eager to build Tahoe Beach Club.

Castaneda and Mecay bought the 19-acre parcel in 2002 for about \$12.6 million. At that time 155 mobile homes occupied most of the land that sits between Rabe Meadow and the University of Nevada 4-H Camp. Now at Tahoe Shores Mobile Home Park there are 18 vacant lots, about 30 people leasing spots from the property owners, and another 110 mobile homes the two men own and lease out. It has been a mobile home park since the 1960s.

While 39 units were supposed to be real phase 1, that will now be phase 3. One hundred and fifty people are on a waiting list to buy into the development. They want one of the units that range from 1,250- to 4,000-square-feet.

The luxury villas will have 19 to 30 units in a building, while the estate homes have four to eight units. The lower level will be one story, while second floor units will have a loft.

The later will be designed to have the feel of a brownstone.

The architecture, though, is old-style Tahoe, with influences of the Tahoe Tavern running throughout.

In all, there will be 14 buildings along one mile.

A private 40,000-square-foot beach club on the water is part of the plans. It will include a restaurant, full spa, workout area and facilities for banquets-parties-weddings. The club will offer memberships to the public.

Club members will have access to the 270-foot stretch of private beach.

Before the market crashed it was estimated the project would cost \$260 million, with units selling for between \$1.5 million and \$4 million. Those numbers could change depending on when construction and sales begin.

### **Environmental benefits**

Environmental improvements are part of the development's goals as well. The project ties into the Rabe Meadow restoration work being done by Sierra Colina, Douglas County and the U.S. Forest Service.

Today about 11,384 pounds of sediment reach Lake Tahoe from the acreage owned by Tahoe Beach Club. When the project is built out that will be reduced to 632 pounds of sediment a year.

Two acres of stream environment will be restored. Currently it's paved.

Greenhouse gas emissions will be cut by 63 percent. Much of that will be accomplished by getting rid of the woodstoves that are now in use.

The goal is to treat the water onsite through an intricate filtration process.

Native vegetation will be used in the landscaping.

Power lines will be put underground. Part of the deal is the developers will also bury the line on the 4-H site.

The whole project is going after silver LEED certification.

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