

South Tahoe mayor lauds agreement without revealing details

By Kathryn Reed

As expected, leaders from California and Nevada came up with a compromise nearly at the eleventh-hour before Monday's Lake Tahoe Environmental Summit.

When leaders met a year ago the promise was made to both state governors that by this year's summit some sort of consensus would be achieved.



Claire Fortier

A committee of Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Governing Board members has been meeting to hash out the updated Regional Plan and bring the environmental documents together, which was achieved earlier this year. They reconvened earlier this summer to work on items the group had not been able to agree to.

A second committee was also formed that included people beyond the Governing Board. The idea was if everyone sat at the table, it might mean compromise could be achieved and lawsuits avoided.

It has been publicly known for some time California Secretary of Natural Resources John Laird and Nevada Director of

Conservation and Natural Resources Leo Drozdoff have been meeting with stakeholders on a variety of issues that could see the light of day at the Aug. 13 summit.

Laird, when he was at the California Tahoe Conservancy meeting in June, said he was all but certain something would be brought forward at the summit, so reaching consensus is not news.

What will be news are the agreements.

No specifics have been released to the public, otherwise media outlets would have reported on them. South Lake Tahoe Mayor Claire Fortier in a press release on Aug. 10 spoke in generalities: "That agreement, which addressed everything from building height to drive up windows, bike friendly town centers to decks and stream environmental zones, was a masterful compromise."

But the Governing Board still needs to vote on all of this for any of it to be policy. And legal action still needs to be avoided for it to be a working document.

While consensus has been reached in the past regarding the Regional Plan, the real history is that it got derailed by special interest groups and is five years overdue.

While Fortier went on to write, "The future of Tahoe has been re-established as a collective vision, not a battleground over regulations vs. state rights," she did not say what the vision is or whose vision. It is not known if the average resident is considered a stakeholder or just people with the means to sue and vote on policy are stakeholders.

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Note: The Lake Tahoe Environmental Summit is Aug. 13, 10am at Edgewood Tahoe in Stateline. Gates open at 9am. It's free and open to the public.

