

Crystal Bay firm wants to reinvent South Shore

By Kathryn Reed

MEYERS – A Crystal Bay company has been contracted to come up with two development proposals for the South Shore.

One was met with trepidation, a bit of suspicion and some optimism Wednesday. The other the co-founder and principal of One Globe didn't want out in the public. The first involves Meyers, the latter the Chateau project – aka the hole in the ground in South Lake Tahoe on the border of Stateline.

“There is no plan for Meyers from One Globe. That is not a plan for Meyers. That is a case study, an analysis of a possibility, a project concept,” El Dorado County Supervisor Norma Santiago emphatically told *Lake Tahoe News* on Jan. 8.

Santiago was unable to attend the Meyers Community Advisory Council's meeting Wednesday night.



Sheri Woodsgreen on Jan. 8 explains her company's development concept for Meyers. Photo/Kathryn Reed

Sheri Woodsgreen of One Globe presented her concept to the council for the first time on Wednesday. She told *Lake Tahoe*

News she was hired a year ago to start looking at what type of development project Meyers could sustain. However, some members of the Meyers group had no idea Woodsgreen had been hired; and knew nothing about the catalyst project until last month.

One Globe was paid about \$20,000 for the Meyers concept from the second round of funding from a Strategic Growth Council grant. The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency was the pass-through agency for the federal grant.

One Globe also has a \$50,000 contract with the county to work on economic development in the basin. However, only half of it has been paid because all of the work has not been done. Chief Administrative Officer Terri Daly signed the contract. She has the authority to sign contracts up to \$50,000, so the Board of Supervisors never approved this. It is something Santiago advocated for.

The money comes out of the Economic Development budget, which the CAO has control over.

“What they were putting together was a strategic implementation plan to get projects on the ground for El Dorado County,” Santiago told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The county contracted with One Globe without input from South Lake Tahoe officials or the party that is developing the site. The contract was signed last summer at about the same time the city issued permits for the current retail to be constructed.

Woodsgreen first told *Lake Tahoe News* that writing about her involvement with the Chateau would derail the project, but then said, “It is only in the concept and discussion phase.”

City National Bank and Owens Financial own the 11-plus acre parcel that until last year had been dormant because the previous developer went belly up.

Tahoe Stateline Ventures is the company property owner Bill Owens formed to develop part of the acreage his firm Owens Financial owns. The \$11 million retail project fronting Highway 50 is expected to open later this year.

When Lew Feldman, attorney for TSV, was asked if he knew about the Globe One contract, he told *Lake Tahoe News*, "No. Why would El Dorado have an agreement with One Globe for a project El Dorado has no jurisdiction over?"

That question has yet to be answered by El Dorado County officials.

Daly has not returned multiple calls, Assistant CAO Kim Kerr deferred detailed comment to Santiago, and Santiago on Wednesday said she didn't have time to get into it.

Plans for Meyers

The first part of the Jan. 8 meeting in Meyers was about the area plan being putting together that will be the guiding planning tool that will have to be approved by the Board of Supervisors and TRPA Governing Board.

The draft of the plan and associated environmental documents are expected to be released in early February, with a tentative date of Feb. 13 to have a public meeting to gather input. The documents will be in circulation for a 30-day public comment period.

It was decided the Meyers council will seek from the Board of Supervisors to be a more official governing body that would have first crack at any development plans for Meyers.

Making it easier for people to build is a goal of the area plan. This includes ironing out differences between the county and TRPA.

"We want consistency. That is why we want your area plan adopted into our General Plan," Kerr said.

TRPA and county staff are meeting next week to help get them on the same page.

Meyers resident Jennifer Quashnick is concerned about the height and density regulations. The Meyers Area Plan allows for a maximum height of 35 feet in the town center, which is what the California Conservation Corps building is. The One Globe proposal calls for 45 feet. Per the area plan, this higher height would be allowable if a series of criteria are met.

Quashnick also questioned whether the California Tahoe Conservancy would sell its non-contiguous 5.76 acres in Meyers under its Asset Lands Management Program. And then she wondered if it's possible to tie properties together for a larger project. (The CTC is meeting today from 10am-noon at Inn by the Lake to discuss the program.)

There is talk of making a website for coverage and CFA so people would know who or what agency has what. And it's possible it could bring down the price of these commodities.

Some of the local property owners wondered why incentives were not being offered to current businesses – such as help with coverage and access from the highway, which Caltrans has banned.

“In the next year we are looking at transfer coverage policies. We hope to simplify that,” Adam Lewandowski with TRPA said.

But it was stated that incentives involving coverage are not likely.

According to the TRPA, there are 33,650-square-feet of commercial floor area available in Meyers.

“The Meyers Community Plan had requirements for CFA allocation that made it difficult to apply for. The Meyers Area Plan will

likely revise the CFA allocation requirements to simplify it and make it easier to apply for new CFA,” Jeff Cowen with TRPA told *LTN*.

Catalyst project

While Santiago and Woodsgreen called the One Globe proposal “merely a concept”, the document comes across as more than that.

The 71-page document says, “The proposed theme is an Athlete’s Village attraction or The Meyers Basecamp. This athlete’s theme would attract complimentary [sic] entities such as 1) a multiuse education and event center that may include space for meetings and workshops, a cross-training area, or a physical therapy center; a sustainable food center; large anchor sponsor and/or retail store, such as a sport or outdoor adventure store; and lifestyle sports event services.”

Woodsgreen said this is needed because “athletes don’t feel comfortable on the South Shore. We know that.”

She did not explain her comment. Perhaps she has not heard of Maddie Bowman, Jamie Anderson, Elena Hight, Hannah Teter or Sho Kashima – all who live on the South Shore and all who could be representing the United States in the Olympics next month.

What worries some Meyers council members, who spoke off the record, is that Globe One came up with an idea that would fit into the area plan, so it could be a slam dunk based on legalities even if the community doesn’t want it.

Woodsgreen said her firm came up with the idea based on what people in Meyers have been saying they want.

In one breath Woodsgreen said, “... our infrastructure is outdated.” And in another she said, “Let’s leap from old technology. We don’t need broadband.”

In one breath she praised the Prosperity Plan, saying geotourism, wellness and the environment should be the focus of the basin. The irony is the Prosperity Center, while it has not produced anything tangible, has solely been working on establishing broadband for the basin – something Woodsgreen said is not needed.

In one breath Woodsgreen said the total maximum daily load issue is all about cars. In the next, she said, “If you want people off the highway, you have to have a place for them to be.” In other words, drive to Meyers and then park. Her plans call for underground parking for the sports facility as well as public parking at both ends of town.

(A factual correction: Cars are not the No. 1 issue with TMDL; it's fine sediment.)

The project calls for melting snow at the sports center as well as what comes from snow removal and treating it in Meyers so it is potable.

Instead of an overpass to get from one side of Highway 50 to the other, One Globe proposes an underground passage for pedestrians and cyclists.

The proposal calls for bungalow-type lodging for athletes and the people they bring. However, currently only 10 tourist accommodation units are tied to Meyers. More could be transferred in if other jurisdictions are willing to do so.

Woodsgreen said she anticipates her project would cost \$200 million to build. She proposed the funding come via using the 63-20 IRS rule, which has been on the books since 1963. It involves a nonprofit overseeing the facility for the life of the 30-year bonds and a public agency taking over the aging facility when the debt is paid. (More info about the 63-20 is available here from the state of Washington.)

It was decided at a future date the One Globe proposal needed

a full vetting by the Meyers Council, if not the entire community.