

CTC close to closing Alta Mira deal in S. Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

It doesn't matter if one is on the street or the beach, the area near the Alta Mira building in South Lake Tahoe is not visually appealing.

At lake level there is a large pipe coming out of the bluff that is delivering water into Lake Tahoe.

At curbside the structure blocks the view of the lake and the bike path is less than ideal.



Water, this month, flows from the pipe below the Alta Mira building in South Lake Tahoe into Lake Tahoe. Photo/LTN

All of that is about to change.

While the California Tahoe Conservancy has been talking about acquiring that 0.55-acre parcel for years, the deal is about to close.

At the CTC's board meeting March 20 money was allocated for relocation expenses. This is expected to be no more than

\$40,000, though \$120,000 was set aside just in case something goes awry.

The actual purchase could come before the board at the May or June meeting.

In March 2012 the board agreed to enter an 18-month option for the building and land at 3339 Lake Tahoe Blvd. The paperwork was finalized late that year, so the agreement expires this June. The \$10,000 was essentially a down payment so the owner – Alta Mira Partnership – did not sell to someone else.

It is going to cost about \$2.5 million.

“When we negotiated the option we had about a \$500,000 gap. Fortunately, the State Lands Commission stepped up to fill the gap,” CTC Executive Director Patrick Wright told the board.

He said the Tahoe Fund, Soroptimist and other groups are focusing on fund-raising efforts so the parcel will be restored. This will likely include dealing with the pipe.

“There is tremendous interest in that we don’t just buy it and let it sit there,” Wright said.

This area is the end point for what started as the 56-acre project. Beautification from that parcel to El Dorado Beach would complete the Lakeview Commons project. That will take more than \$4 million to complete. No money is in the bank to start it. (Lakeview Commons cost more than \$6 million.)

The remaining acreage in the bigger project is across the street and includes Campground by the Lake.

Mary McCall told the board she is a bit perturbed because she owns the land to the east of the Alta Mira building and no one from the Conservancy has talked to her about what is going on next door.

McCall is the daughter of Knox Johnson and part of a pioneer

family in South Lake Tahoe that still has substantial land holdings. On their property is Don Cheapos ski rentals.

McCall told *Lake Tahoe News* she does not want the history of the area to be lost. After all, it was on what is now Johnson Boulevard where the railroad would come down to the lake by their property, carrying logs when timber was a big commodity in the basin.

After the item was heard by the board McCall spent a significant amount of time with Bruce Eisner, the point man on the project for CTC.