

# Letter: Hidden lies hurting Meyers future

To the community,

“Honest baby, it was just once. It meant nothing, I promise.”

If you’ve never heard this before, thank your lucky stars. But if you have, you recognize a whopper when you hear it.

Via email, I received a copy of the third round of a grant, a grant that our county supervisor signed on Feb. 26, for \$1,150,000, the very day she was punching her fists in the air proclaiming, “The Catalyst is Dead.” This grant basically throws Meyers under the bus. It reads something like this: Meyers will be the pilot community for the Sustainable Mobility Plan, the prototype for communities around the lake and around the world! Meyers is the “donor community” and apparently, we are all on board for this.

What?!

Boy, do I have issues with this. First, how could something be “sustainable” if our tax dollars are paying for it? Second, I’m getting a little sick of these meetings with half truths and almost honest answers.

Seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars of this grant goes to consultants, the rest to the agencies (TRPA, county, etc.). Consultants were included in the first two rounds of this grant, \$850,000 and \$950,000, respectfully. Pretty cool gig because consultants can consult indefinitely. Well, until the cause-du-jour runs out of grant money.

This particular cause is bikeable-walkable communities, buildings snuggled together with parking underground, tourist-retail on ground level, low income housing-timeshare-condos on

upper floors. There's your 40- to 50-foot tall buildings, just like the Catalyst. You heard me, the Catalyst is not dead, just renamed.

One of the problems with these sustainable communities is combined zoning. Who would want to live above a breakfast cafe where employees arrive at 4:30am? Who wants to hear doors slamming and car alarms chirping all night? Smelly commercial dumpsters, and of course, signs, street and emergency lights? How about inebriated people wandering around doing naughty things after the bars close at 2am? Commercial, residential, and tourist recreational, thrown together like a tossed salad, really?

This grant, the Incentive Plan (formerly Catalyst) and the TRPA's Regional Plan update (RPU), all buy into this idea. Maybe everyone went to the same convention. I don't know, but this is what the TRPA has been spoon feeding the Meyers Community Advisory Council (MCAC) since the beginning. The agencies were specifically dovetailing the Meyers plan to the RPU, calling the RPU our current plan. Well, lying by omission is still a lie. Our current and existing plan is the 1993 Meyers Community Plan.

The original focus of the MCAC was to update that '93 plan and these good people did not realize they were being manipulated because the '93 plan was never used for comparison. It still hasn't. So much is being taken from us, so many huge changes to our community. This is planning for decades ahead, not just a year or two. This isn't a game, people, this is our future.

The new Meyers plan has problems, it's not ready, and most of us have never heard of it. How could we be on board? How could our supervisor be proclaiming, "This is your community! You can write your plan!" when the whole deal sounds set in stone? If you are interested in reading this grant, there is a new website which has compiled this and other documents from the agencies. Check it out. And, follow the money, like, how much

money did it take to convince the Conservancy to take this bad publicity hit? Selling off sensitive lots for profit, changing sensitive lands to asset lands? I think that the TRPA is in no position to take any more bad press, but for some unknown reason, needs this new Meyers plan to get pushed through, ASAP.

What about this commodities transfer business? Changing residential allocations to commercial ones, changing commercial floor area to tourist accommodation units? Goofy – buy one get five free “incentives for big business”. It’s untouchable for small business. This kind of thing is ripe for corruption and misuse.

We mustn’t overlook the zoning changes. My commercial-light industrial property changed to Town Center. It pretty much wrecked my future, and not just mine. The entire commercial corridor in Meyers was rezoned and none of us was ever told. Are all these aforementioned things connected? All to accommodate one big new project? I am not opposed to growth, in fact, my business thrives on it. But what kind of growth are we really talking about here?

I don’t want to be the prototype for some cockamamie idea that a bunch of grant-gitters made up to make big money fast, and nobody wants another hole-in-the-ground. So, bring your questions and ideas to the next Meyers meeting at the CCC building, 6pm March 19.

**Angela Olson, Meyers resident and business owner**