

Opinion: EDC wrong to encourage secrecy

By Dave Jinkens

In a stunning step backward from transparency the El Dorado County Planning Commission, holding a difficult to attend morning weekday workshop on the draft Meyers Area Plan at City Hall in South Lake Tahoe on Oct. 16, recommended that any new Meyers Area Advisory Council formed by the Board of Supervisor after adoption of a Meyers Area Plan not be subject to California's Open Meeting Law, the Brown Act.

Three county supervisor appointed planning leaders present want any Meyers Area Council to work "informally" without notification requirements provided in state law for the news media and general public. Concerned Meyers Area residents present at the meeting were shocked at this disavowal of the public notification process by these county appointed leaders and their staff.



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The problem to date with the process used by the county of El Dorado in developing a Meyers Area Plan is that it has not been transparent process. It has not complied with the customary and commonly used requirements of local government to notify the media and the general public under the Brown Act of area plan meetings, and it appears to be guided by back-door small group and special interest lobbying of county

officials and staff outside of the public view.

The process used to date is not open and inclusive to the entire Meyers community. Sadly, some County government officials and staff to date have left the unfortunate impression that they know best what is good for Meyers, and they will decide what is best, not the community.

Concerned Meyers residents who have for months urged the Board of Supervisors and county staff to have a broader community-based and inclusive public input process were disappointed to learn their calls for democratic reform in the process have been ignored and will be perpetuated even after a new plan is adopted.

“If there is one thing the broader community appeared to support without question, it was that the future Meyers Advisory Council would be subject to the Brown Act,” said Meyers area resident Jennifer Quashnick.

Meyers resident and business owner Angie Olson said, “We were surprised to see the county staff present this as option to the Planning Commission, and even more so when they selected the non-transparent, non-public option.”

The South Tahoe Chamber of Commerce board of directors supports Meyers area residents and property owners who want a communitywide and unbiased Meyers survey to determine Meyers community views on a new plan. The South Tahoe chamber board does not wish to tell Meyers area residents what they need or want in a new plan. California’s South Tahoe chamber supports the right of Meyers Area residents to make that decision themselves in a democratic and transparent way.

In the end, it is the Meyers community as a whole that needs to decide their future, and they need their voice to be heard and listened to by county officials and their staff. The hope remains that the full Board of Supervisors will ultimately embrace open and legally noticed meetings and an inclusive

Meyers Area Plan process.

On Oct. 28, the county of Board of Supervisors will hold a workshop on the Meyers Area Plan at City Hall in South Lake Tahoe and Meyers residents and property and business owners are encouraged to attend.

For more information about the concerns of Meyers community members, go online.

Dave Jinkens is the government affairs liaison volunteer for the South Tahoe Chamber of Commerce.