

Letter: EDC needs to listen to residents

Publisher's note: *This letter was originally sent to the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors and reprinted with permission.*

Supervisors,

Last year, at your annual Tahoe Board of Supervisors meeting, you couldn't swing a dead cat in that room without hitting a grant writer or grant getter – often one and the same person. The rest of the room was packed with Nevada groups, government/agency employees and “sustainable” agenda pushers. The deck was stacked against the people of Meyers; most of whom had to stand out in the hall, and of course, we weren't being paid to be there.

To date, the TRPA has directed our plan and we, residents and businesses, have had little say. We have asked for an independent, expert-run survey, something the city of South Lake Tahoe invested in with much success, to more accurately write a community plan that we can live with for years to come. Petitions, letters, and grass roots neighborhood canvassing have shown a very different feedback than what has been presented to you. A lot of important issues have been ignored.

As I see it, issues with the new Meyers Area Plan include the new allowable building and land use information that is not being accurately compared to the existing allowables in our 1993 plan; such as the “anything goes mixed-use” zone change, taller building heights with incentives to go higher – disregarding community meeting decisions, and larger building densities – in some cases, four times more units per acre.

Changes in the new plan are advantageous to large investors,

but don't do a thing for small business. Say an investor wants to build a three-story apartment but the code allows four stories. Wanting the most return on his investment, he will build out to the maximum allowable height and density. The county Building Department cannot stop or deny this if it is in the plan. This is why it's so important to spend the time, inform the community and weigh publically in real English the long-term impact of our plan. This is not the TRPA's plan to live with. We have to live with the outcome.

Furthermore, we have no representation. Trying to explain the powerful agency influences to an "off the hill" supervisor simply doesn't work. Supervisor Sue Novasel does understand, but apparently, cannot communicate or advise you other supervisors? Not sure how that works or how we, as a community, can be fairly heard.

Please consider the new Meyers draft as just a draft – don't put it forward for CEQA review. It ain't cooked yet.

Thank you,

Angela Olson, Meyers