

Sierra Colina project in Stateline resurrected

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – Similar, yet different. That’s one way to describe what the latest version of the Sierra Colina subdivision in Stateline looks like.

“The original Sierra Colina project was going to be the premier project in the entire Lake Tahoe Basin. It’s unfortunate it ended up in litigation. Everyone lost,” Douglas County Commissioner Nancy McDermid said.

She singled out how the previous project included nine moderate-income deed restricted single-family residences that would have been ideal for local workers.

The property borders Lake Village, Highway 50 and the commercial area with Sushi Pier and Azul restaurants. Today it is vacant land.

Commissioners on Jan. 21 unanimously agreed to subdivide the 18-acre parcel into 47 parcels on which 13 single-family residences and 34 duplexes will be built. They will be smaller units – the smallest being 1,546-square-foot – than what was proposed more than six years ago. All will be built to LEED standards. There will also be a homeowners’ recreation building and trails. The road through the development will be private.

“We are gratified with the votes cast by the Douglas County Board of Commissioners (Thursday) in support of the Sierra Colina project. Because the county approval process is still ongoing, out of respect for that process, we reserve further comment until it is completed,” Gail Jaquish told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Jaquish with her husband, Steve Kenninger, who live locally, acquired the property in 2005 in a foreclosure sale. Four years later they obtained approval from the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency to build 50 units.

Soon thereafter the League to Save Lake Tahoe filed a lawsuit that ultimately derailed the project. The **appellate court in 2012** sided with the environmental group, which had challenged TRPA over the coverage issues for the Sierra Colina project. Coverage is a TRPA creation dictating how much land can be paved in order to contend with erosion issues.

Since that decision came out Jaquish and Kenninger have been deciding how to go forward. Neither attended this week's meeting.

The six members of the public who spoke at Thursday's meeting were all in favor of the project. Many pointed out how the couple has put more time and money into this project when someone less determined would have walked away.

The project will be built in four phases. The first will be to put the utilities underground.

Before the second phase begins improvements to the intersection of Lake Village Drive and Highway 50 will be made. These include left and right turn lanes onto the highway, and an accelerator lane on the highway for those turning left.