

South Tahoe seeks to upgrade design standards



Red Hut on Ski Run Boulevard is an example of building design that works.
Photo/LTN

By Kathryn Reed

Roof lines, construction material, lighting, landscaping – even how the building is situated on the property – are all aspects of design guidelines being created for future development in South Lake Tahoe.

The goal is to establish a mountain feel, while still being contemporary.

Plenty of negative comments surfaced after BevMo and Auto Zone were built. People said they look like they could have been built anywhere. They met the minimum standards.

Those who have been involved in the design guideline process want more for this town than ordinary, average and homogenous.

Wednesday night marked the second of three informational gathering sessions. After the January meeting there was also

an online survey to solicit input.

The final draft is expected to be released at a March 9 meeting. After that, the Planning Commission and City Council will be presented with the document for approval.

Repeatedly at the Feb. 17 meeting the Red Hut restaurant on Ski Run Boulevard was mentioned as a building that works on many levels – from how it is located on the lot to the roof to the materials used.

Stephanie Grigsby with Design Workshop went over some of the responses from the last meeting as well as from the 260 online surveys.

People don't like it when there is little or no landscaping. Instead, the preference is for native vegetation, and plants that need little water. Using the plants as a buffer between the street and building is being touted. Signs that are clean with a concise message are more desirable than ones that stand on a pole or are cluttered. Boxy designs are passé. Don't have parking be the visual focal point. Create a sense of connectivity to neighboring businesses and open space. Use natural materials. All of these ideas came from survey takers.

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Notes:

- The next design workshop is March 9, 5-7pm at City Hall.
- A second **online survey** is open until Feb. 26 at 5pm.