

North Tahoe Citizen Action Alliance

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Jerry Wotel, Newsletter Editor

NTCAA Newsletter – February 2010

Homewood Mountain Resort

The Board of North Tahoe Citizens Action Alliance (NTCAA) has met unsuccessfully with JMA Ventures, the developer of Homewood Mountain Resort (HMR), requesting a reduction in density of the project. NTCAA has followed this project since spring of 2007. A more local group, "Friends of the West Shore" (FOWS), was formed and has been more closely involved in this project. FOWS's web site is at <http://www.friendswestshore.org/> and gives more information about the organization and the HMR project.

This is the biggest project planned on the West Shore in a rural area without an adopted TRPA General Plan or a Community Plan. The redevelopment portion only considers the asphalted areas at the current Homewood Ski Area, while every other aspect is development on open space/vacant land. HMR would overwhelm the present rural town of Homewood with massive impacts on the environment and traffic, and extending to the surrounding areas.

The project as planned has non-attainment of air quality standards for ozone precursors and particulate matter, increase in impervious surfaces resulting in groundwater recharge and increase surface runoff, erosion from soil disruption causing runoff contamination, and a significant increase in traffic congestion and noise. TRPA Executive Director Joanne Marchetta has said there will also be cumulative impacts to the watersheds.



The West Shore General Plan, as it is presently, will require major changes. The use of multi-residential is not an allowable or special use in the plan which states; "The establishment of new uses not listed shall be prohibited within the Plan Area." It will also be necessary to amend the Placer County General Plan of 1998. The TRPA Planned Area Statements will require "Special" need amendments for tourist units, condos and the hotel, because of the project density. HMR is requesting a "Special Height District" for the excessive building heights.

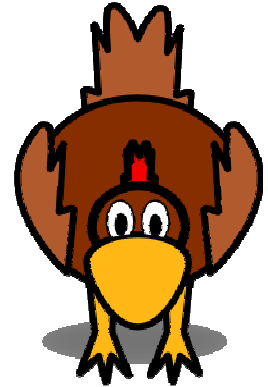
Tahoe Fried Chicken

Placer County is considering zoning amendment (PZTA T20090403) allowing for the keeping of chickens (up to six hens, no roosters) in the Residential Single-Family (RS) zone district that includes the Tahoe Basin, the Squaw Valley Land Use Plan area, as well as other adopted specific plans.

The problems are many in keeping chickens in the mountain woodlands. Cold winters, heavy snowloads, and keeping the animals safe from predators, to name a few. No one can deny that there are nu-

merous bears and coyotes in pretty much every area around the Basin, not to mention raccoons. All three of these species of native wildlife are known to kill and consume chickens. The only way to avoid this is to electrify the coop so the hens are not an easy meal. This would all be good and fine except that the smell of the birds as well as the scratch they are fed are also a lure to the predators. Neighborhoods must be considered and will suffer damage due to the presence of an abundance of these predators.

Ann Bryant of the BEAR League says, ***“The presence of a chicken coop in a neighborhood will attract bears, coyotes and raccoons. This will not set well with the people who live nearby and who have been diligent in bear-proofing their trash, keeping bird feeders away from the bears, etc. and who, because of chickens down the street, are still experiencing unwelcome bear visits.”***



Then there are the environmental impacts. The sounds of chickens feeding, the odor of their food and droppings, might lend a country atmosphere to some. However, the runoff of their waste products, either directly or from their waste being used as fertilizer, will be detrimental to Lake Tahoe.

Ms. Bryant continues, ***“Also, a resident is allowed to shoot and kill a bear or coyote if the animal is attempting to raid a chicken coop. This is legal in unincorporated areas, like most of the Tahoe Basin. Do we really want someone in our neighborhood to be firing guns nearby after attracting the wildlife they are shooting at? And why would we set our bears and coyotes up for failure? God knows they have enough temptations they must resist in order to stay alive.”*** She continues, ***“Having a chicken coop in bear territory is like placing a big bowl of candy out in the midst of a group of young children and then slapping them for reaching for a piece of it. We need to think about how our actions will affect others...neighbors and wildlife alike.”***

The BEAR League keeps detailed call logs on every call coming into their 525-PAWS line and has numerous records of complaints from both chicken owners and neighbors of chicken owners. In their experience, the keeping of chickens causes serious bear problems.

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency is yet to express its opinion. The Placer County Board of Supervisors will rule on this zoning amendment in a few months.

Land Use Amendment for Medical Marijuana

Placer County Planning Department is recommending to the Board of Supervisors a Zoning Text Amendment that will define and disallow medical marijuana collectives, cooperative or dispensaries to operate in Placer County. The amendment will clarify that the production and composting of cannabis is not included in the definition of “Crop Production” or “Agricultural Processing” within the existing County Code. The Placer County Planning Commission has voted in favor of this amendment.

The Municipal Advisory Councils (MACs), who normally are consulted before an issue is brought before the Planning Commission, were bypassed for this issue. The North Tahoe Regional Advisory Council (NTRAC) learned of this and included the issue as part of its February meeting. The finding was that the Placer County Planning Department did not do a complete analysis of the issue and did not conduct public outreach meetings through the MACs before presenting it to the Planning Commission. NTRAC therefore did not endorse the issue.

Did You Know...?

1. The Placer County Public Works located in Truckee, is moving into a recently purchased facility in Kings Beach. The site is the vacant AAA building next to Lanza's Restaurant.
2. At the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Governing Board (TRPA) meeting on February 24, 2010 at their Stateline office will discuss the Settlement of Litigation, League to Save Lake Tahoe, Friends of Tahoe Vista v. Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, Tahoe Vista Partners, LLP, Placer County, USDC E.D. Cal. Case No. 2:08-cv-2447 JAM-KJM, concerning the Sandy Beach Timeshare/Fractional Ownership Development.
3. Also at the TRPA meeting on February 24, 2010, granting the second year extension for allocations under the Community Enhancement Program (CEP) for seven, of the original nine, applicants will be considered. Of the original nine CEP projects, three projects have formally applied to TRPA (Boulder Bay, Homewood Mountain Resort, and BB, LLC.), and one, the Domus Kings Beach Housing Now project, has formally withdrawn from the program. The three projects that have formally applied are in various stages of environmental and project review with TRPA and the local jurisdictions.
4. There are five Placer County Focus Groups to discuss Lake Tahoe issues in the areas of Recycling, Pedestrian/Traffic Safety, Land Use, Redevelopment, and TRPA. If you wish to participate in any of these, contact Jennifer Merchant, Placer County Executive Office at jmerchan@placer.ca.gov.

Upcoming Events/Key Dates

Agendas for TRPA Governing Board and APC, and also Placer County BOS are not available until a few days before the meeting. Therefore, it is difficult to provide a meaningful emphasis to the meetings. Other meetings/events not shown here, or changes, will be announced by email.

February 24, Wednesday	TRPA Governing Board	9:30 am, TRPA Stateline Office
March 2, Tuesday	Placer County BOS Mtg.	8:30 am, Auburn
March 3, Wednesday	NLTRA Board Meeting	8:30 am, TCPUD Board Room
March 9, Tuesday	NTPUD Board Meeting	10 am, NTEC, Kings Beach
March 10, Wednesday	TRPA APC Meeting	9:30 am, TRPA Stateline Office
March 11, Thursday	NTRAC Meeting	6 pm, NTEC, Kings Beach
March 16, Tuesday	Placer County BOS Mtg.	8:30 am, Auburn
March 17, Wednesday	NTPFD Board Meeting	6 pm, TCPUD Board Room
March 19, Friday	TCPUD Board Meeting	8:30 am, TCPUD Board Room
March 24, Wednesday	TRPA Governing Board	9:30 am, TRPA Stateline Office

TRPA – Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
 NLTRA – North Lake Tahoe Resort Association
 TCPUD – Tahoe City Public Utility District
 NTEC – North Tahoe Event Center (NTCC)
 BOS – Placer County Board of Supervisors

APC – Advisory Planning Commission
 NTPUD – North Tahoe Public Utility District
 NTPFD – North Tahoe Fire Protection District
 NTRAC- North Tahoe Regional Advisory Council

“I believe there are more instances of the abridgement of freedom of the people by gradual and silent encroachments of those in power than by violent and sudden usurpation.”..... James Madison