

North Tahoe Citizen Action Alliance

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NTCAA Newsletter – July 2011

TRPA Executive Director Suddenly Ends Kings Beach Biomass Plant Proposal....Maybe

The following words are directly from Joanne Marchetta's Monthly Executive Director's Report, dated July 20, 2011, submitted to the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) Board of Directors at their July 27th meeting. *"On July 18, 2011 I informed the County of the TRPA staff's determination that the site is unworkable and recommended to them that the Kings Beach project site be removed from consideration as an alternative included in the detailed EIR/EIS for the County's proposed project."* For the complete report see page 143 of

http://trpa.org/documents/packets/gb_packets/2011_gb_packets/July_2011_GB_Packet.pdf

Under TRPA's Rules of Procedure Article 6.5 (b), "The Executive Director shall determine the scope of the EAs... The scope of an EA shall include (1) the range of alternatives to be considered..... This action was within the purview of the TRPA.

For all intents and purposes this determination by TRPA's Executive Director should exclude the Kings Beach site as an alternative for the Biomass Power Plant project proposed by Placer County. However, there has been no acknowledgment by Placer County that Kings Beach is "off the table."

Opponents of the biomass plant site in Kings Beach include a coalition of technical, political, and grassroots organizations. NTCAA has been a leader in researching this issue since early 2010, and has compiled extensive technical data revealing serious flaws in Placer County's NOP claim that Kings Beach is the "preferred alternative" for the 1-3MW power plant. These facts have been published in a Position Paper and our monthly newsletters revealing the dangers to public safety, the environment, and lack of financial feasibility.



Placer County and the TRPA signed a Reimbursement Agreement dated May 25, 2010 to channel the federally earmarked funds to perform numerous services including, *"all other services in conjunction with the development, environmental review, and finalization of a permit for a biomass facility in Placer County."* Sidney Coatsworth of Ascent Environmental was contracted to produce the EIR/EIS and John Paul Harries was contracted to represent TRPA throughout the process. Has TRPA cancelled their obligations in these contracts? Why? There is no evidence of this.

The Kings Beach Anti-Biomass Coalition has asked for evidence that TRPA is no longer involved in any contracts related to a biomass power plant in the Tahoe Basin. This evidence should be forthcoming, along with a resolution by the Board of the TRPA banning all further consideration of any biomass power plants in the Lake Tahoe Basin in order to maintain the integrity of this Outstanding National Resource Water of Lake Tahoe.

The rationale is clear, and the facts prove no need for an incinerator in Kings Beach. Cabin Creek (outside the Basin) is the regional collection point for biomass material where it is processed and stored. The amount of open burning (based on Placer County's records) in the vicinity of Kings Beach accounts for only one day fuel for the power plant, and there is no excess money from such a small plant to subsidize fuels reduction activity. The complete failure of the 1MW Carson City Plant after only three years of operation attests to the lack of economic viability of small, stand alone biomass incinerators.

Incline Village's North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District has completed their initial treatments of fuels reduction and is in a maintenance mode. Their exemplary effort to curb catastrophic wildfire is a model for the rest of the Basin, and they anticipate no further biomass fuel for a power plant coming from Incline Village.

The TRPA needs to follow through, and Placer County needs to reevaluate their facts to correspond with reality. The public distrust of local government is rising, and the biomass plant in the Tahoe Basin is now a metaphor for government wasting public funds.

Homewood Mountain Resort (HMR) Developments

The Final EIR/EIS is being prepared (this includes issues raised by the public comments on the DEIR/DEIS for which over 1000 comments were received). Preparation of this report/statement is currently in process and is expected to take several months. Release of Final EIR/EIS with a 30 day final comment period is expected to be issued this Fall. This will be followed by the decision to certify the Final EIR/EIS.



In the Draft EIR/EIS, HMR indicated that only Alternative 1 was feasible with a project size of 340 units, which includes:

- At the North Base, 75 hotel rooms, 40 two-bedroom for-sale condo units (with 20 lock-off bedrooms), 30 penthouse condo units, 36 residential condominiums, 16 townhouses, 20 fractional ownership units, 13 affordable housing units and 99 condominium units at the South Base.
- These 697 bedrooms, excluding the 16 townhomes at peak occupancy, would allow over 1400 tourists (See DEIS, Appendix K-3).
- A 272 space three level parking structure with additional underground parking included elsewhere in the project.

- 15,000 sq. ft. mid-mountain lodge, a 30,000 sq. ft. skier services lodge, 25,000 square feet of commercial area
- A health spa, ice skating rink, 18 hole miniature golf course, three swimming pools, a gondola and a new ski lift.

Grading includes 203,700 cubic yards of cut/fill or a total of 20,370 dump trucks at ten cubic yard capacity. Phase 1a alone proposes 1,040 cubic yards of cut/fill material per day. (See DEIS, Appendix N)

The Friends of the West Shore (FOWS), a Lake Tahoe grassroots community conservation organization established to help preserve and enhance the character, scale, environment and historical significance of the West Shore, fully supports the redevelopment of the Homewood Mountain Resort (HMR) but feels that the proposed project is TOO large. FOWS believes:

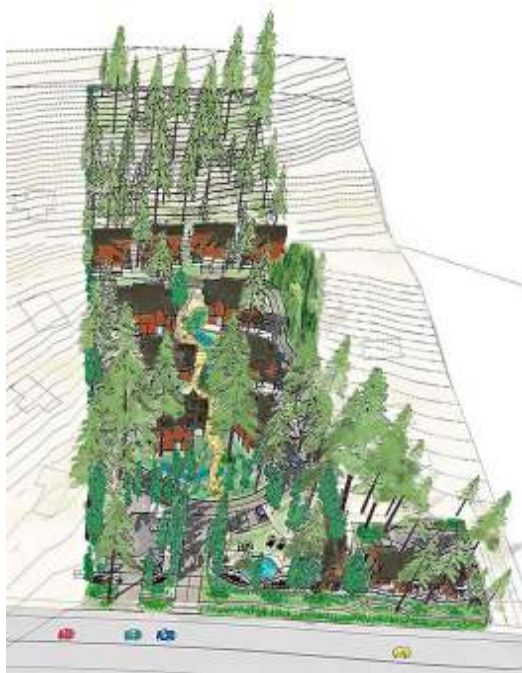
- This Project will severely impact the scenic views that residents cherish on the West Shore.
- The Project proposes three amendments to height, groundwater and the Planned Area Statements (PAS)
- Amendments to PAS 158- zoning will change from single family dwelling to multi-residential.
- The project should be a redevelopment only, no new development on vacant land should be allowed, especially outside of the urban boundaries into the recreational ski area.
- The Traffic Study in the DEIS is flawed and not supported by substantial evidence. Traffic is not measured during peak summer periods and incorrectly assumes that tourists at the resort will not drive to other destinations during the summer period.
- Construction traffic- the DEIS states “trucks removing excavation material will generate up to approximately 146-192 trips per day” (See DEIS, p. 11-81).
- Traffic congestion will be exacerbated in the back up from Tahoe City during the summer and cannot be mitigated. The proposed project will add about 8,431 Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) every day during the summer.
- Project fails to articulate a plan to achieve its stated goal of eliminating parking on Highway 89.
- Flawed Draft Environmental Impact Report/ Statement - does not include essential information on land coverage, traffic, building sq. footage, and other information needed to analyze the resulting environmental impacts.
- FOWS has requested Story Poles to visualize the impacts of this development. The proposed building heights are inconsistent with the surrounding community and its character. FOWS feels that the community deserves to have a visualization of the mass and size of the project, especially with the proposed height amendment to allow for building heights up to 77 feet. (See DEIS, p. 10-29)



- The project proposed requires a ten year construction phase- The DEIS states “HMR anticipates a ten (10) year time frame for the build out of the Ski Area Master Plan” (See DEIS, 3-47 and Appendix N “Construction Schedule.”)
- 697 Bedrooms (this does not include townhomes)- If one assumes that there are two guests per bedroom this makes the total number of guests during peak times to be approx. 1400-1500. This is TOO many people at one time for such a small community. (See DEIS, Appendix K-3).
- The omission of an adequate emergency evacuation plan to address the increased number of visitors trying to flee in their cars in the event of a major fire or other emergency situation.
- Proposed project does not meet the Regional Plan’s Water Supply Assurance Requirement. The “Water Supply Assessment” does not identify sufficient water supplies for the project.

6731 Tahoe

The property at 6731 North Lake Boulevard, Tahoe Vista, is a former vacation resort with a collection of structures and is a blight on the neighborhood.



The Klapper Family is developing the property into a site of 10 duplex townhomes on 5.6 acres and will reduce the number of buildings. The new townhomes will be approximately 2100 sq. ft., and be incremental shared ownership and on rental programs when not in use. A pool and clubhouse will be added and a 14-space parking lot with separate entrance along Highway 28 for Tonopalo use; there is no other affiliation.

The redevelopment will utilize 21 existing tourist accommodation units, currently 35 onsite, two residential units, and 914 sq ft. of commercial space. A six foot high perimeter fence separates the development from its neighbors, and a circular drive provides access to the townhomes. Three-story lake-view townhomes are built into the hillside at the garage level to minimize building height.

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.

August 3, Wednesday	NLTRA Board Meeting	8:30 am, TCPUD Board Room
August 9, Tuesday	NTPUD Board Meeting	9 am, NTEC, Kings Beach
August 10, Wednesday	TRPA APC Meeting	9:30 am, TRPA Stateline Office
August 11, Thursday	NTRAC Meeting <i>Homewood Mountain Resort</i>	6 pm, TCPUD, Board Room
August 17, Wednesday	NTPUD Board Meeting	6 pm, TCPUD Board Room
August 19, Friday	TCPUD Board Meeting	8:30 am, TCPUD Board Room
August 24, Wednesday	TRPA Governing Board <i>6731 Tahoe Project</i>	9:30 am, NTEC, Kings Beach

TRPA – Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
NLTRA – North Lake Tahoe Resort Association
TCPUD – Tahoe City Public Utility District
NTEC – North Tahoe Event Center
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

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”... Margaret Mead

Contributors to this newsletter: Dave McClure, Susan Gearhart, and Jerry Wotel

The North Tahoe Citizen Action Alliance (NTCAA) seeks to provide an ongoing voice for ordinary citizens. Planning the future of our communities and providing for communication and education on key issues affecting our communities is of prime importance. We serve the North Lake Tahoe area from Kings Beach to Tahoma. NTCAA is a tax-exempt California Public Benefit Nonprofit Corporation formed in May 2007, staffed by community volunteers. Membership is limited to those who subscribe to the NTCAA Goals and Objectives and are willing to participate in the organization's activities.