

Meyers Advisory Council

Wednesday, May 1, 2019; 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm

California Conservation Corps Building
1949 Apache Ave, Meyers, CA
meyersadvisorycouncil@edcgov.us

Members:

*Leon Abravanel
Joseph V. Cardinale
Trevor Coolidge, Secretary
Greg Daum
Carl Fair
Josh Marianelli
James Marino
Amanda Ross, Chair
Judith Wood, Vice Chair*

Meeting Minutes and Actions Taken

1. Open Meeting, Establish Quorum –

Action: Adopted Agenda

Meyers Advisory Council (MAC) Chair Amanda Ross opened the meeting at 3:05 PM with MAC members Cardinale, Coolidge, Fair, Marianelli, and Marino present. Cardinale motioned to approve the proposed agenda as prepared by Mr. Brendan Ferry, Principal Planner with El Dorado County (EDC). Fair seconded the motion, and the motion unanimously carried. There was nothing requested that was not on the agenda by MAC members, nor were there any requests from the public for items not on the agenda. Daum arrived at 3:09 pm, bringing the total to seven of nine MAC members in attendance.

2. MAC Housekeeping - Procedural Rules, Email

No Action Taken

Mr. Ferry discussed the establishment of a Meyers Advisory Committee (MAC) email address and updated EDC website for hosting updates and agendas. The meeting was also noticed on the Holiday Market (former Lira's) bulletin board. There was also a review of the voting agreement and desire to pursue a consensus model. Cardinale asked if a split vote receiving over half of the votes would be represented as a majority and Ferry confirmed that this was correct.

Ferry advised that regular meetings would occur quarterly, but more frequently if required, and would be noticed 72 hours in advance. Ross added that notices had been posted at Meeks, Altitude 360, Freel Perk, and Holiday Market. The MAC Housekeeping item was closed following a brief discussion stressing the overall goal of being transparent and passing along recommendations to the EDC Board of Supervisors (BOS).

3. Presentation on Pioneer Trail/US 50 Intersection Safety Project

Action: Provide Letter of Support

Mr. Donaldo Palaroan, Senior Civil Engineer with the EDC Department of Transportation (DOT) presented an overview of the US 50 - Pioneer Trail Intersection Improvement Project being pursued by EDC DOT. He reviewed the results of US 50 Meyers corridor study that identified intersection improvements at Pioneer trail as a priority safety project. Palaroan also noted that the project is also identified in chapters three (3) and seven (7) of the Meyers Area Plan.

The corridor study was funded by a Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) On Our Way Grant, that supported a road safety audit; the safety audit was completed in April 2016 and identified 34 collisions occurring at the intersection of Pioneer Trail and US 50 between 2007 and 2015, with 14 occurring during snow and ice conditions. Following identification of the project, EDC DOT submitted a Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funding application to Caltrans for Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funding, and received a \$3 million award.

In providing additional framework for the proposed project, Palaroan provided an overview of projects in the area ranging from Highway 89 water quality improvements to the current roundabout being installed by Caltrans at the intersection of US 50 and HWY 89 in Meyers. He also reviewed the outreach that had occurred to the EDC Sheriff's office, the California Highway Patrol (CHP), and Caltrans.

EDC DOT hired the civil engineering firm GHD to develop and evaluate potential improvements at the intersection of US50 and Pioneer Trail. GHD considered four (4) alternatives: a no-build option, stop control, a modified traffic signal, and two roundabout concepts that included two different hybrid roundabout options, with and without a bypass lane. The study found that a roundabout was the preferred alternative due to it providing a higher long term level of service (LOS) and reducing the severity of crashes at the intersection.

Beyond selecting the roundabout design as the preferred improvement for the intersection, Mr. Palaroan indicated that the GHD and EDC DOT were still reviewing the two roundabout design concepts included in the intersection study. One concept did not include a separate bypass lane, was easier to construct, and reduced snow removal complications, while the second concept included a bypass lane and might offer better traffic flow. The two concepts were being reviewed with project stakeholders and further evaluated as two which option was most effective before moving forward with additional design work.

During the discussion that followed the presentation, Ross asked about what bike infrastructure would be present. Palaroan indicated that separate Class 1 bikelanes would be included in the project and that the cyclists would cross the intersection using pedestrian facilities. Marianelli asked what had been discussed regarding snow removal and Palaroan indicated that snow is generally pushed to the outside or stored in the middle of the roundabout and that the designers were continuing to consider snow removal in the design option and were soliciting input from Kings Beach and Truckee. Marino asked about the funding timeline for the project and Palaroan indicated they were targeting fiscal year (FY) 2021, with the funds being available for three years following award. Cardinale asked about any warning lights as part the project and if big rigs or 18-wheelers had been considered; Palaroan stated that rapid rectangular flashing beacons (RRFBs) would be included if the two-lane roundabout concept was selected and that large trucks had been considered. Cardinale subsequently asked about the traffic study results; Palaroan indicated that they were based on the weekend before Labor Day in 2017 and were largely unchanged since 2010, with peak summer months being considered. Marino asked about the LOS at the intersection and Palaroan stressed that the roundabout would not alleviate all traffic issues in Meyers, but would improve safety.

EDC DOT Deputy Director of Engineering, Mr. John Kahling, joined Palaroan in responding to Marino's question in again identifying safety as a driver for the project and noting that gridlock would continue due to the large volume of vehicles, weather conditions, and capacity limits on US50 westbound.

Palaroan and Kahling subsequently received questions from members of the audience; Lake Valley Fire (LVF) Fire Marshall Brad Zlendick requested that any roundabout consider emergency vehicle access - Kahling responded that any roundabout would include 18-foot to 21-foot wide lanes to accommodate emergency service vehicles in the roundabout. LVF Chief Tim Alameda conveyed concern for the overall corridor in noting that calls could not be responded to due to the magnitude of the gridlock hampering access to North Upper Truckee and upper Apache areas that has resulted in the consideration of declaring a state of emergency to rid streets of non-essential traffic during recent winter storms.

Secretary Coolidge asked if gateway signage for Meyers could be included in the project; Palaroan indicated that the project was currently going through the environmental review and documentation phase and that Meyers signage could be included as a request, while noting that maintenance requirements or agreements would likely need to accompany any unique signage.

Following questions, Palaroan asked if the MAC would be willing to support the project. Marino requested clarification if the letter of support would endorse a roundabout alternative. Palaroan confirmed that they were seeking support for a roundabout option. Ross requested that the letter also include the MAC's concerns regarding traffic and that the project seek to reduce single occupant trips. Brief discussion of the letter occurred, with consensus reached that a letter of support would be drafted that would also note concern regarding the level of traffic congestion in Meyers and the Tahoe basin, that the MAC endorses alternative transportation options, and that the MAC seeks to see elements of the Meyers plan included in the project.

4. Design Review for Holiday Market Sign Revision

Action: Approve as submitted

North State Grocery acquired the grocery store at 2977 US HWY 50 in Meyers and is in the process of remodeling the establishment and converting the signage to reflect a change from "Lira's Market" to "Holiday Market." Project Planner Melanie Shasha with EDC Development Services presented an overview of the review process along with the hierarchy of the applicable review documents, including the Meyers Area Plan (Sections 2-15 and 2-16), Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) requirements, and EDC zoning regulations. The sign revision application included revisions to a front monument sign, movement of one sign area to the edge of the building, replacement and relocation of another sign on the building front, and removal of an existing pole sign for Tahoe Paradise Golf Course. The application represents one of the first applications within the Meyers Area Plan (MAP) area being processed by EDC under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with TRPA. The golf course is a separate property behind the applicant property that shares access – a golf course sign would remain a pump house that houses a backflow preventer on the US50 frontage.

Shasha also provided background for the permits and approvals for the property, which included a 1999 permit for the monument sign on the US 50 frontage, that did not include specific language regarding the golf course signage, but did show removal on a site plan. EDC staff noted during their review that not all of the proposed signage was above public entrances and that the requested signage did not meet minimum spacing requirements between signs (1000 feet on one property or facing separate streets). Following background and overview provided by Shasha, Mr. Michel LeClerc, representing Holiday Market, noted that the golf course has had signs from the 1950s to present on the property with existing easements. Mr. David Beeman, owner of Tahoe Paradise Golf Course, provided additional information that the pole sign for the golf course was originally next to a billboard that had already been removed

for the golf course. Beeman indicated a preference to remove the pole sign and leave the golf course signage on the pump house.

The Bob Dog pizza restaurant within the Meyer's US50 corridor was noted as the only other sign that had been installed since adoption of the current Meyers Area Plan. MAC members asked how signage for Bob Dog's was permitted by TRPA, as it appeared inconsistent with the MAP design guidelines for materials, lighting, and design. EDC Staff present had not been involved in the approval and did not know the background for permitting and approval.

The MAC discussed the application. In reference to the golf course signage, Marino asked if there were any exceptions within the signage regulations regarding a property without frontage that gains access through another. Shasha indicate that there were not. Daum and Faire note that they felt the signage was tasteful and necessary to promote a viable business. There was also general consensus that a grocery store was important to the core of Meyers. Marino, Ross, and Coolidge raised concerns regarding the overall area, spacing, and number of signs on the property as exceeding what was allowed by TRPA regulations (79.7 SF as submitted, versus the 40 SF specified in TRPA Code of Ordinances), in addition to the orientation of the additional sign. Coolidge expressed concerns over the illumination and materials, noting that MAP Design Guidelines specifically state that plexiglass or plastic faced signs should not be used and that signage should be lit from above and not cast light off the property. LeClerc stated that he believed the signs were not in conflict with the design guidelines.

Faire moved to approve the signage revision as approved; following brief discussion prior to voting, Marino, Ross, and Coolidge indicated they would consider supporting the application with the exception of the additional south facing sign. A vote was held and approved the sign revision application as submitted by a vote of four (4) to three (3), with Marino, Ross, and Coolidge as neighs.

5. Update on Meyers Sign and Meyers Community Foundation Involvement

Action: Subcommittee formed to implement Meyers gateway signage

Chair Ross reviewed her discussion of a Meyers gateway sign with the President of the Meyers Community Foundation, Rene Brejc. A gateway sign for Meyers is one of the prominent elements of the MAP. Mr. Cardinale inquired regarding sign locations and Mr. Ferry indicated that EDC doesn't have a preferred location. A general concern was noted that visitors might cause a safety hazard when seeking to take photos with the sign if too close to traffic. Chair Ross noted that it would likely be in Caltrans right-of-way (ROW) and Mr. Marino noted both the need for and his familiarity with seeking ROW relinquishment from Caltrans. Marino, Ross, and Coolidge indicated a willingness to work together to advance the sign, with Cardinale also volunteering to provide backup support as necessary.

6. Presentation by Lake Valley Fire Department (LVFD) – Proposed Tax Increase

No action taken – received presentation

LVFD Board President Gary Moore provided an overview and basis of need for dedicated funding to support LVF facilities and equipment. Moore provided a background for the increasing costs that the LVF is facing in combination with an increasing number of competing funding priorities within EDC. Moore indicated that LVFD operates on a \$5.5 million annual budget (excluding USFS grants) and that the budget is balanced, but has no capital fund or rainy day accounts. Moore highlighted areas where LVFD has cut staffing costs by shifting to reduced a CalPERS benefit and shifting medical insurance costs

to employees. Properties within the LVFD service area currently pay an annual fee of \$20.00 for fire protection, a rate that has not increased in over 30 years.

LVFD has hired a polling and finance consultant to determine if homeowners can handle increasing the annual fee to provide additional dedicated funding for fire protection services. Moore indicated that an increase to around \$60.00 per parcel would provide an additional \$500,000 to LVFD. Moore indicated that neither the Local Public Safety Protection Improvement Act of 1993 (Prop 172) sales tax funding or Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) from the Department of the Interior go to LVFD. LVFD Chief Alameda joined Moore in addressing misconceptions regarding Prop 172 and PILT, noting that both go to the EDC Sherriff's office and not LVFD. Chief Alameda also noted that the CalFire fee went to state resources and not LVFD, indicating that the last time LVFD approached the community for additional funds was in 1986.

Moore indicated that LVFD currently has 25- and 15-year-old fire engines in service, and that the expected life is 20 years, with an \$800,000 replacement cost. As an example of costs, Moore also noted that a new air pack system is \$300,000. Moore indicated that the fee would allow for the fleet of fire engines to be cycled thru with a truck retired on a set cycle and that the fee would be tied to the consumer price index (CPI), which the current fee is not. Marino asked if the fee would truly be dedicated funds via a two-thirds vote or if the potential additional funds would be discretionary via a simple majority vote. Moore indicated that LVFD was pursuing funding via a simple majority vote, and that while this would result in funds that were discretionary in nature, an oversight committee would be formed to ensure the use of the funds on capital expenditures.

7. Availability of Discretionary Fund from BOS for MAC Resources

Action – funding requested to purchase an audio recorder for MAC meetings

Mr. Ferry advised that BOS Novasel can provide a small amount of funding to provide necessary items to support the MAC. After minor discussion, Cardinale requested an audio recorder for meetings, Marianelli seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

8. Adjourn

Action - Date for next MAC meeting set for July 29th at 3:00 PM at the CCC building.