

Letter: Meyers Area Plan is a worthy document

To the community,

It's been sad for me to see all of the misinformation and confusion about the Meyers Area Plan lately. As someone who is from a third generation small mountain community family (my kids being the fourth) and someone who has lived in Meyers since 2001 and raised my kids here, I want to see some improvements in our town like I have seen in many other progressive, environmentally responsible small mountain communities in this country. That is why I volunteered to be on the Meyers Community Advisory Council to help update our 20-year-old community plan.

What stood out to me since the beginning of the process two years ago is that it is all about the community. A lot of times we see a county write a plan and just go through the motions with whatever public input is required. But that's not what happened in Meyers. It was Meyers residents who started this process, and it has been Meyers residents who have led this community plan update and will see it through to approval.



Rene Brejc

It is my perception that council members wanted to focus on the implementation part of the plan with the goal of positioning ourselves on getting things done by adding an

implementation strategy section to the plan. The advisory council has been meeting ongoing with public workshops and community meetings along the way at key points in the process. In fact, the League to Save Lake Tahoe, which works with communities around the lake, complimented the team on the Meyers Community Plan process compared to others around the lake. Perhaps other council members see things differently, but this is how I saw things work.

There will always be a handful of people that want nothing to ever change and there will always be a few people with over the top ideas about changing our town. But this plan is for the majority of us that are somewhere in the middle. It's for people who want to see some improvements in our town like getting some crosswalks, a stoplight at Apache Avenue, a welcome to Meyers sign, upgraded streetscape for our main street, making it easier for property owners to do basic improvements, and doing something with the eyesore properties such as the old gas station.

Recreation and sports are on the minds of many community members now with three Olympians from Meyers; two of who won gold medals in Sochi. Three Olympians for 3,060 in population makes us perhaps one of the highest per capita of Olympians in the entire country and perhaps the world.

We also have many other high profile athletes and recreations athletes that live, work and play here whether they be primary residents, second homeowners or tourists. We have new companies incubating in town including ski and snowboard manufacturers, video-related manufacturers, book publishing companies and many other creative brain-based companies here. We all love Meyers for what it is and want to be here – to live, work and play. This growth and progress is happening organically – here and now. The vision is thriving local-based economy.

I've heard a lot about how this area plan calls for big

parking garages and skyscrapers, but that's just not true. Yes, a company did come up with some proposals about an Olympic-high altitude training center and transit center. The size and scale of what they proposed were too big for Meyers and just about everyone agrees with that. The Meyers Community Advisory Council didn't endorse this concept, it couldn't be approved under the draft area plan, and it's not in the area plan. Also, as one Meyers business and landowner mentioned to me, if a big developer was coming to Meyers, it would have been between 2000 and 2006 when money was cheap.

But, the reality is that some things will change in Meyers over the long term, whether we like it or not. So the question is, do we want to just sit back, do nothing, and have a bunch of fast food places and dollar stores built in Meyers; or do we want to look at the possibilities and try to promote something like a recreation-sports center, place for people to catch ski shuttles, a community gathering spot – in a nut shell – an amazing place to live, work and play?

The updated Meyers Area Plan keeps the maximum height and density pretty close to where they've been for years. But now instead of about 25 pages of TRPA regulations to tell us how high a building can be, we can just have a number. It helps small local businesses by getting rid of overlapping TRPA and county rules to just have one set of rules about what can be done in Meyers. This isn't something for big developers; they can pay a consultant to navigate the different regulations. But small local businesses in Meyers need this if we don't want to go broke trying to remodel or build something. Most important, this draft area plan makes sure that Meyers residents have a say in what gets built in the future. Right now projects can get approved in Placerville without anyone in Meyers even realizing. The area plan would require that each project be reviewed by a council of Meyers residents at a public meeting in Meyers.

I know most people don't have the time to sift through

documents and separate fact from fiction. But this plan is for Meyers residents, so please do what you can to read the plan, get the facts, make your own decision, and get involved. The draft Meyers Area Plan is available online. www.edcgov.us/Meyers/. You can also submit comments, questions, and suggested revisions to the draft to MeyersAreaPlan@edcgov.us. Lastly, if you can, please attend the meeting on Feb. 26 from 6-8pm at the CCC building in Meyers at 1949 Apache Avenue.

I love Meyers,

Rene Brejc, Meyers Community Advisory Council member