

Indoor climbing gym coming to South Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

A year from now it might not be necessary to go to Pie Shop or Lovers Leap or any of the other iconic climbing locales around Tahoe. That's because an indoor climbing gym in South Lake Tahoe is in the works.

"My husband and I are both rock climbers. When we moved up here about three years ago one of the first things we noticed is South Lake needs a climbing gym," Gianna Leavers told *Lake Tahoe News*.

She and her husband, Brad, are in the planning phase with Blue Granite Climbing Gym. The hope is by the end of the year to have done what is necessary for the city regarding permits, then hire a contractor and break ground in May, with a fall 2017 opening.

One obstacle they must overcome is getting the necessary commercial floor area or CFA. CFA is a commodity that the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency created to curb development, but which is now impeding redevelopment and thwarting a free market economy.

The Leavers bought the parcel on Emerald Bay Road where the Tahoe Budget Inn used to be; it was razed in 2007.



This is a rendering provided by Monarch Architecture of what the gym will look like.

The building – which is intended to be built to LEED criteria – will be about 7,600 square feet. According to Monarch Architecture, it will have metal cladding, vertical glass elements and a heavy timber intermediate roof canopy.

To get around the maximum building height of 35 feet, the plan is to excavate some of the dirt in the back so a taller climbing wall – about 40 feet – can be installed.

The pitches will range from slabs, to vertical to overhangs. A smaller wall will be near the entrance, with the idea this will be used to introduce people to the sport, for kids or even groups.

There will be top ropes, leads, bouldering, a yoga room, free weights and cardio equipment.

“One of the aspects that we are interested in as climbers is that we are interested in building a community for the climbers in Tahoe,” Leavers said.

It will be a place for people to hang out as well as meet like-minded individuals.

But it won’t just be for the hard-core climbers to practice their skills. The goal is to make it appealing to all levels –

where classes are taught, camps are offered, birthdays are celebrated, and after school programs take place.