Greenway Bike Trail to be expanded in 2021

By Kathryn Reed

The next phase of the Greenway Bike Trail in South Lake Tahoe is about to go forward.

Trustees of Lake Tahoe Community College on Tuesday are expected to approve three items related to the project. The college, city of South Lake Tahoe and California Tahoe Conservancy are involved in a three-way land swap and cash transaction to build more sections of the path.

There was a hiccup in the process when two global easements were uncovered. They go back decades; one involving the Globin family and the other the Hartoonians.

To overcome these easements Placer Title got involved to provide an insurance policy of sorts.

“After much discussion, the district and the CTC worked with the title company to request a title assurance for site 3. This assurance would insure over two easements, allowing the district to construct on the property based on a proposed development area map and survey provided by the district,” the LTCC staff report for Dec. 12 reads.

Site 3 is west of South Tahoe Public Utility District and south of LTCC.

College President Jeff DeFranco told *Lake Tahoe News* the easements are so old they lack clarity of what the original owners intended.

While the college is still providing $700,000 to the bike project, the money is being redefined.

“What is proposed now is the district contributing $650,000 to hard costs of construction, then $50,000 for these soft costs,” DeFranco said. The soft costs being surveys, legal expenses and the like.

CTC, which is the lead on this trail project, completed the first phase in 2015. Construction of the next two phases have been pushed back a year to 2021.

Chris Mertens with CTC at that agency’s board meeting last week called these phases the most important because of their “recreation and community resources.” The trail will cross Trout Creek and Bijou Meadows, connecting Lake Tahoe Community College, Bijou Community Park, El Dorado County offices and South Tahoe Middle School.

Of concern, though, is the cost of the project is increasing by $600,000 to $1.3 million based on bids coming in higher. The booming economy and natural disasters are contributing to construction costs escalating. Still, the CTC believes it can get the money together to keep building.