South Tahoe trying to work with TRPA

Publisher's note: ***The following is reprinted with permission. It is from South Lake Tahoe City Manager Dave Jinkens to Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Executive Director Joanne Marchetta.***

Joanne,

I am in receipt of the report in the latest TRPA publication online [excerpt below] urging the board and public to support and encourage the growth and diversification of the regionâ€™s economy as a means of improving the lives of our region, improving the built environment and as the only feasible way to help finance needed environmental improvements. The message is clear from your report and from our City government assessment. A strong economy and environmental protection go hand in hand and are essential ingredients for our future.

City officials are moving forward as well with the adoption of a new City General Plan [that includes an economic development element], Tahoe Valley Community Plan, Redevelopment Plan Project Area No. 2, and implementation of the Cityâ€™s Sustainability Plan. All of these local plans are important and inter-related. We know that for all of local planning efforts to be successful we need and want the support of you, the TRPA Governing Board, and your staff. I am told that your staff continues to work well with our staff in coordinating our local planning effort with the regional plan update. This is critical and demonstrates the collaborative and productive approach we all are taking.

City government officials have taken responsible and vigorous

local planning to heart. We believe what the TRPA Compact urges local government officials to engage in vigorous local planning. We will do our part to define the needs and wants of our City of 25,000 hard-working and honest people and continue to work to inform you, the Board and the regional plan on needed and desirable local planning initiatives. Our goal is to see our General Plan and TVCP policies in place this year knowing well that some components of our local planning may have to wait until a new Regional Plan is adopted.

I believe we are making progress to create a plan of prosperity for our City residents and residents of the region. We are participating in the region-wide Prosperity Plan effort as well. I know the task of planning for the future is not an easy one, but the City Council and community I serve are depending on us to make needed regulatory reforms and put good planning in place to allow all in the community to prosper, grow and diversify our economy, develop as needed quality workforce housing and achieve local and regional environmental goals. I know we will not let them down. We cannot and will not fail.

Best wishes, and again my thanks to you for your help and support.

Sincerely,

DaveÂ Jinkens, MPA, city manager South Lake Tahoe

TRPA Publication:

Cost of Doing Nothing too High at Lake Tahoe

The facts are plain, and the research is clear: Much of the environmental damage at Lake Tahoe can be attributed to impacts from development that occurred a half century ago. By removing some of this “bad” development and replacing it with limited environmental redevelopment, we can reduce the flow of polluted runoff into the Lake. An educational briefing March

25 before the TRPA Governing Board will provide a glimpse of the current economic, environmental and social state of affairs at Lake Tahoe. The report will include findings and recommendations from community stakeholders on how to make sure the Basin is headed in the right direction.

STARS of Tomorrow Talent Competition

The 5th annual STARS of Tomorrow Talent Competition is April 22 at the South Tahoe Middle School Theater from 6-9pm.

The competition is open to students in grades 9-12 on the South Shore, California and Nevada.

Applicants will be judged on technique, difficulty, staging, and presentation. The competition will be open to soloists, duets, trios, and quartets in vocal or instrumental music, dance, drama, and other performing arts.

Applications and copies of the contest rules will be available from performing arts instructors and at the school administrative offices.

For more information, call Dick Van Buskirk at (530) 541.6487 or Margie Maxhimer at (530) 318.7717.

Applications must be submitted to the Kiwanis Club by 5pm April 12.

Students planning to compete must be available for dress rehearsal on April 21at the South Tahoe Middle School Theater from 6-9pm.

Lake Tahoe ski report, March 22



It’s a bluebird day in Lake Tahoe. Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

Homewood-Alpine combo pass for next season

Two mountains for one price is being offered at Alpine and Homewood for the 2010-11 season.

The Unfiltered Alpine Homewood pass offers unrestricted skiing and riding at both Tahoe resorts at $699 for adults; $1,399 for families (two adult passes and two passes for kids 18 and under).

Financing options are available as are other passes.

Call (530) 583.4232.

Transit infrastructure upgrades planned for basin

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – Transportation planners realize not everyone wants to abandon their vehicle. Easing congestion through better driving routes, providing alternatives to passenger vehicles, and creating better connections for walkers and cyclists are the goals.

The idea is the infrastructure improvements will also make walking and cycling a more pleasant experience in the region.

Tahoe Transportation District, which has been around since 1980, is in the business of securing money for the plans various jurisdictions have and helping with the implementation. Because the basin has multiple layers of government and bureaucracy, it's the TTD's job to be the umbrella agency to get things done.



Carl Hasty looks over the map of Lake Tahoe Basin transit plans. Photo/Kathryn Reed

TTD, though it never went away, had been dormant in many ways

for many years. Carl Hasty now manages the district and Alfred Knotts is the transportation projects manager. They work for an 11-member board comprised of representatives from throughout the region, including both state transportation departments.

“We look at system needs for basin transportation,” Hasty said. “This board is focused on implementation and getting things done.”

A map in the conference room of their Stateline offices shows the five projects the TTD is working on.

One is the Loop Road on the South Shore that involves California and Nevada. For decades people have talked about diverting traffic behind the Stateline casinos to make the corridor more pedestrian friendly.

“Right now the concept is not to eliminate all traffic on Highway 50,” Hasty said. “Maybe it will be three lanes with one being for transit and bikes.”

Knotts said the environmental review is the next stage, and working with Caltrans and the Nevada Department of Transportation to development alternatives for the loop road.

With the Heavenly Village project completed in 2002 and the so-called convention center project still on the books, the idea for years has been to divert vehicle traffic so pedestrians would be more comfortable frolicking in the area.

“Stateline is where the bed base is. It is where the congestion is,” Knotts said.

Planners and developers of infrastructure are taking an approach that hasn’t often been done at the lake – looking at the big picture instead of solely on an individual project-by-project basis.

As the Loop Road goes forward, those involved are aware

Edgewood Companies wants to develop a hotel on its golf course, that Horizon casino may evolve into something besides a gaming venue when the lease expires, that the Greenway Bike Trail from Meyers will empty at Stateline, that the Van Sickle Bi-State Park has broken ground under the Heavenly Gondola, and that the Stateline-to-Stateline bike trail is well on its way to being a reality.

“They all support getting around by linking places,” Hasty said. “We are looking at building a network that offers choices to get from one place to another.”

All of this is for locals as well as tourists.

The goal is have all future transportation projects be interrelated and not isolated. The car isn’t going away, but the idea is people will have more choices.

The Tahoe Transportation District is also involved in the Stateline-to-Stateline bike trail. Work on the South Shore end should begin next year.

(Click here for more details.)

Another TTD project involves South Lake Tahoe and Tahoe City – water transit. The goal is connecting the North and South shores via transit. By the end of the year the federal transit analysis should be finished. Out of that will come a recommendation if water transit is viable or not.

Another project in Tahoe City is figuring out what to do with the Fanny Bridge that crosses the Truckee River. The bridge is seismically challenged and could be deemed unusable for certain weight vehicles by 2013.

“It’s a lifeline bridge,” Knotts said, meaning no other crossing exists to keep commerce rolling in that area of Highway 89.

Six options have been proposed. It’s possible Fanny Bridge

could become a pedestrian-bike only structure. Vehicles might be routed across the river farther up Highway 89, a bit closer to Truckee.

“It would remove a choke point and improve the flow,” Hasty said. “Then you design for the character of the place you want.”

Not having traffic in that Y intersection could make the area more walkable.

The other project in the basin the Tahoe Transportation District has a hand in is at the junction of highways 431 and 28 in Incline Village.

“It’s a scenic byway so we want to improve the aesthetics,” Knotts said.

Safety and efficiency of the Mount Rose Highway are also factors. NDOT is designing and building the project, with construction likely to begin in 2011.

A roundabout is being talked about. The plan, which is still in the works, is likely to tie into bike trails and address water quality concerns.

“I think these projects bring needed change and opportunity to the lake,” Hasty said.

Annual permits available for Caple and Silver lakes

By Cathy Locke, Sacramento Bee

The El Dorado Irrigation District is expanding its annual permit program to cover day use and boating at three of its mountain recreation areas.

Annual permits have long been available for Jenkinson Lake in the Sly Park Recreation Area, off Highway 50 near Pollock Pines. Now the permit also covers use of Caples and Silver lakes.

Read the whole story

Musicians, restaurants throw weight behind SLT Relay for Life

The American Cancer Society is hosting its kickoff extravaganza April 3 at MontBleu in Stateline with an all-ages show with hip hop artist Mike E and local/regional artists Lavish Green and Outta-Control.

At 3:30pm is a meet and greet the artists, a chance to learn more about Relay for Life and the American Cancer Society, register a team and celebrate those who've beaten the fight against cancer.

Live music starts at 6pm.

If teams register prior to the show, they will receive five free tickets. Tickets are $15 for adults, $5 for children 12 and younger, and free for cancer survivors. All ticket sales benefit South Lake Tahoe's Relay for Life.

This year marks the fifth South Lake Tahoe Relay for Life event. The all-night walking event symbolizing cancer never sleeps will be at Kahle Community Park Aug. 7 beginning at 4pm, concluding about 8am Aug. 8. The committee's goal is to have 30 teams registered after kickoff and 50 teams before August. The committee is encouraging teams and the community to raise more than $100,000 to help fight cancer prior to the event.

In celebration of Tahoe's fifth anniversary, the committee has created Relay for Life Taste of Tahoe. Taste of Tahoe will feature one restaurant from the South Shore each week leading up to Relay for Life, with a final highlight of all the restaurant booths at Taste of Tahoe Restaurant Row during the Relay for Life.

The focus is to raise money for the fight against cancer while having great food, drinks, entertainment and fun with family, friends, coworkers and neighbors at local restaurants. Each restaurant sponsor makes a donation toward the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life fund-raising efforts for the week it is spotlighted.

Participating restaurants include: Blue Angel Cage, Bistro Danielle, Brooks Bar & Deck at Edgewood Tahoe, Chevys Fresh Mex, Fox and Hound, Mott Canyon, Murphy's Irish Pub and Rockwater Restaurant, and Sushi Pier; Corporate Nevada and Erik Watada State Farm Agency are business sponsors. *Lake Tahoe News* is one of the media sponsors. For details, click here.

The Relay for Life committee is seeking more teams, volunteers and sponsors to help organize the event. The next committee meeting is April 13 at 6pm in the loft at Blue Angle Cafe.

For more information about the South Lake Tahoe Relay for Life event, to register a team, ways to get involved or make a donation, click here.

Court ruling puts 911 fee in jeopardy for California cities

By Kathryn Reed

Conflicting court rulings have South Lake Tahoe officials trying to figure out if the nearly $500,000 it collects each year from the 911 fee on phone bills is legal.

“Clearly the existing 911 fee is important in our ability to provide emergency dispatch services to the community and to visitors. The dollars derived go exclusively to operate the city’s emergency dispatch center and are an essential part of our city’s emergency delivery system,” City Manager Dave Jinkens said.

However, the state Supreme Court refused to hear an Appellate Court’s decision out of Union City regarding the matter. This means that ruling which deemed the fee to be a tax is the law. But a case out of Santa Cruz says it is a fee, not a tax.

It’s up to individual cities to figure out what it is.

Why the distinction between the assessments being a tax versus a fee is important is because a city can impose a fee, but voters must approve a tax.

City Attorney Patrick Enright said he expects to bring a recommendation to the City Council in April. It will be up the council to decide if it believes what is collected is a fee or a tax.

If it’s ruled a tax, then the council would have to decide to

eliminate it or ask the voters in November to continue with it.

If the half million dollars disappears, it’s not known how the dispatch services would be funded.

Teter 4th, Hight 6th at U.S. Open halfpipe event

By Lindsey Sine, USSA

STRATTON MOUNTAIN, VT – Kelly Clark (Mt. Snow, VT) threw down for the home crowd Saturday, stomping some massive 9s to take the win in halfpipe at the 2010 Burton US Open at Stratton Mountain.

Clark put down a frontside air, backside five, frontside seven, cab seven, and frontside nine to not only win the competition, but become the winningest woman in Open history.

“I’ve been coming to the Open for so many years, both as a spectator and competitor, and to come away with a win and to get the record for having the most wins by any woman, that’s a pretty huge honor for me,” Clark said.

Not only was Clark writing history at the Open, she was trying to break the barriers of normalcy for women’s runs in halfpipe.

“I was able to land my first run in finals, which was what I wanted to do and it left some room for me to step it up. I had the opportunity to do that in my next two runs,” Clark said. “I was able to try my front 10 on my third run and I just barely sat it down. It was the closest I’ve been to landing it

in a competition. For me having just learned that trick and wanting to put it in a contest run was really cool."

In the end, the hometown girl was happy to win in front of all of her biggest supporters.

"It's so nice being home. I grew up 20 minutes from here. I think my entire family, extended family and dogs were here and everyone had a good time," Clark said. "All of Burton was here supporting me as well, it was a huge hometown crowd and I think all the Vermonters were happy today."

Clark led the way for what was a killer day for the U.S. snowboarding halfpipers with Kaitlyn Farrington (Sun Valley, ID), just off her win at the inaugural European X Games, landing second and Ellery Hollingsworth (Stratton, VT) third.

Over on the men's side of the pipe Japan's Kazuhiro Kokubo was the victor, followed closely by birthday boy and Olympian Louie Vito (Sandy, UT) who was second. Switzerland's Iouri Podladtchikov finished third.

2010 BURTON US OPEN Stratton Mountain, VT, March 20, Halfpipe

Men

1. Kazuhiro Kokubo, Japan, 97.17

2. Louie Vito, Sandy, UT, 96.17

3. Iouri Podladtchikov, Switzerland, 96.00

4. Markus Malin, Finland, 93.83

5. Janne Korpi, Finland, 91.83

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6. Scotty Lago, Seabrook, NH, 90.17

10. Ross Powers, Reno, NV, 72.67

Women

1. Kelly Clark, Mt. Snow, VT, 94.17

2. Kaitlyn Farrington, Sun Valley, ID, 90.33

3. Ellery Hollingsworth, Stratton, VT, 86.33

4. Hannah Teter, South Lake Tahoe, 82.50

5. Rana Okada, Japan, 77.00

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6. Elena Hight, South Lake Tahoe, CA, 75.00

7. Kelly Marren, Hillsborough, CA, 53.67

8. Maddy Schaffrick, Steamboat Springs, CO, 40.83

Lake Tahoe ski report, March 21

It will be a mix of clouds and sun today. Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.