REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – Approved October 3, 2019
6:00 PM, Thursday, May 2, 2019
Squaw Valley Public Utility District – Community Meeting Room
305 Squaw Valley Road
Olympic Valley, CA

Pursuant to notice given, a meeting of the Squaw Valley Municipal Advisory Council (SVMAC) was held on Thursday May 2, 2019 in the Squaw Valley Public Service District Community Meeting Room in Olympic Valley, California.

1. Call to Order
Stepner called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM. A quorum was established.
MEMBERS PRESENT: Bazjanac, Johnson, Georgiu, and Stepner
MEMBERS ABSENT: Adriani, Lange, and Calhoun
STAFF PRESENT: Romack and Friedman
ATTENDANCE: 20

2. MAC Member Introductions

3. Approval of May 2, 2019 Agenda
GEORGIU/BAZJANAC/UNANIMOUS

4. Approval of April 4, 2019 Minutes
BAZJANAC/GEORIU/Carried with abstention from BAZJANAC

5. Reports
   A. Supervisor/District Director Reports
Romack announced Cindy Gustafson has been appointed to replace Jennifer Montgomery as the District 5 Supervisor. Gustafson will do a “meet and greet” session for Council members and the public prior to next month’s SVMAC meeting.

The Placer County Parks & Trails Master Plan Workshop has been scheduled for Tuesday May 7 at 6:00 PM at the Kings Beach Event Center.

Placer County is hosting a public meeting regarding the Nahas property purchase for housing on May 20 at 6:00 PM at the Fairway Community center in Tahoe City.

Placer County Business Resource presentations will be held monthly and streamed to the Tahoe City office. The first one is scheduled for May 30. Business Counseling is available the second Wednesday of each month in conjunction with the Sierra Small Business Development Center at the County office in Tahoe City.
B. Community Reports
Mike Geary reported SVPSD is on track to begin the Truckee River Siphon Replacement Project in June. This is the largest project in the District’s history as the 40 year old line is being replaced.

Geary reported work continues on the Olympic Meadow property acquisition. Several scenarios for the property and structures are being considered. A parcel tax amount needs to be determined by the end of June so voters can consider the measure on the November ballot. There is a $1 million request for TOT funds to be used towards the acquisition, which will be considered by the CAP Committee at its May 30 meeting at the TCPUD Board room.

6. Public Comment
Megan Chillemi noted many homeowners are receiving insurance cancellation notices because of fire concerns. Geary said SVPSD is working with the fire department to help homeowners obtain insurance by writing letters explaining the on-going efforts to reduce fire danger.

Daniel Hagerty believes the fire issue is substantial and this area is remiss in not fully understanding the threat. The County allows large development and an evacuation could take 10 ½ hours. He noted recent approval of the Alpine Sierra project in Alpine Meadows. This is more than a building sprinkler issue.

Georgiu wants to raise awareness of a situation at the end of Squaw Valley where the school is. There are a lot of young families in the area and no safe way to cross Squaw Valley Road.

7. Action Item
A. Squaw Valley/Alpine Meadows Base-to-Base Gondola
The MAC is being asked to make a recommendation to the Planning Commission on the proposed Squaw Valley/Alpine Meadows Base-to-Base Gondola project. The proposed project requires certification of the Final Environmental Impact Study/Environmental Impact Report, and approval of amendments to the Squaw Valley General Plan and Land Use Ordinance, a Rezone of land within the Alpine Meadows portion of the project, and approval of a Conditional Use Permit. If approved, the project would result in the construction of an aerial gondola connecting the Alpine Meadows and Squaw Valley ski resorts.

Presenter: Heather Beckman, Placer County Planning Services Division
Applicant: Ron Cohen, Squaw Valley Ski Holdings

Beckman presented the final EIS/EIR for the project and explained the requirements for each, given a portion of the alignment crosses US Forest Service land. Both CEQA and NEPA are also required. Beckman showed the project map and described the four alternatives considered, including a “no project” option. The Gazex exploders have been removed from the project. The eastern most alignment, Alternative 4, was preferred in the environmental documents, as well as by the applicant. Beckman described the studies done to gauge impacts of the project, including the Skier Visitation...
Analysis, which also considers vehicle trips. Significant/Unavoidable Impacts have to do with transportation and traffic circulation during high skier days. The mitigation is to change the timing of the street light at Squaw Valley Road and SR 89. Other impacts were minimal from visual and noise during construction as helicopters will be used to reduce the need to cut roads. The gondola is only scheduled to operate in the winter time, when both Alpine Meadows and Squaw Valley ski areas are open. Significant increases to skier days are not anticipated.

The Council asked clarifying questions regarding the presentation, including proposed mitigations for parking and traffic and the number of skiers per day. Beckman and Joe Flannery from USFS provided additional detail. Beckman said comments from tonight’s meeting will be part of her staff report to the Planning Commission.

The topic was open to public comment. Six speakers addressed the group. Concerns were voiced about the impacts of the alignment and construction to the Granite Chief Wilderness and Five Lakes area and degradation of the public’s outdoor experience. Although two of the speakers favored the gondola and expanded ski experience it will offer, there was concern that it could turn into a year-round operation in order to be financial feasible. Beckman explained a completely new environmental review would be required if there was a request to operate the gondola year-round.

Public comment was closed.

Flannery described the Granite Chief Wilderness boundaries and how that land was designated over both Federal and private property. The Council further clarified details of the project, including construction access and proposed used of the gondola by skiers and employees. The applicant, Ron Cohen, said the plan is for the gondola to stop operating at 8:00 PM, but the shuttle bus may then be used to transport people who may have come to Squaw for dinner.

Stepner noted the environmental report requires a written plan on how traffic is being handled on Squaw Valley Road. SVMAC has routinely asked for such a report with limited response and would like that plan to be submitted to this body by October 15 of each year for the coming winter.

Ron Cohen addressed the group. He gave a historical perspective on the discussions of connecting the Squaw and Alpine ski areas that have been going on for at least 50 years. Cohen said this project is about more than the limited number of new skiers expected. It is more about retaining existing customers who want new experiences and to keep this area competitive. There are many benefits from both the guest perspective and the management perspective as the ability to move employees and supplies between the two areas will be improved.

**Motion to recommend approval of the:**

1) Amendment to the Squaw Valley General Plan and Land Use Ordinance “Potential future ski Lifts Map” to include Alternative 4
2) Rezoning of .5 acres at Alpine Meadows from Neighborhood Commercial to Open Space
3) Conditional Use Permit
With the following conditions:
1) Changes to RPM MUL-4 including permanent specific yearly beginning and end
   limitations to operation
2) Specification and advanced notification of Five Lakes trail closures for construction
3) Maximize use of helicopters to minimize road construction
GEORGIU/JOHNSON/UNANIMOUS

8. MAC Member/Sub Committee Reports
   A. Squaw Valley Design Review: David Stepner
      SVDRC did not meet this month.

   B. Parks and Rec: Shelly Georgiu and David Stepner
      The Committee did not meet this month

9. Future Agenda Items
   1) Rename Country designations from Squaw to Olympic
   2) Presentation from Luana Dowling, Placer County Fire Safe Council Chair
   3) Meet and Greet at 4pm with Supervisor Gustafson prior to the June 6 SVMAC meeting

      Romack anticipates cancelling the July 4, 2019 SVMAC meeting.

10. Adjournment at 9:05 PM to next regular meeting on June 6, 2019.