Presentation of Tom Infusino to Calaveras County BOS - March 22, 2016

America is a great nation in some singular ways: in the great courage of her warriors, in the strong faith of her believers, and in the hard work of her laborers. Even more so, America’s true greatness rests, not merely on her singularities, but also on her elegantly balanced dualities.

She protects her people from criminals, but also protects the accused from police brutality.

She supports investors in free enterprise; but also protects the health, safety, and wellbeing of laborers.

As an American, if you want to protect your freedom to be a Christian, you have to protect another’s freedom to be a Jew. For if the followers of one religion lose their rights today, the followers of another may lose their rights tomorrow.

As an American, if you want to protect your freedom to be a Republican, you have to defend the freedom of another to be a Democrat. For if the followers of one party lose their rights today, the followers of another may lose their rights tomorrow.

As an American, if you want to protect your freedom to read the books you want to read, you have to defend the freedom of others to read the books they want to read; even if that book is the Mintier General Plan.

Republican President Dwight D. Eisenhower implored, “Don't join the book burners. Don't think you're going to conceal faults by concealing evidence that they ever existed. Don't be afraid to go in your library and read every book...” Note that the great president identified the enemy of Constitutional freedoms; and that enemy is fear.

So I ask you Supervisors today, “What do you fear?”

-Do you fear, as stated in the letter denying the record requests, that the General Plan Update will be disrupted by people advocating for the policies in the Mintier General Plan? People have already been advocating for the policies in the already released and rejected elements: the economic development element, the energy element, and the water element. The Board of Supervisors and the Planning Department rejected most of those suggestions, and the Planning Commission has been delegated the power to reject even more. So, with these safeguards in place, I ask you to be not afraid.

-Do you fear that the General Plan EIR will have to evaluate the Mintier General Plan as an alternative, and that it will become preferred by the people? If the Mintier General Plan was, as County Counsel says “incomplete and required extensive editing”, then the County can find that the Mintier General Plan is not sufficiently complete to serve as an alternative. Or, the County can find that the Mintier General Plan does not meet enough of the objectives of the County General Plan to serve as an alternative. So again, with these protections in place, I suggest that you be not afraid.

-Do you fear that some policy in the Mintier General Plan may qualify as a mitigation measure even though the County cannot implement the policy? If a policy cannot be implemented by the County, then County can find that the mitigation measure is infeasible and need not be adopted. So again, with this shield in place, I encourage you to be not afraid.

Please, give the people the Mintier General Plan they paid for with their time, and their effort, and their taxes. Free the Mintier General Plan.

Dear Editor,

Your paper has done an excellent job reporting on the Board of Supervisor’s refusal to release the Mintier General Plan for the public to read.

As an American, if you want to protect your freedom to read the books you want to read, you have to defend the freedom of others to read the books they want to read; even if that book is the Mintier General Plan.

Republican President Dwight D. Eisenhower implored, “Don't join the book burners. Don't think you're going to conceal faults by concealing evidence that they ever existed. Don't be afraid to go in your library and read every book...”

It is time for the Board of Supervisors to let the people “read every book.” It is time for the Board of Supervisors to be accountable for the money they spent. It is time for the Board of Supervisors to let people see the Mintier General Plan which they paid for with their time, their effort, and their taxes.

Tom Infusino, Facilitator Calaveras Planning Coalition