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Planning Coalition continues listing General Plan Update fixes for Supervisors

During the Board of Supervisors' public comment period on Tuesday February 12, five representatives of the Calaveras Planning Coalition (CPC) listed specific changes needed in the Draft General Plan Update to improve its consistency, clarity, and comprehensiveness.

The group recommended changes to both the Introduction and the Land Use Element: the first to parts of the General Plan Update. For each problem the group noted in the Draft General Plan Update, they proposed one or more solutions.

Tom Griffing began noting that the stated purpose of the plan was too narrowly focused on private interests and economic development. He recommended that the purpose of the plan should be more comprehensive, and mention the plan's public interest aspects including conservation, open space, and public safety.

Expressing the virtue of general plan clarity, Mari Crane reminded us that, "The objective of a land use element is to set forth a pattern of land use that is coherent and *predictable*. It should be detailed enough so that all users of the plan can reach the same conclusion of the appropriate use of any parcel of land." She pointed out that the general plan chart indicating which zoning

categories would be allowed in which land use designations needed greater clarity to avoid bad consequences and unintended interpretations.

Joyce Techel suggested that the Public Institution land use designation needed to be split into subcategories so that people purchasing property adjacent to public parcels could determine if they were moving near a future school, government office, sheriff sub-station, or solid waste dump. She explained that, “These public land uses, while all beneficial, are hardly interchangeable.”

Neil McKeown concluded by expressing his concerns that the plan did not comprehensively deal with key local issues including the protection of historic structures and development on steep slopes. He encouraged the Supervisors to follow the general plan consultant’s prior recommendation to develop standards for the safe development of steep slopes. He also encouraged the Supervisors to follow local expert Julia Costello’s recommendations regarding historic preservation.

This was the third such presentation by the CPC to the Board in the last month. On January 15, the Board denied the CPC’s request for a study session on the General Plan Update. Undaunted, the CPC listed improvements needed in the General Plan Update’s environmental impact report during the Board’s next public comment period on January 22. In its email to the Board of Supervisors on January 21, the CPC indicated that the Supervisors have more work to do on the General Plan Update than will fit in, “A last minute hearing, at the end of the approval process.”

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