

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: September 27, 2023

Continued Item from June 20, 2023

To: Town of Truckee Planning Commission

From: Yumie Dahn, Senior Planner

RE: Tahoe Donner Downhill Ski Lodge (Planning Application 2022-00000071/DP-MUP-SP; 11585 Snowpeak Way (also addressed as 11603 Snowpeak Way), 14943 Slalom Way, 12250 Viking Way, 14942 Slalom Way; APNs 046-250-009, 046-050-002, 046-050-001, and 046-040-002)

Approved by: Jenna Gatto, Town Planner

Recommended Action: That the Planning Commission adopt Resolution 2023-10, taking the following actions based on the recommended findings and subject to the recommended conditions of approval:

- 1) Adopt an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (State Clearinghouse #2023050519);
- 2) Approve the Development Permit;
- 3) Approve the Minor Use Permit; and
- 4) Approve the Sign Plan.

Project Summary: The applicant is proposing a new downhill ski lodge at the Tahoe Donner Downhill ski area located at 11585 Snowpeak Way (also addressed as 11603 Snowpeak Way; APN 046-250-009). The applicant is proposing to demolish the existing two-story 15,838 s.f. downhill ski lodge and construct a new three-story 24,490 s.f. structure that would serve the existing needs of the facility.

The following land use permits are required: 1) **Development Permit** for new non-residential structures that contain 7,500 s.f. or more of total gross floor area and disturbance of 26,000 s.f. or more of the site (disturbance includes graded areas, landscaped areas, parking and access areas, and structures); 2) **Minor Use Permit** for disturbance of land or for development located within 200 feet of any wetland area; and 3) **Sign Plan** for one wall sign.

This item was continued from the June 20, 2023 Planning Commission meeting.

Planning Commission's Role: The Planning Commission's role is to review the site layout and design of the building to ensure the project is consistent with the 2025 General Plan and the Development Code and review the draft Mitigated Negative Declaration to ensure the proposed mitigation measures adequately address the potential impacts to the environment.

Location/Setting: The project site is located in the Tahoe Donner Subdivision on Slalom Way and Snowpeak Way, at the bottom of the Tahoe Donner Downhill Ski Hill. The ski hill is located to the south, and the Tahoe Donner Condominiums are located to the west, north, and east.

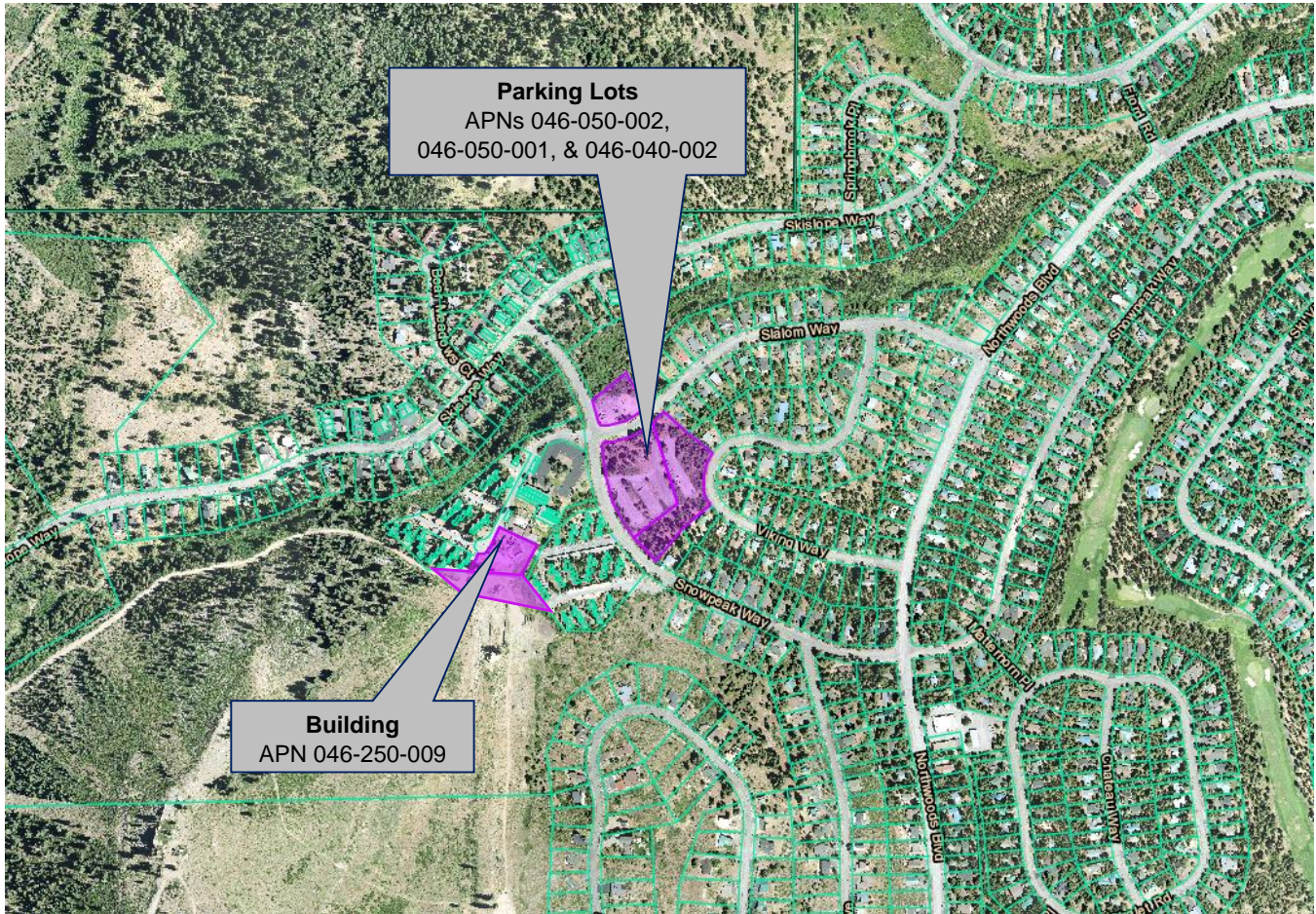


Figure 1: Vicinity Map

Project Site Information:

General Plan Designation: Tahoe Donner Plan Area
 Zoning District: Recreation (REC)
 Project Site Size: 2.64 acres after submitted Lot Line Adjustment

Discussion/Analysis:

This item was originally scheduled and published in the June 20, 2023 Planning Commission agenda (see staff report link in Attachment #2 with minutes in Attachment #3). Prior to the June meeting, the Planning Commission received a number of public comments on the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration. Staff recommended, with the applicant’s support, that the Planning Commission continue the hearing to allow additional time for staff to review the comments and provide responses to these comments, where appropriate. These responses would help the Planning Commission consider the project holistically, with the context of the public comments. The Planning Commission accepted verbal public comment at the June 20, 2023 hearing, continued the hearing to a date and time uncertain, and opened the public comment period for the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration until June 23, 2023.

Since the June meeting, the Town has reviewed the comments received from the public and provided responses for Planning Commission’s review (see Attachment #1, Exhibit B), which, if adopted, will be incorporated into the Final Mitigated Negative Declaration. Master responses were drafted to address many of the comments that had similar concerns related to groundwater, stormwater, Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frogs, application of the 2040 General Plan, and the potential impacts of expanded uses.

One mitigation measure (MM-HYD-1) was modified slightly for clarity:

Dewatering Plan. Prior to issuance of a building permit, a California licensed Geotechnical Engineer or Engineering Geologist shall prepare a Dewatering Contingency Plan (Plan) for any dewatering activities that may be required during construction activities. The Plan shall minimize impacts to water quality, including Alder Creek, by incorporation of water quality best management practices (BMPs), e.g. the use of sediment basins or holding tanks, energy dissipators, and/or sediment traps, that are designed and proven to protect water quality of receiving waters. The Dewatering Contingency Plan shall prioritize gravity flow techniques, where feasible, prior to use of pumping techniques and include ~~best management practices (BMPs)~~ for the management of any discharge water. The required BMPs shall be consistent with the most recent California Stormwater Quality Association Construction BMP Handbook for Dewatering Activities (NS-2) and include appropriate BMPs such as setbacks from surface waters and use of low flow rates for discharges ~~sediment basins or holding tanks, energy dissipators, and/or sediment traps.~~ The plan shall be submitted to the Town of Truckee, Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, and any other applicable State agencies, for review and approval prior to issuance of a grading permit.

This change is described in more detail in the Responses to Comments in Exhibit B of the Resolution. The change has been incorporated into the Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Program.

The applicant has not proposed any changes to the project; the analysis in the attached June 20, 2023 staff report should be referenced for the review of the project (see link in Attachment #3).

Technical Changes

Conditions of Approval

Since the June meeting, the applicant team reviewed the resolution and conditions of approval and requested technical edits to the document. These changes do not have any impact to the design of the project or environmental review. Staff reviewed the submitted applicant comments and draft resolution and made technical and clarifying changes to the draft resolution, including the following:

- Updated the title of the resolution;
- Updated the resolution to include actions leading up to this meeting;
- Added CEQA findings;
- Updated the effective date;
- Clarified the conditions that required fees;
- Consolidated the two Truckee Donner Public Utility District Water Department conditions (Condition of Approval No. 58 was folded into Condition of Approval No. 55).

Sign Plan

Staff unintentionally omitted analysis of the proposed wall sign in the June staff report. As a technical correction, staff has incorporated review of a Sign Plan as an action for consideration by the Planning Commission. For reference, all permanent signs greater than two square feet are required to be approved. As the review authority for the project, the Planning Commission is required to review the Sign Plan for consistency with the Development Code requirements for size, height, location, materials, color, and lighting. three mandatory findings are required to be made by the Planning Commission in support of an action to approve the Sign Plan (see Exhibit D of the attached resolution). The Planning Commission may approve deviations to the sign standards, including sign area, number of signs, location, height, and/or material, if the requested deviation is based on site-specific conditions or design features and the requested deviation is the minimum necessary to create a superior Sign Plan with the highest quality signs.

The applicant is proposing one wall sign that is 33.6 s.f. in area and located less than 20 feet from the proposed pedestrian walkway on the street side (west elevation) façade. The proposed 18” tall letters are metal cast lettering individually mounted with hidden threaded studs. The size, height, and materials are consistent with the requirements of the sign standards of the Development Code. One minor deviation the applicant is requesting is to allow the Tahoe Donner logo to “turn the corner” on the outer corner of the cantilevered building wall. Staff believes the deviation is minor in nature, is integrated into the design of the building and is intended to provide interest to the building and break up a portion of the building façade that is unarticulated (See Figure 2).



Figure 2: Street (West) Side

Special Districts and Utilities

All applicable special districts, utility companies, and Town departments with an interest in this application have been notified. No objections were filed and all conditions of approval that were imposed by other agencies have been incorporated into Resolution 2023-10. The project will be required to be in compliance with all utility and special agency requirements.

Environmental Review: An Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (Exhibit C of Resolution No. 2023-10) has been prepared for the project (SCH #2023050519). The Initial Study concludes the project is consistent with the development density established by the existing zoning and 2025 General Plan policies and will not have a significant effect on the environment upon incorporation of project-specific mitigation measures. The Mitigated Negative Declaration was routed to State agencies through the State of California’s Office of Planning and Research State Clearinghouse. Identified potential significant environmental impacts include air quality, biological resources, and hydrology and water quality. However, the Town has incorporated mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate the potential impacts. Mitigation measures have been developed for inclusion within the project as conditions of approval to mitigate all potentially significant impacts to less than significant levels. A mitigation monitoring reporting program has also been created to help in the implementation of these mitigation measures. It is staff’s opinion that the mitigation measures developed for the project are adequate in meeting the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as well as the goals and policies of the 2025 General Plan. Responses to comments (Attachment 2) are provided in the Final Mitigated Negative Declaration which focus on the five primary concerns identified by the public.

Public Communication: The public hearing notice was published in the *Sierra Sun* on September 15, 2023 and mailed on September 14, 2023 to all property owners within 500 feet of the project site, as shown on the latest current tax roll of Nevada County. Staff also sent an email notice of this hearing on

September 14, 2023 to community members that have specifically requested updates on the project. The Notice of Intent to Adopt an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration was mailed out to all property owners within 500 feet of the project site and e-notified on May 19, 2023. The applicant posted an onsite sign on December 21, 2022 indicating a notice of application. Staff also held a virtual public information session on September 9, 2022, early in the application process, to provide an outline on how the application process will proceed. Additionally, the Tahoe Donner Association conducted their own outreach to their homeowners association membership, which is described in detail in their application submittal (Attachment #2 of the June 20, 2023 staff report). All public comments that has been received up to the publication of this staff report can be found in the link in Attachment #4. Public comments received for this meeting will be uploaded to the "Additional Information and Public Comment" folder of the September 27, 2023 agenda folder:

<https://portal.laserfiche.com/Portal/Browse.aspx?id=59662714&repo=r-6a91ddbc>

Staff Summary and Recommendation: The applicant believes that the existing lodge building, constructed in the 1970s, no longer meets the needs of the Tahoe Donner Association membership and the users of the ski hill. The applicant is proposing to replace an existing building with a modern building that functions more effectively for the needs of its users and will be required to address modern code requirements for accessibility, energy efficiency, and stormwater treatment. No changes to the proposed use of the ski hill, lodge, or parking areas are proposed. Overall, the project is consistent with the 2025 General Plan and the development standards associated with the REC (Recreation) zoning district and mitigation measures are recommended to reduce any potential impacts of the project. Replacement of the existing building will ensure that Tahoe Donner can continue to provide the Tahoe Donner and Truckee community with a locally based amenity for residents and visitors, as envisioned and supported by the 2025 General Plan. With incorporation of the recommended conditions of approval, including the proposed mitigation measures, staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt Resolution 2023-10, approving the Development Permit, Minor Use Permit, and Sign Plan for the Tahoe Donner Downhill Ski Lodge.

Alternative Actions: Actions that the Planning Commission may take as an alternative to the recommended action include:

1. Continue the public hearing to a date and time certain.
 - a. The Planning Commission may request additional information from the applicant and/or staff (if new information is presented at the next meeting, the public portion of the hearing must be reopened on the new information submitted).
2. Land Use Permits
 - a. Add, delete or modify the proposed conditions of approval
 - b. Deny the project on the basis that all of the required findings cannot be made.
3. Require additional environmental review.

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Resolution 2023-10

Exhibit A: Plans

Exhibit B: Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration with Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Program and Responses to Comments

Exhibit C: Conditions of Approval

Exhibit D: Draft Findings

Attachment 2: [June 20, 2023 Planning Commission Staff Report \(amended to include condition numbers\)](https://portal.laserfiche.com/Portal/DocView.aspx?id=59656298&repo=r-6a91ddbc)

<https://portal.laserfiche.com/Portal/DocView.aspx?id=59656298&repo=r-6a91ddbc>

Attachment 3: [June 20, 2023 Planning Commission Minutes](https://portal.laserfiche.com/Portal/DocView.aspx?id=59661193&repo=r-6a91ddbc)

<https://portal.laserfiche.com/Portal/DocView.aspx?id=59661193&repo=r-6a91ddbc>

Attachment 4: [Public comment link](https://portal.laserfiche.com/Portal/Browse.aspx?id=59656953&repo=r-6a91ddbc)

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