

# **Attachment 8**

Tamarack Neighborhood Interest Group Letter

TAMARACK NEIGHBORHOOD INTEREST GROUP

March 23, 2011

**To:** The Town of Mammoth Lakes Planning Commission (cc: Mr. Terry Plum & TOML Staff).

**From:** Members of the Tamarack neighborhood that are signatories to this letter.

**Subject:** Consensus Agreement about the Terry Plum Vesting Tentative Parcel Map/Use Permit (VTPM/UPA10-001)

Dear Honorable Members of the Planning Commission:

To begin, all of the signatories to this letter are residents of the Tamarack neighborhood which includes households residing on: Tamarack Street, Tamarack Lane, Carter Street, Ranch Road, Woodcrest Street, Sunny Slopes Lane, Gull Street, Summit Road, Hill Street, Evergreen Street, Woodman St, Cliff Circle, and Old Mammoth Road. All signatories are in close proximity to and affected by the proposed public access element of the proposed Terry Plum Vesting Parcel Map/Use Permit.

Secondly, we appreciate the opportunity to submit our sentiments regarding the proposed Terry Plum Vesting Tentative Parcel Map/Use Permit to you. As local residents, and in many cases long-term residents of the Town of Mammoth Lakes, we feel it is important to express our opinion as a cohesive voice. Moreover, as local residents who work, provide employment opportunities, and deeply care about our community at large, we support and want to promote the long-term viability of a locally vibrant, safe, and resilient community.

We unequivocally recognize the importance of providing access to public lands. Doing so is essential to local livelihoods and we appreciate Mr. Plum's provision of a non-motorized public access easement to the adjacent USFS lands. We also appreciate and want to support the efforts of the Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra and the MLTPA, and we encourage strategies that serve their constituency. To this end, we are submitting the following concerns based on our desire to maintain the integrity of our community with the larger belief that doing so will benefit both the neighborhood residents as well as the public at large. With this in mind, the undersigned individuals have come to the following agreement illustrating our concerns regarding the project and its related improvements:

Our concerns fall into the following categories:

- 1- Additional studies & information.
- 2- Additional traffic calming & signage measures.
- 3- Parking issues and concerns.
- 4- A timeline for public access improvements.
- 5- Further subdivision of parcels.

### Additional Studies & Information

We feel there are a number of issues which have not been adequately addressed by appropriate studies:

- 1- We request that the Vehicle Speed Analysis component of the traffic study be redone at the south end of Tamarack Street beyond Tamarack Lane taking into account: the winter roadway clear width of less than 15' in places, the reduced sightlines along this stretch of the street in winter and summer, and the results of an actual speed study in this area during winter. (The original studies were flawed in that they were performed at the north end of Tamarack Street near OMR in order to get an accurate traffic volume count, however in that location the road is more than 50% wider with more than 100% longer sight lines resulting in higher speeds. In general the studies did not appear to take into account winter conditions and the letter from LSC Consultants completely omits winter considerations. **Moreover the studies have no reference to pedestrian or equestrian usage or safety.**)
- 2- We also feel that the cumulative impacts on OMR by this and other projects necessitate that the TOML should review the need for left hand turn lanes, for westbound traffic, onto side streets in a number of locations.
- 3- We also request that the Preliminary Geotechnical Investigation for the development be redone since it is outdated in its reference to the drainage plan dated 5/4/10 which shows the new road on Parcel A; which is entirely different than the current drainage plan dated 1/3/11 which shows the proposed road adjacent to parcels on Woodcrest Street. Moreover, it should take into account impacts to existing ground water conditions that exist in the area with active springs in or adjacent to the development.
- 4- We feel that there are some remaining questions about the avalanche hazards relative to public & resident safety that haven't been adequately addressed by the town or Mr. Plum.
- 5- Finally, we request an arborist's assessment of the viability of the large (>30" dia.) pines adjacent to the proposed roadway and parking area. The footings for 7-8' tall retaining walls adjacent to the trees, and within their drip-lines, will heavily impact these trees' root systems probably either killing the trees or making them unsafe in what is a very high wind area.

### Additional Traffic Calming & Signage Measures

In the interest of public & pedestrian safety we would like to see Mr. Plum provide:

- 1- Street signage in multiple places along Tamarack Street and Sunny Slopes Lane stating: "Slow – children at play" and "Slow – one lane road in winter".
- 2- If the revised traffic study allows, a posted speed limit of 15 mph from Tamarack Lane to the south end of Tamarack St.
- 3- Provide other viable traffic calming measures.
- 4- Signage at the trailhead indicating that bikes yield to pedestrians and both yield to horses and wheelchairs.
- 5- Signage at the trailhead indicating that the pedestrian route is through an avalanche hazard area.

## Parking Issues and Concerns

Currently, this consensus group is opposed to the addition of a public parking lot in the midst of our neighborhood which has a vibrant pedestrian character in both summer and winter. With respect to establishing a public parking lot, it would be helpful to better understand the basis and justification for the Town Staff's recommendation to establish a permanent parking facility consisting of six (6) spaces. We feel the town has not studied the impact of such a parking area on the pedestrian and equestrian usage of the neighborhood nor has the town included the neighborhood in discussions of whether such a parking area is desired. Lacking such outreach or studies, significant concerns remain regarding: pedestrian/equestrian safety, parking misuse, night time use, loitering, and resident security. These concerns are explained below:

1. Without adequate justification to support a "parking lot", signatories to this letter oppose the establishment of such a parking lot. Such a position is based on the following:
  - a. Given the Town's "Feet First" philosophy as expressed in the TOML's General Plan document, that the Town is already planning to establish a permanent handicap accessible parking facility at the east end of the USFS meadow with an ADA compliant trail, and given that Tamarack Street currently provides foot access for the broader Old Mammoth neighborhood: we do not believe a new parking facility is necessary. Additionally, we are concerned that increased vehicular traffic would be hazardous to the numerous pedestrians and equestrians that currently access the meadows via Tamarack Street in all seasons.
  - b. As it currently stands, existing signage noting that on street parking is illegal in winter is being ignored with vehicles often parking along the southern end of Tamarack Street. Such parking is not being enforced by the town. Moreover, and more importantly, vehicles that park there illegally pose a safety threat to existing residents requiring access to and from their properties during heavy snow storms. We have grave concerns about the town's ability to control the increased vehicular use should a public parking facility be established. Additionally, we are concerned about the potential for visitors to park for an extended duration, leaving vehicles unattended and inviting vandalism to adjacent properties. There is also a significant concern of loitering on the part of those parking. Our neighborhood is family based with many small children. Essential to maintaining the health and spirit of the local community is the desire to ensure children are safe and not exposed to public alcohol or drug use which has been prevalent among winter users of the Sherwin's area. One request we have is to designate Tamarack St. as a "pedestrian only" access location. A further suggestion would then be to publically note pedestrian access as a beneficial attribute of the Town and as a way to support existing public transportation to Tamarack Street and USFS meadows trails.
  - c. The proposed access from Tamarack Street to the USFS meadow land has been, and will be, limited to non-motorized vehicles. However as a result of currently poor TOML enforcement, snowmobiles and motorcycles already access the meadow via Tamarack St. It is our belief that providing a public parking facility will result in additional motorized vehicles accessing the trails. This inadvertent promotion of additional motorized vehicle activity has the potential to not only

require additional enforcement patrols, and in doing so raise expenses to the Town; it will also further threaten the peace and quiet that characterizes this neighborhood.

- d. Another important issue is the potential for vehicles to access & exit the proposed parking lot via Sunny Slopes Lane, Gull Street, and Summit Roads, particularly during extreme snow conditions. As it stands now, residents of these streets are financially responsible for snow removal services with the road itself being closed on occasion. It has been suggested erroneously that adequate signage to direct traffic to Tamarack St. would be sufficient to address the potential dangers of vehicles deciding to exit the area via Sunny Slopes Lane, Gull Street & Summit Road. While signage may help direct traffic, their efficacy is limited and unenforceable. Our concern is based on the potential for increased traffic congestion due to poor road conditions, if not closure altogether, that poses potential threats of injury and property damage to families living on these streets. Should there be increased traffic, in all likelihood vehicles would travel (inadvertently or otherwise) via Sunny Slope/Gull/Summit Roads resulting in local families carrying the burden of increased liability should and unfortunate accident occur.
2. In light of the signatories' opposition to establishing the aforementioned public parking facility, we request the following measures be required of the project:
    - a. Enhance public transportation signage indicating the current public transit routes that provide access to the intersection of Old Mammoth Rd and Tamarack Rd. Doing so would provide relatively easy access to the public trails without increasing vehicle traffic in the neighborhood.
    - b. Provide signage on Tamarack Street indicating it is a pedestrian and equestrian corridor connecting the town's paths with the trails on USFS lands
    - c. Establish one designated handicap parking space to be located at the south end of the Plum access driveway adjacent to USFS land. Doing so would provide handicap access while at the same time minimize traffic and associated noise etc within the neighborhood. It should be provided w/ explicit signage that states the fines for violations and the parking restricted to the hours 8am-6pm and the months April-November.

#### A Timeline for Public Access Improvements

We ask that a timeframe be established, with no extensions, for Mr. Plum's completion of all the public improvements and all related road surfaces & drainage from OMR to USFS lands to be provided within one year of the approval of the Parcel Map.

#### Further Subdivision of Parcels

We ask that Mr. Plum place deed restrictions or CCR's upon all his properties limiting them from further subdivision so that the town and the neighborhood do not have to revisit all these issues and studies again in the future.

To reiterate, members of the Tamarack Neighborhood recognize the importance of providing access to public lands. It goes without saying that the beauty of the Sherwin Meadows should be enjoyed by all. Signatories to this letter also believe that such access can be provided without compromising the current setting for those families that have established roots in the area nor the core nature of the Town of Mammoth Lakes.

It is the desire of the Tamarack Neighborhood Group to find solutions to the above issues raised by the proposed development. In order to do so, we are seeking further discussions and would like to be a collaborative partner in such discussions in order to reach consensus with the TOML & Mr. Plum on the most productive way forward.

**Today, we respectfully request that the Planning Commission carefully considers our concerns outlined above and incorporates them into the requirements for this development prior to granting Mr. Plum approval of his parcel map and use permit.**

Sincerely,

Signature

Printed Name

Email

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