

Jamie Gray

From: mitch.dutko@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, October 17, 2023 1:48 PM
To: John Wentworth; Amy Callanan; Dan Holler; Jamie Gray; Bill Sauser; lsalcido@townofmammothlakes.ca.gov; Sarah Rea; Haislip Hayes; cbubser@townofmammothlakes.ca.gov; Amanda Rice
Cc: 'Mike Dutko'; 'Mark Dutko'
Subject: Don't chuck Old Mammoth Under the Bus!

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

To Mammoth Town Council/City Manager/Engineering Department and Old Mammoth Community,

We just received word that the town is already doing demo work on the Woodmen Bus Site today 10/17/2023 which is incredibly upsetting. What has become of the Mammoth Lakes we knew and loved?

Below is the letter I was about to send before I just heard the shocking news that there is a dump truck and loader on site. What an outrage!

This project was controversial and contentious from the beginning has anyone failed to remember that. A friendly reminder to the Town of Mammoth, we had over 300 hundred signatures from the Old Mammoth neighborhood that opposed the bus stop (these signatures were gathered in less than 10 days after the bus stop was originally sprung on the community). Who knows how many additional signatures could have been gathered if we knew the project was to be “authorized” to move forward again. For comparison purposes there were only 150 signatures against the proposed Ice Rink Project. **Is the bus stop the new ice rink? We shall see.**

It's upsetting but not shocking that this project has allegedly received an “authorization” as per Dan Holler's letter dated Oct 10th. Time and time again the Old Mammoth Community has been given short notice of the project and its current resurrection. Once again being quietly slipped in the town agenda with less than 6 days for community rebuttal. I mention 6 days as that is when most of us were made aware of the letter dated October 10th. Who “authorized” this project? The Council, The Engineering Department, and/or the City Manager as the process seems very undemocratic. Where is the Environmental Impact Report for this non-ministerial project? Also, where in the letter is SAFETY addressed it seems to be “overlooked” or some would say omitted.

To our recollection the only city official open to our concerns was John Wentworth. John showed a great sense of leadership with his engagement and honest interactions with the neighborhood. John, seems to be a person who truly cares about his community and its vision for the future.

We all know this is a project that should have never seen the light of day based purely on SAFETY, lack of ridership, scope, noise, and environmental impact. Very few people used the bus when it went past Woodmen on Old Mammoth Road so why would this change now. There is still plenty of space at Snow Creek to accommodate the turnaround which was where the original plans outline between Snow Creek and the Town, and where it should remain to service the only necessary riders who live in Aspen Village. There is no need for public transportation past Aspen Village and if a smaller bus is going to be used and alternate option can be turned around in Aspen Village. (See phot below). Aspen Village HOA was never contacted about a bus alternative. FYI

The perception fair or not is that the developers have more say in City Planning than the people. Playing into this same narrative was evident at the very first site meeting when Haislip Hayes was asked who was funding the project and he said, **“that is not your concern”**. We all know it was Snow Creek funding the project which was another glaring example of a lack of transparency. Let’s be honest, the Town was going to move forward with this project as of May 21, 2021, without the input of the residents. On this date during a closed-door negotiation between the Town and the Water District there was an agreement that there would be an exchange of ownership from the Water District to the Town of Mammoth. This was made official on July 2nd with the recording of a grant deed with the County (exchanging the property from the Water district to the Town of Mammoth with other considerations). Dan’s letter misstates that the **“The property is owned by the Mammoth Community Water District”** when it is still owned by the Town of Mammoth Lakes since July 2nd of 2021. Why was this parcel transferred without public debate and before the City Council even voted on the project. That would be like buying a tractor before you purchased the land.

Unfortunately, there is a perception that some individuals working on the project are pushing the project for personal reasons and not for the best interest of the Old Mammoth community.

The Town never wanted our input as they tried to ram it through as a ministerial project which we all know legally based on the scope of work it was not. Has the Town attorney reviewed the safety studies? We only recently received one safety study today 10/16/2023. Was a safety study performed in the dead of winter? This year at best during the winter storms there was barely one and a third wide lane up Old Mammoth. If an accident occurred at the proposed site and Old Mammoth Road was blocked could emergency vehicles get through? These are all questions that have not been addressed. Since the beginning of this fiasco, this project was sprung on the neighborhood without timely disclosure, with secret meetings behind closed doors between the Water Department, Engineering Department, The Town Of Mammoth Lakes, and ESTA. So, when the recent letter states, **“we are willing to listen to those concerns”** and in the very next paragraph it states: **“The authorization to move forward with construction of the turnaround has already been given and will not be considered by the council at this meeting”**. Is another scathing testimony of the City of Mammoth Lakes, ESTA, and the Mammoth County Water Districts lack of transparency.

Regards,
Mitchell/Mark/Mike
19 Woodmen

