

10/8/18 – News Update



Cultural Resources Study Completed for The Cal Neva: *Includes Project Overview & Preservation Recommendations; Local Heritage Partnerships Explored.*

In October, a Cultural Resources Study for The Cal Neva was completed and filed with the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) and it will be submitted for review to both the Nevada and California State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO).

Upon approval by SHPO, The Cal Neva project redevelopment team plans to move forward with the preservation recommendations as well as with additional efforts, above and beyond the Study recommendations, to explore local heritage partnerships.

The Study includes an overview of what the project redevelopment team is proposing who shared, “we wanted to get back with our community in a timely manner to acknowledge their interest and curiosity about the heritage of the site and plan details.” Since early July, the team has been welcoming ideas and input from the local community.

Cultural Resources Study

Conducted by two long-time historians, the Cultural Resources Study and Evaluations report was recently completed by Judith Marvin and Terry Brejla, of Foothill Resources, Ltd. Marvin is a principal investigator for projects surveying and evaluating historical resources and is certified by the CA Council for the Promotion of History (CCPH) as Public Historian No. 525. Brejla has participated in historical resources inventories in both northern CA and NV where she has recorded buildings and conducted extensive archival research. She is a Tuolumne County (CA) Historic Preservation Review Commissioner, a member of the CCPH, and formerly the Vernacular Architecture Forum.

Pending SHPO determination, Marvin and Brejla have suggested in their findings that many of the buildings were evaluated “as either lacking in integrity or do not meet the age criteria or are also in a deteriorated condition.” Whereas historical consideration has been given in some cases, the study concluded, “although two of the cabins were occupied by Sinatra and Monroe at various times, there are many other places more closely associated with them throughout the United States.” The evaluation specifically noted these cabins “are completely lacking in integrity to their period of significance.”

Project Overview & Preservation Recommendations

The Cal Neva project redevelopment team is proposing to create a new five-star quality resort at Crystal Bay to be in balance with the surrounding environment and community.

The proposed project includes renovating the existing 10-story hotel tower and removing the deteriorated low-rise lodge and casino in order to revitalize and bring back its glory. A new two-story building would be created at the base of the existing hotel tower to unify, restore and integrate the hotel, restaurants, casino, conference center, spa, and support facilities to bring a vibrant experience back similar to previous uses. The project is expected to bring notable environmental improvements and economic infusion to the region.

With SHPO approval, the project redevelopment team will pursue several preservation recommendations including detailed photo documentation and a historic booklet to be donated to various museums and historical societies. With attention and respect to the heritage of the site, the project redevelopment team is also connecting with potential local heritage partners for possible placement of the few artifacts that have remained on site into preservation care.

Local Heritage Partnerships

“In the spirit of preservation, I’m pleased to be in conversations with members of The Cal Neva team at this early stage of the project,” said Bill Watson, Chief Executive and Curator of Thunderbird Lake Tahoe, a non-profit dedicated to saving Lake Tahoe’s art and history.

The Cal Neva project redevelopment team is exploring the possibilities of placing the few remaining artifacts into preservation care to include murals and fireplace stone. As more information becomes available about these efforts, they will circle back with the community. It is important to note that when the property was acquired through bankruptcy earlier this year, many aspects within had either been stripped out or damaged in the course of the prior owner’s work or the ensuing three year period of abandonment and court proceedings.

Since mid-summer, the owner, planners and architects continue to meet with the various regulatory agencies toward putting together a viable project application that agrees with all entities, and is responsive to the community. The project is expected to deliver strong economic and environmental benefits to the Crystal Bay and Incline communities as well as to the north shore and surrounding region.

“We are looking forward to restoring the popularity of the Cal Neva Lodge and Casino. We thank everyone for connecting in with their questions, ideas and excitement.”

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