

Supervisor: New VS plan best represents constituents

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by Nick Baptista, The Valley Springs News

District 1 Supervisor Gary Tofanelli was pleased with the outcome of Tuesday's vote on a new Valley Springs Community Plan and believes the action by the Board of Supervisors represents the bulk of his constituency.

After lengthy discussion on the matter, the board voted 4-1, with board Chairwoman Merita Callaway opposed, to approve what is being called the May 27, 2010, map as the preferred map and the earlier May 4 Calaveras Council of Governments map as the alternate map.

"What we came up with was well represented by the community people involved who were representing certain community groups and the people at large," Tofanelli said after Tuesday's meeting.

Tofanelli said he knew when the process to revisit the Valley Springs Community Plan began it would not please everyone. However, many of the concerns expressed with the May 4 map were addressed.

"I'm sorry that one group (MyValleySprings.com) decided not to participate," Tofanelli added. "I believe it was a mistake on their part."

From the feedback he received, many District 1 constituents were not supportive of the plan developed through CCOG, Tofanelli said. They did not see the process as neutral and many of their concerns raised in the public meetings were ignored.

MyValleySpring.com representatives voiced their concerns with the May 27 map at Tuesday's board meeting.

"(T)he new map being presented today is not a refinement of, or a compromise with, the May 4th Community Plan consensus map," said Colleen Platt of MVS.com at Tuesday's meeting. "This is a totally new community plan map, with different boundaries and significant land use changes. This new map has not been reviewed or vetted by the community."

"Some of the changes are extreme," said Joyce Techel of MVS.com. "For example, the existing 1974 Valley Springs plan has no land designation called Mixed Commercial and Residential. The May 4th community plan update 'consensus' map proposed 106 acres of Community Center with Mixed Use, located in the town center. But this new May 27th community map proposes over 600 acres of Mixed Commercial and Residential, located mostly outside of the town center and on land currently zoned Agriculture."

Tofanelli said this is only one step in the General Plan update process. The preferred map will be analyzed along with the alternative to a lesser extent and they will re-emerge when the General Plan update is up for consideration.