

Letter to Town Council

Ross Community and Town Center

08.09.26

Email: towncouncil@townofrossca.gov

Members of Ross Town Council,

I have been thinking about how we can best move forward to ensure that the goals of both the Town Council and the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) are successfully incorporated into the planning and architectural solutions being developed over the next three months. Time is of the essence, and we need to make sure we have the right information to move the initial concept forward from a planning, design, and financial perspective.

In the last Town Council meeting, Christa outlined three upcoming meetings between now and early November. While three meetings are adequate for Town Council updates and interim concept approvals, many architectural, engineering, and operational decisions will need to be made during weekly sessions. These include previously discussed topics such as the Laurel Grove intersection exit, flood mitigation efforts, and other operational issues. There is no doubt that some compromises will have to be made on several issues, which is the nature of every project, especially one associated with adaptive reuse of a historical building.

Typically, the client attends these regular meetings to guide critical discussions and ensure timely decision-making. The architectural and engineering team selected for the project will see Christa and her consultants as the clients and will look to her for guidance in making key decisions and providing daily directions.

However, in this case the client is the Town Council and the various constituencies they represent. Therefore, I believe it is critical to also have representatives from both the Town Council and the CAC present in periodic meetings to provide ongoing input. While they would not be empowered as final decision-makers, their involvement will bring additional expertise to the table, ensure transparency, build trust, and foster community support.

Moving forward without Town Council representation assumes that Christa and the team are empowered to make key decisions. If the Town Council disagrees with those decisions, the month-long gap between updates could lead to a change in direction after significant work has already been completed. It is much more efficient, and far less expensive, to collaborate and make necessary adjustments in real time.

Personally, I am not sure why this has become an issue. While I understand and respect the role of Christa and staff, the Town has never embarked on a project of this scale and complexity, and it seems to me that having experienced people at the table is in everyone's interest. Although some of our individual goals and opinions may differ, we all share the same objective in mind, to design and construct a wonderful building for our community. Accomplishing that goal is a team effort and one that leverages the talent we are fortunate to have in our Town.

Regards,

Daniel Winey