

Letter: Citizen input into General Plan a farce

Chico Enterprise-Record

Article Launched: 08/17/2008 12:37:34 AM PDT

The city has gone to considerable expense to create an aura of community participation in the current General Plan update. At the Aug. 5 joint planning meeting, staffers babbled on and on that "the bottom line was community input."

But look at the report itself — nowhere will you see verbatim quotes from any letters received or meetings over the last few years. You will see reports written by the Chico Realtors Association, two neighborhood associations and consultants. There's a survey written and administered by consultants, "summarizing" the comments of the public into trendy sound bytes. But nowhere will you see any letters or direct comments from individual citizens.

I spent hours reading "vision studies" and wrote comments. I know others did the same.

One planning staffer told me, "We are posting as much of the relevant public comment on the priority setting process as we possibly can."

They get to pick and choose which public comments are "relevant"? They post the agreeable comments online and hide the rest in a drawer downtown.

This is just one way staff leads and distorts "public input."

Meanwhile, off camera, they have worked to push the public out of the permits process by allowing more "administrative" permits, lessening

requirements to notice neighbors, shortening the time for appeals to 10 days and raising the appeals fee to \$150. They've also deferred and lowered developer fees, despite our "looming deficit."

Staff has their own plans, and they don't want any of us getting in the way.

— Juanita Sumner, Chico

Advertisement



A bright idea in online advertising.

PrinterStitial® ads by Format Dynamics.



FormatDynamics®

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™