

## Camino Community Meeting

February 23, 2015

We had a good group of over 50 people in attendance. Most were from Camino or owned a business/worked in Camino.

The meeting was facilitated by Mark Stanley, a member of the Camino Community Action Committee.

Mark began the meeting by welcoming folks and giving an overview of our goals for the meeting. He then introduced Tom Purcell from the Planning Dept. Tom gave a bit of background about why we were holding the meeting. In preparation for the meeting, he said he did a little research on Camino and was surprised at the diversity of activities available in our community. In discussing resources, he mentioned historical protection as one topic that he could get info for us.

Mark emphasized that all are welcome at the meeting but comments would be limited to Camino residents or business people. Mark then went through the questions that had been established at the meeting that was the impetus for this gathering. They are:

**Color coding identifies answers that answered additional questions.**

**What does Camino mean to you?**

**2. What are our attributes?**

**3. What brought you here?**

**4. What keeps you here?**

**5. What does it mean to be a resident of Camino?**

**6. What do we want to keep?**

**7. What would you like to see changed?**

**8. What would you like to see added? Examples: sidewalks, streetlights, businesses, motels, gas stations, fast food, etc.**

The plan was to get answers to each question, but it was clear from people's answer to the first question that the audience preferred to respond to all questions in one answer.

A question was asked before we got started with responses regarding what time line we have. Mark explained that we (the community) are in control of this process, so we don't really have a specific timeline. This is just our first step.

As noted above, we started with Question #1, but people's answers tended to encompass all the questions.

**Question: What does Camino mean to you?**

**Responses:**

- Peaceful, above fog, green, quiet, full of nature, agriculture, beauty, view (from a new resident)
- Beauty of nature, doesn't like outdated signs that stay nailed up to trees
- Camaraderie, friendly
- Sense of community, we can come together cooperatively in spite of different opinions
- Working as a unified force
- We are/were fortunate to have industries (Apple Hill/ Mich Cal Mill) that foster(ed) agriculture and forestry to benefit the community.
- The school is a hub that benefits everyone, kids and adults, and attracts people here.
- Maintain quality of school
- Loves this school and thinks it's a privilege to teach there (from a Camino teacher)
- Ag brought us to this area, community, (long-time resident)
- We need to respect people who already live in a community (from a former mayor in the Bay Area).
- Post office is a hub for communication.
- Once concrete is poured and trees are removed, you can't go back.
- Cooperation of growers with the community
- We are well positioned for new trends, like Farm to Fork.

- Other places want to create a place that looks like Camino does.
- Think about water, drought, and ground water
- Keep economy strong.
- Cooperation with school, which needs maintenance and replacing
- RV resort could allow Camino to be a destination and year-round draw for tourism.
- Ideal elevation and unique, has a great sense of place
- Been around since the Gold Rush
- Human scale, intimate and inviting
- Friendly
- Came here for schools and the easy commute, love the environment, ag, wineries
- Inviting, welcoming
- Downtown looks ghostly.-
- Downtown could use new businesses that are open year round.
- Hopes to see a park for families or grocery store on the mill site.
- **Doesn't like sidewalks or outdated signs on trees or post office fence.**
- Promote tourism.
- School needs spiffing up (some discussion about the parent volunteers who in years past, redid the playground and painted the school.)
- Generosity (Camino has the highest % of giving in EDC)
- **Need jobs**
- **Sierra Pacific drives trucks through but doesn't contribute to the community for use of roads.**
- Pimentel's have the only remaining lumber mill in the county.
- **School needs fixing.**
- **Don't like signs on trees.**
- Loves the community, wants it to stay the way it is.
- Leave it the way it is.
- Concern about roads and safety, walking, riding, safe bus stops
- RV Park was originally planned at the Log Cabin (across Hwy 50) but was never approved by the county. There was a mention of all the problems that the owners of the KOA Campground in Shingle Springs encountered when trying to get their project approved and opened.
- Bike and pedestrian lanes are needed or get the county to make it safe.
- Want density what it is and keep restrictions on zoning. Keep acreage from being split.
- **Has concern with traffic speeds on Hwy 50. could we go back to 55 MPH between here and Placerville?**
- Likes not having light pollution at night, hearing the birds
- Feeling of community
- We share our community with visitors for 9 months which allows us to enjoy it unchanged for the other 3 months.
- Mill closure is not a done deal; maybe we could get another mills, speaker said plans are still on the books
- We need to fight for ag water and protect ag.
- Water resources should go for ag.
- Left LA because orange groves were paved over
- Forest and agriculture is Camino
- Loves old buildings in downtown.
- Horror about what will happen at mill site
- What happens to the mill site will be key to the look and future of the town.
- Stewardship of the town
- 2/3 of county is timber
- Mill site has industrial waste.
- Mill site should stay industrial or a use that is compatible with forestry or ag.
- Industry at the mill that promotes Camino
- 50 years of industry waste is in the forest.

- Important to keep industrial options
- Don't try to imitate something that doesn't work.
- Preserve Camino School.
- Think of the whole picture.
- Want it like it is
- RV park would conflict with industrial use.
- Likes the economic diversity
- Diversity of school is a positive.
- Phil Rowe was a developer who had big plans for development south of highway 50 between the Camino exit and the school – there was not much local support for his efforts. CORE was organized then. We didn't want it then and we don't want it now.
- Don't want to see San Jose or LA
- His grandparents would still recognize the town, except for the mill. (from a long time resident)
- Bring kids back to the school. Supt. Matt Smith commented that the attendance numbers are climbing. At its peak there was 490 kids and now, with the Charter School, there are about 470.
- Attract businesses that are viable.
- There is no real parking downtown. Backing up onto a main road is actually illegal; not sure why it is still allowed.
- Sidewalks don't belong to the county; they are the responsibility of the individual homeowners.
- Camino PO is the only remaining post office on the Pony Express and Wagon Train Trail. Is there a way to capitalize on this?
- Some have proposed a museum over the years. Some of our logging equipment is in another logging museum and some of our historical items are in the county museum.
- Better cooperation and communication with El Dorado Trail
- Bad left turn on 50 is dangerous.
- Club for kids so they have activities after school or a community center
- Western Slope Roads is seeking volunteers for focus groups – Ann will provide contact info and Mark will post it on our website
- Coffee House should be supported; it struggles to stay viable.
- Used to be less traffic
- People take their business down the hill.
- Do we want to be a bedroom community or are we willing to go down the hill
- We have been a bedroom/commuting community for a long time.
- There is less parent involvement now than in the past.
- Why would we want sidewalks and street lights
- Closing of the mill was a big loss. We need some similar use that is rooted in our sense of place. The possibility of a UC Ag Science Center has been mentioned as one possibility.
- Tell BOS what we want at the mill site.
- Put pressure on BOS to make a viable opportunity on the mill site.
- We are the only place that doesn't have a co-generation plant within 50 miles of the forest.
- Aftermath of the fire means 90,000 acres of refuse are still be in the woods that will not be harvested.
- Michigan Cal supported the school; Sierra Pacific Industries never cared and never supported the community and school.
- Larsen Barn and Museum/Park are wonderful assets to our community.
- One resident said she tries to make Camino prettier and warmer and more inviting and is happy to see the color on the barns and the mural at Rainbow and loves the character of the community.
- Views are wonderful and so are the sunsets; loves the beauty.
- Likes to hear animals, great weather, close to emergency services, medical services, store
- Want businesses that are compatible with agriculture
- Clean up the mill site.
- Perhaps we could attract remanufacturing compatible with the wineries and Apple Hill at mill site.
- We all like ag so we should develop businesses that work in tandem with ag.
- It is a hazard to walk on roads.

- Loves it when she tells out of towners that she is from Camino, which they don't recognize, but they then tell her they love Apple Hill
- We should share the Apple Hill 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary video.
- Bigger grocery store would be nice.
- Old infrastructure needs to be dealt with through maintenance.
- Small businesses need decent infrastructure.
- Keep things the way they are.
- Low income housing
- No new sidewalks
- Change will happen; preserve history.
- How do we encourage local businesses?
- Need to define Camino boundaries
- Value to our Camino buildings...
- Create our standards as a community for retention.
- Wants choices
- We don't want formulaic development for Camino.
- We need to protect things with policies that people can live with.
- There are certain designations that can protect a community.
- Sue Taylor said she submitted a historic overlay plan but nothing was ever done.
- We can help support local businesses when we shop and eat – most small business don't provided needs; they generally provide wants so it is often discretionary dollars that are spent there.
- People need to be able to get to the ranches easily.
- We need small infrastructure improvements,
- Safe roads and safe biking and pedestrian trails
- There are pinch points for cars and bikes that are particularly unsafe. Perhaps the county can focus on those areas.
- We discussed bike lanes vs. bike trails and some concern was voiced about taking people's property for bike trails.
- Some sidewalk improvements would increase safety.
- Should there be fees for cyclists to provide bike paths?
- Maybe there is money from SMUD for increased bike safety.
- We need a CSD for road improvements because these are logging roads.
- Our community drives the economic engine of our county.
- Make sure EID has water for ag.
- Someone asked where Cedar Grove boundaries are.

The question was asked, "What will we do with this information?"

Mark's answer – We will post it on our website and communicate it to the county.

Tom from the Planning Department was taking extensive notes. He responded that the Planning Dept. will look for common themes and identify corresponding resources, highlight potential funding sources and technical assistance, such as providing help with Cal Trans and DOT. They can come back to help us find tune our desires and needs. Perhaps we should invite Brian Veerkamp to our next meeting

Although the meeting was for Camino residents and business owners to express their thoughts, one resident asked that Fran be allowed to speak briefly. She said that similar meetings in Pollock Pines were not judged to be productive from many of the participants, who were frustrated with the outcomes, one of which she mentioned was a blue Welcome to Pollock Pines sign. She felt that over the years, there was much cooperation between Pollock Pines and Camino (sports, community center, etc.) but felt there is less of this now, and more isolation of each community.

The meeting ended at 7:25 and many people stayed around to talk about topics raised. Thanks to attendees who helped put the chairs away.