



Cleve Morris &lt;cmorris@cityofplacerville.org&gt;

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**Proposals for 487 & 489 Main Street – Confidence Hall and Emigrant Jane Stuart Building**

2 messages

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**Jennifer Chapman** <jenchapman415@gmail.com>

Tue, Apr 30, 2019 at 7:42 AM

To: Cleve Morris &lt;cmorris@cityofplacerville.org&gt;, Mark Acuna &lt;macuna@cityofplacerville.org&gt;

April 30, 2019

TO: City of Placerville

ATTN: Cleve Morris, City Manager, Mayor Mark Acuna, and City Council

RE: Proposals for 487 &amp; 489 Main Street – Confidence Hall and Emigrant Jane Stuart Building

I understand you will be having a special meeting to consider proposals for the use of the city owned buildings at 487 & 489 Main Street on Monday May 6, 2019. These iconic buildings are central to the identity of the community, yet this meeting which will set the course for the future of these buildings has not been publicized.

These two buildings -- Confidence Hall and the Emigrant Jane Stuart Building -- are on the National Register of Historic Places and contribute to a historic district which has not been properly evaluated for its significance. Evaluation of the Placerville historic district to determine if it is eligible for state and national listing is required as part of the environmental planning process for the Clay Street Bridge project. The Arts Council has also applied for federal funding which would require compliance with national environmental law. Evaluation of the historic district is needed to comply with the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). These two buildings would be included in that evaluation. The Arts Council's intent to renovate these buildings to create apartments and to make other structural modifications will diminish their historic integrity. This will degrade the historic value of the buildings and the historic district as a whole. Maintaining their original design, and offering tours that take people back in time, orient people to downtown Placerville and interpret the extensive number of other related local historic resources would be a world class attraction. These other resources include other historic buildings on Main Street, the Pony Express Trail, the California Emigrant Trail, the Lincoln Highway, Hattie Mine (Gold Bug Park), the Druid Monument, and more. The potential to draw more of the 5 million visitors to Old Sacramento is much stronger in the Tribe's proposal than in the Arts Councils proposal.

The Visitor Center proposal submitted by the Wopumnes Nisenan-Mewuk Tribe recognizes the primary value of the historic buildings as heritage assets and offers the most compatible use with historic preservation and heritage-based tourism. The history of the Tribe is directly related to the history of the buildings which speak to the mass migration associated with the California Gold Rush which displaced Native American people. The Arts Council can accomplish its vision in a different location. Its emphasis on agriculture suggests it would also fit better where there was a stronger connection to Apple Hill. For example, a presentation last year by the Arts Council about their proposed use of historic buildings suggested planting a "living roof" as part of their agricultural theme. A "living roof" would be very unappropriate to a historic building in the historic district but could offer an interesting educational experience nearby. The Arts Council also envisions offering cooking classes which would be better suited to a different location.

The Tribe's proposed fire history museum could make important, relevant connections with the fire and vegetation management issues of today. This fire education aspect would have many grant opportunities associated with it. The Tribe also has the potential to offer an experience that directly relates to the Marshall Gold Discovery State Park in Coloma and the new California state Indian Museum in Sacramento, offering exciting opportunities to work with these organizations.

The Tribe's proposal includes partnerships with the El Dorado County Historical Society, the El Dorado Fire District, and the Placerville Downtown Association. I urge you to support the efforts of the Wopumnes Nisenan-Mewuk Tribe and the local groups they are partnering with by accepting their proposal for 487 & 489 Main Street.

Sincerely,

*Jennifer Chapman /s/*Jennifer Chapman  
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