

Crystal man girds for development battle

By MARK WAITE
PVT

When it comes to fighting a proposed development, Crystal resident Bob Regan may have more stamina than the guy who blocks a bulldozer or the proverbial old lady who refuses to let her home be demolished for a skyscraper.

Regan owns a 20-acre plot in Crystal Heights, the informal name given to a community north of the regular part of Crystal, which includes the Short Branch Saloon and the Brothel Art Museum. Rumors have been running rampant in the community about a proposed development with hundreds of homes in Crystal Heights.

Regan fired an opening salvo, with a petition signed by 14 residents, asking to keep the Ash Meadows Trail open, a historical path that passes through two of the 40-acre parcels recently divided for possible development. He vowed to pursue further nuisance claims against dust disturbance created during the development.

Regan claimed favoritism is being shown to developers pursuing projects in Crystal Heights.

He said the historic Old Ash Meadows trail has been in existence since the construction of a railroad in 1906, originating from the old Johnnie siding. It was used to haul goods, visitors, miners and workers to Ash Meadows, he said.

Regan said he consulted with former county road worker Harry Ford, a Pahrump resident since 1946, who remembered grading the road in the 1940s and 1950s.

The petition states: "We have since learned that you the board of commissioners have approved of a subdivision cutting off this route for 1,500 feet without any study relative to the impact it will cause to this road and to the adjacent Area of Critical Environmental Concern, consisting of 6,891 acres which contains this trail."

The historic road, Regan said, qualifies as an RS 2477 road, a federal designation that recognizes rights-of-way granted by the federal government between 1876 and 1976.

Regan said the Area of Critical Environmental Concern adjoins the proposed developments in Crystal Heights, created in 1998 to preserve mesquite trees growing on the sand dunes. He consulted with BLM consultant Gayle Marrs-Smith, the state engineer's office and others.

Regan alleges the developer will be able to build the subdivision without any controls by Nye County. Previously, the Nye County Road Department had to pay \$17,000 to repair a portion of White Boulevard with gravel, a fact confirmed by Nye County Road Supervisor Dave Fanning.

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