

Jackson Town Council

Via e-mail

RE: Snow King Future Development Plan Local Review

Dear Mayor Flitner and Town Councilors:

Thank you for your efforts to coordinate review of new development concepts planned by the owners of Snow King, prior to the Forest Service beginning a costly environmental impact statement (EIS). We applaud you for directing planning staff to work with Snow King ownership to analyze all impacts and benefits from the proposed development prior to an application being made to the Forest Service. This is as it should be, and we appreciate your efforts to ensure Snow King's proposed development benefits our community.

Please allow us this opportunity to underscore what needs to be addressed in ascertaining the impacts of the revised resort master plan as required by our land use rules for resorts.

Before the Town or the Forest Service approves new developments including: amusements, a road to the summit, a planetarium, additional lifts, and a large restaurant, it is important to answer basic questions. Where are people going to park? How are people going to get there? Where are new employees going to live? Where will all the new sewage go? How can we protect wildlife and habitat? How do we ensure this private investment results in benefits for locals and keeps Snow King the heart of our community?

This is exactly why the Town and County have the Resort Master Plan Amendment process in place, the purpose of which is to know the breath of uses the resort plans to add and to ascertain the cumulative impacts of all uses. All uses and types of development are to be set forth in the Planned Resort Master Plan. From the Snow King Planned Resort District Master Plan (Plan) itself: "The Master Plan also defines the future boundaries of growth necessary to preserve community character," and "As a community partner, Snow King offers the community, through this Master Plan, limits of development predictability, preserved open space, access to forest lands, and many other positive attributes discussed in this document."

As the Plan is now 16 years old, some of the uses the ownership has put forth as new proposals are not included in the Plan, which they need to be. Also, the community needs to take a look at the cumulative impacts of all changes proposed together with the existing uses, and a holistic look at the vision and phasing for the resort.

The Town has a responsibility to ensure the Plan aligns with our community's land use

Protecting the wildlife, wild places, and community character of Jackson Hole.

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rules and vision of a better future as articulated in the new 2012 Comprehensive Plan. Specifically, since the Plan for the public and private lands at the base is out of date, contains none of the newly proposed projects, and does not anticipate any expansion, the Town should consider an update to the base master plan to ensure it aligns with our community's current vision of a better future.

The idea behind resort master plans, as expressed in our land development regulations, is to "create a process in which Teton County and the Town of Jackson collaborate with landowners in planning and designing resort master plans that meet community goals and respond to the unique circumstances of the resort area"...(Div. 4.3 3 Planned Resort Zones). This cannot take place if none of the proposed development concepts are included in the Plan.

In order to ensure Snow King's development benefits our community, please make sure any approved updated Plan that proposes development increases or changes in use:

- Ensures seamless public access to resources.
- Improves public transit and makes the resort a pedestrian oriented community, to reduce traffic.
- Includes a traffic impact analysis, transportation demand management plan, and parking and loading plan.
- Provides a capital improvement program to address such things as adequate sewer and water systems, and the Resort's funding share of these items.
- Provides impact analysis for all facilities and services.
- Contains a land use element, listing all permitted uses and amount and type of development.
- Addresses a new vision and the economic benefits that vision will provide to the public. Previously the centerpiece was a convention center and the whole of the Plan is based on this vision and the economic contributions of a convention center to our community, but a convention center has not materialized. What is the new Plan vision and new documented economic contribution?
- Keeps Snow King affordable to people who live here, in exchange for the use of our public lands.
- Contains a phasing element which addresses "long-range planning for infrastructure, capital facilities and community land use patterns by establishing a level of predictability in the maximum potential size and character of each resort area" (Plan page 34), so we all know what to expect and when, and can better track master plan compliance.
- Includes performance objectives and a monitoring program, to ensure that development within the resort achieves the required mitigation of projected impacts on the community.
- Enhances our public gathering spaces at the base.
- Uses some of the dozens of acres of vacant land at the base to help address our housing crisis.

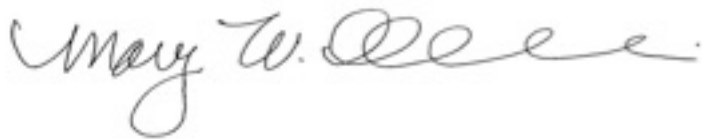
- Protects wildlife habitat adjacent to the existing ski/amusement boundary.

There should be an updated Environmental Assessment (EA) included as part of this Plan update, which demonstrates how impacts to wildlife and resources will be avoided. This EA is to have a visual component dealing with the visual impacts of development, per the existing Plan. Clearly, last summer's development had large visual impacts that were not reviewed in advance.

Thank you for your commitment to collaboration and coordination with the owners of Snow King and the Forest Service on this important project. This will help ensure that Snow King's proposed development benefits our community.

Thank you for your hard work on this important issue. Please let us know how we can be of assistance moving forward.

Sincerely,



Mary W. Gibson
Community Planning Director