



June 27, 2019

Jackson Town Council

Subject: Van Vleck block – new re-zone proposal to save the block

Dear Mayor and Town Councilors,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the new subdivision and zoning proposal for 135 and 175 East Broadway, commonly known as the Genevieve or Van Vleck block. **The Alliance supports this new community-based approach to saving the Genevieve block, and is grateful to the Land Trust for leading a fundraising campaign.** This new approach achieves significant historic preservation, supports local businesses, and is clearly better for our community than a block-wide hotel and all its associated impacts.

We believe that our community has a responsibility to make land use decisions that align with our community's vision in our Comprehensive Plan: ecosystem stewardship, growth management, and quality of life – which includes our history and our local businesses.

At its core, our quality of life and community character require that we sustain a true local community where we and our neighbors can look out for each other, coach youth sports, vote, volunteer with Search and Rescue, and steward our wildlife and ecosystem. Our community character is also our unique sense of place, which includes our historic buildings, community spaces, and local businesses. All of these are increasingly under threat from speculative commercial and hotel development. Local restaurants close and are replaced with banksⁱ, while families' affordable homes are bulldozed and replaced by high-end condos or four-story corporate hotelsⁱⁱ. Let's be true to our slogan: "the last of the Old West."

The Van Vleck block hosts a unique combination of important historic buildings like the Van Vleck Cabin (over 100 years old) and newer beloved local businesses like Café Genevieve, Persephone Bakery, and Healthy Being Juicery. These local businesses have quickly become part of the fabric of our community.

We are also encouraged to see that the Teton County Historic Preservation Board has begun work on drafting incentives and regulations to address historic preservation throughout our community. The campaign to save this block has acted as a catalyst for the larger discussion.

Ultimately, we support this application because it encompasses much of what our community cares about: green space, historic community character, locally-owned businesses, and smart growth within the downtown core.

Thank you for your support of this project, and for all your work for our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Skye Schell'.

Skye Schell

Executive Director

Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance

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

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ⁱ "Bank, drug store: Any resemblance is coincidental," *Jackson Hole News & Guide*, September 5, 2018.

https://www.jhnewsandguide.com/news/business/article_81e21a5c-35c4-5b49-b3e5-75bb9fea4813.html

ⁱⁱ "4th-floor setback dies as Marriott wins OK," *Jackson Hole News & Guide*, Dec 17, 2014.

https://www.jhnewsandguide.com/news/town_county/article_d18f2bd6-8436-56e4-8427-1e0f5378c475.html

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