

November 1, 2019



Town of Jackson Planning Commission

Dear Town Planning Commissioners:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Snow King base area master plan amendment. We want Snow King to succeed as our Town Hill, not an amusement park covered in luxury short-term rental condos at the base.

We appreciate that the Town, County, and Forest Service are working together to make holistic decisions about Snow King. Within that context, please understand that this base area master plan amendment is strictly about future private real estate development – not skiing – and that the developers are proposing a radical shift from the deal our town made in 2000. Please see our attached Sept. 2018 comments for more of that history.

One of the key issues in last year’s discussions was how to get SKRMA fees to support the ski hill operations, as called for in the 2000 Base Area Masterplan. The proposal from SKRMA is a nice start, and we are glad to see that SKRMA is open to the fee. However, there is much to improve in the proposal. Primarily, unlike most or all nearby resorts, SKRMA does not levy a transfer fee on condo sales (see attached Nov. 2018 comments). And the investors don’t want to use the fees to support the ski hill – in fact, they are trying to weaken that language. These are major flaws.

Please recommend to the town council that SKRMA fees:

- (1) Be **mandatory** and legally attached to all properties within SKRMA (please ask legal staff to investigate which properties already have fees in their deed, and which do not, especially given the rumor that Manuel Lopez gave one property a waiver)
- (2) Be a **minimum of 1%**, to line up with other resorts in Teton County (please ask staff to present an overview of transfer fees and resort taxes in all the other resorts)
- (3) Cover *all* commercial transactions, including not only hotel rooms and other short-term rentals, retail, and restaurants, but especially **condo/home sales**
- (4) Be used to **fund the Snow King ski area** in perpetuity, so the ski area has a stable funding source (removing the “need” for ziplines and other intrusive developments).

Please remember that this is not a philanthropic proposal. The various investors stand to gain a lot from this amendment, like being able to cash out on many new condos on Lots 53/57/58, more condos at the hotel (instead of the currently-approved hotel rooms that may not be as profitable as short-term-rentable condos), and a more-marketable KM6¹. So if allowing more condos, please make sure our community finally gets a fair fee on commerce at the base, so Snow King can be financially sustainable without more amusement park development or harmful-to-wildlife boundary / footprint expansions.

On a separate note: since the state legislature is again looking at taking away our housing mitigation program, please ask staff to analyze what would happen to housing mitigation in the Masterplan area if that bill passes, and how we can maintain mitigation in the SKRMA area in perpetuity.

Thank you for your dedication to our community,

Skye Schell
Executive Director
Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance

¹ Would the “indoor recreation” proposed for KM6 allow a movie theater? Is this an end-run to sell KM6 for movie theater / hotel development, proposed in 2015? See [“Councilman calls for comprehensive look at King.”](#) by Ben Graham, *JH News & Guide*, Feb. 18, 2015.