

TOWN OF BASALT

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Basalt Town Council
101 Midland Avenue
Basalt Town Council

To whom it may concern at the Basalt Town Council,

There has been discussion for a long time about what to do with the newly reclaimed river-side land in downtown Basalt. On a similar topic, the downtown businesses are always looking for ways to get more traffic into downtown Basalt, having lost a lot of volume to the Willits area. We have an opportunity for a two birds, one stone solution here.


As an active performing musician, I can't tell you how much of my time I spend driving up and down the valley for rehearsals and performances. We desperately need an adequate performance venue in the mid-valley! It would be ideal for it to be one that is state of the art, with both indoor and outdoor performing spaces. It would not have to be large to be a tremendous asset to the Basalt community. Not only would this serve a need for both performers and patrons alike, it would draw more traffic to the downtown community, benefiting local businesses. I would be a win-win for everyone.

The remaining area would be best used as a park with river access, the way some of it used to be. When I envision it, the grounds surrounding the new Theater Aspen building come to mind. That space is lovely, surrounded by gardens, grasses, trees, the river and in close access to the John Denver Memorial Garden affording patrons the opportunity to enjoy the garden, or stroll by the river before or after performances. If the town could build something on that order it would put Basalt on the map as a destination within the valley. I have no doubt that the community would book up the space in no time with bands, plays, fashion shows, who knows...! There is no shortage of creativity in this area.

I have lived in this community for over a decade; one thing that I have always loved about it is the wealth of arts and culture here. There are regularly more performances in our valley than one can manage to see. For such a small community the amount of local talent is really incredible. Why not use this space to highlight our local arts culture, one of our community's assets?

Building condos and/or hotels may be a tremendous boon for a small number of individuals, but building a venue and a park would benefit the whole community. If town tax dollars are going to be used in this project, then the benefit should go to all taxpayers, not just a select few. While a hotel might bring guests into town, unless we give them a reason to stick around, they are just going to hop in their cars and head on over to Willits, or Carbondale.

Finally we all know that this area has a tourist economy. Why do people love to travel to the Roaring Fork Valley? They come here for our nature, open space and our vibrant but quaint local culture. How is that best served? Not by building more condos and a hotel, rather a venue and a park.

Thoughtfully,

Maureen Hinkle