

Susan Philp

From: Pam Schilling
Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2015 8:17 AM
To: Mike Scanlon; Judi Tippetts
Cc: Denise Tomaskovic; Susan Philp; James Lindt; Bernie Grauer; Bernie Grauer; Gary Tennenbaum; Gary Tennenbaum; Gary Tennenbaum; Herschel Ross; Jacque Whitsitt; Jacque Whitsitt (Jacquewhitsitt@comcast.net); Mark Kittle; Mark Kittle (Work); Rick Stevens; Rick Stevens; Rob Leavitt
Subject: FW: Some thoughts to consider

For those of you not listed on the original email, I am forwarding this to you.

Pam Schilling

From: Nick Aceto [<mailto:nick@terrainla.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, October 13, 2015 10:12 PM
To: Jacque Whitsitt; Herschel Ross; 'Norm Clasen'; Rob Leavitt; begrauer@comcast.net; 9lax@comcast.net
Cc: Pam Schilling
Subject: Some thoughts to consider

Dear Council Members and Neighbors,

Just this week a group of young professionals gathered downtown to discuss the future of Basalt and our role in the community. Aside from any particular positions shared with regard to the latest issues in town hall, there was a decidedly unanimous sentiment -- The Town of Basalt, and our local government is woefully out of touch with the 'under 40' demographic.

Perhaps the most critical issue facing young people today, particularly in our valley, is housing and cost of living. Following principles of smart growth which have been adopted by most modern towns and cities worldwide, it is generally agreed that growth should be prioritized in the core and continued with a pattern that aims to conserve resources and connect people.

Identifying priorities for growth in our core has the added benefit of reducing congestion on our roads and highways by encouraging walkability and use of mass transit (RFTA), activating public spaces and local businesses with consistent patronage, and offering would-be residents (young people in this instance) housing designed to be 'attainable' via reduced infrastructure and maintenance costs, reduced transportation expense, and a threshold for access to our community and sense of belonging.

Frankly, the acceptance of a proposal for a 5 acre open park in the core of our historic downtown would be a serious insult to our young professional community and those searching desperately for housing. This is not to say that a river park and community center would not be a good idea, but that it should be appropriately scaled and well-integrated into the urban fabric. Furthermore, much of what has been proposed in recent weeks has been of a standalone, auto-oriented nature which will undoubtedly contribute very little, if intermittent and inconsistent activity and vibrancy to our historic core. The notion that the least possible 'development' should be our goal is a baseless conclusion, out of step with current urban planning theory and practice. In other words, its worth considering that what 'just barely works' from an economic perspective, may not in fact be the best possible outcome from a creative standpoint. Taking this a step further, there are numerous instances where development is a vehicle, when appropriated responsibly and intelligently, for often seemingly antithetical ideals such as urban agriculture, for example, covered in this article:

http://www.citylab.com/cityfixer/2015/10/the-newest-odd-couple-real-estate-developers-and-urban-farmers/409060/?utm_source=SFFB

However, I fear that we are not going to arrive at any actionable solutions until we return this process to the professional creative community, one way or another, and begin listening to our future generation. I apologize if this letter seems pedantic, but it is difficult to ignore the fact that Basalt and the mid-valley is missing the point and falling further behind the curve, continuing to stagnate under a barrage of misguided anti-growth rhetoric. Certainly, there is a time and place for the community to rise against the tide of unfettered sprawl, but this is not it.

I ask you to please consider returning this process to the creative community for a more well-informed discussion and resist balking any further to the rampant NIMBYism, fear, and politicization of what should be a creative, constructive, optimistic, and exciting process.

Thank You,

NICK ACETO
Principal Designer

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