



Vail Town Council Public Hearing – Vail Resorts East Vail Interchange site rezoning.

VAIL HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

An Election Is Coming:

September 26, 2017

With the issues facing the TOV multiplying, an election is coming which could change outcomes on many issues. On Tuesday, November 6, four positions on the Vail Town Council will be up for election. In Vail there are no districts or otherwise designated seats, and elections are non-partisan so all candidates appear on the ballot with the top three vote-getters winning four-year terms and the fourth vote-getter winning a two-year term. The mayor and mayorpro tem are elected by the Council.

There are 10 candidates for those four seats. In alphabetical order the candidates are:

Jenn Bruno:*

Age: 47, Career: Retail, Business: Luca Bruno enterprises, Residence: Chamonix Lane Neighborhood – West Vail, Years in Vail: 24.

Dave Chapin:*

Age: 58, Career: Food and Beverage, Business: Owner/Manager - Vendetta's Italian Restaurant and Pizza Bar. Residence: Larkspur Lane Neighborhood - West Vail, Years in Vail: 36.

Travis Coggin:

Age: 37, Career: Building Contractor, Business: Hardwood flooring, Residence: Sandstone Drive neighborhood, Years in Vail: 18.

Mark Gordon:*

Age: 54, Career: Real Estate, Business: Christiania Realty, Residence: Aspen Drive in the Matterhorn Neighborhood – West Vail, Years in Vail: 17.

Rodney Johnson:

Age: 57, Career: Food and Beverage, Business: General Manager at Los Amigos, Residence: West Vail Town Center Neighborhood, Years in Vail: 36.

Bart Longworth:

Age: 40, Career: Food and Beverage/Real Estate, Business: Employed - 10th Mountain Whiskey & Spirit Company, Residence: West Vail Commercial Center Neighborhood, Years in Vail: 4.

Greg Moffet:*

Age: 59, Career: Media Sales, Business: Tiga Advertising Inc., Residence: Buffehr Creek – West Vail, Years in Vail: part-time 4, full-time 23.

Edward Padilla:

Age: 80, Career: Retired, Business: Corporate Executive and Entrepreneur, Residence: Streamside Circle Neighborhood in East Vail, Years in Vail: (?)

Brian Rodine:

Age: 34, Career: Professional, Business: Environmental Sustainability and Compliance Manager for Vail Resorts, Residence: Columbine Drive Neighborhood – East Vail, Years in Vail: 8.

Taylor Strickland:

Age: 24, Professional: Communications and Marketing Consultant, Business: Public Relations Professional with [@ReCommGlobal](#), Residence: Racquet Club Neighborhood – East Vail, Years in Vail: 2.

* Served prior term

All elections are important, this one equally so. Vail faces a number of pressing issues in the coming year: ranging from VR's attempt to down-zone some East Vail land so that it can build employee housing, to parking and public safety, to congestion and to quality of life issues. VHA reports and newsletters have addressed those issues, and more, over the past year. You can access those reports on the VHA web page at www.vailhomeowners.com

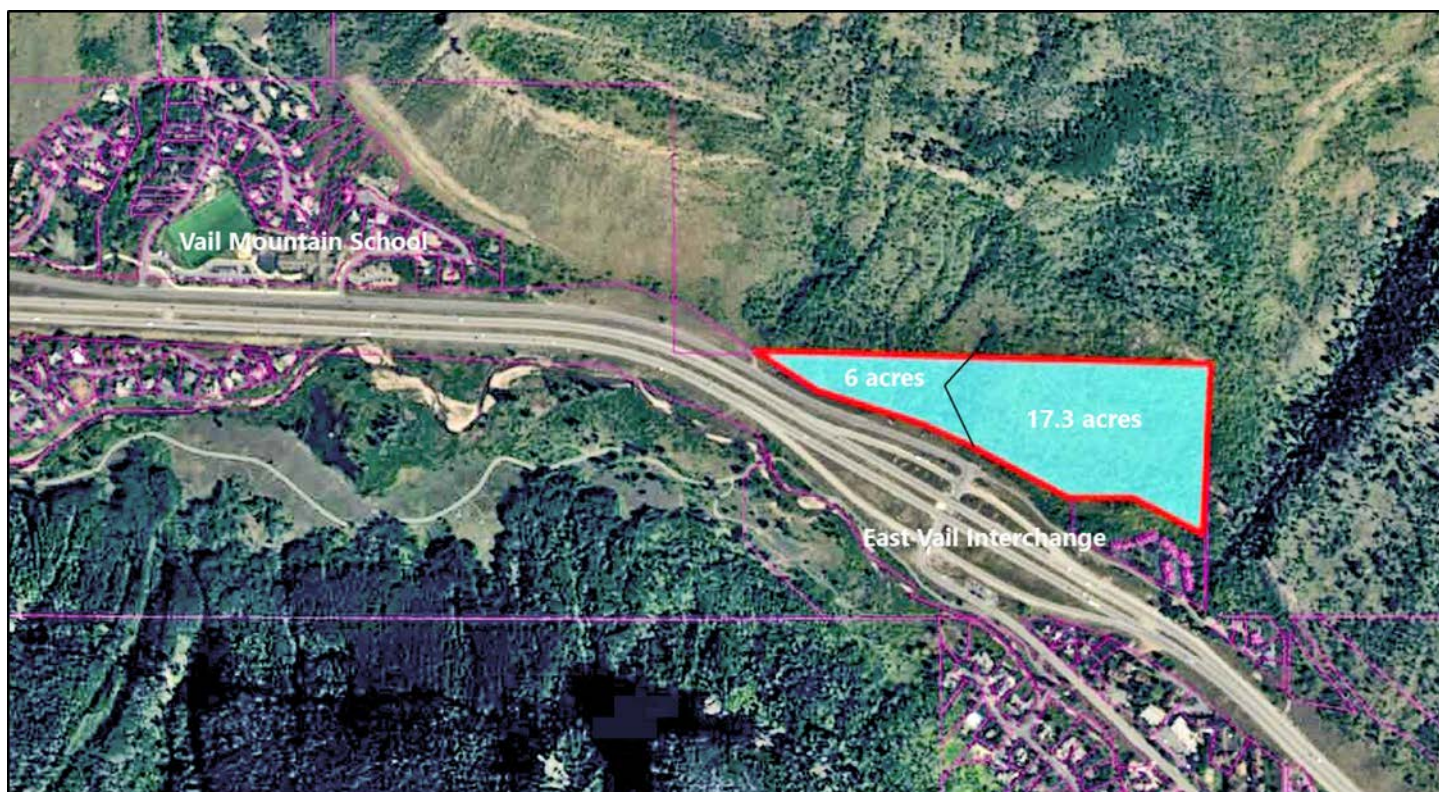
With the Town now essentially built out, it can no longer depend on growth to fuel its budget. At the same time, its major funding source, sales taxes, is flat, and there does not appear to be adequate resources for looming major capital needs. Serious questions exist over increased densities and wholesale commercial development: new initiatives which will result in more vehicles and a continuing lack of government transparency. Whatever your view, the next Town Council is going to be in a position to make some very important decisions for Vail's future.

As it has done for previous elections, the VHA sends questionnaires to the candidates on the most pressing and critical issues facing Vail. The candidates' responses will be published on the VHA website. You can watch for and review them in September and October at www.vailhomeowners.com.

The VHA does not endorse individual candidates, but it does believe that there are certain attributes that would make for the best candidates:

- Experience. A broad life experience in either government or personal pursuits provides a solid foundation from which to deal with Vail's many problems and issues.
- Vision. The Town forefathers had a great vision of what Vail could become and worked to make that possible. Many of their dreams were realized. But the Town still needs leaders who can not only make wise decisions on current issues but who can also have a clear vision of where Vail should go over the next 50 years.
- Transparency. The Town Council is called upon to make many decisions that affect its residents. Those decisions should be made openly and in full public view. Council members should be comfortable and willing to so engage in the Town's business.
- Dedication. Council members are elected to serve the people. Their work should not be compromised by personal agendas or gain.

Again, No Mail-In Balloting. Although empirical data shows that [mail-in balloting increases voter participation](#), and Eagle County uses a mail-in ballot, the Town Council has decided, once again, there will be only in-person, Election-Day balloting at the polls (absentee voting is also allowed), a form of balloting that favors incumbents. This decision has not been a shining moment for the Council. Ideally, candidates for election should pledge to provide mail-in balloting on all future elections so that voter participation can be maximized.



The western portion of this site is proposed for workforce housing.

Vail Resorts' East Vail Housing Proposal. As VHA has recently reported that in the run-up to the election, [VR is trying to down-zone 5.4 acres](#) of the [last pristine forested wildlife habitat in Vail](#) so that it can be converted to workforce housing. There has been a rush-to-decision aspect about this proposal which means that the application is coming on while many are absent and before the new Town Manager can get his feet on the ground. If granted, rezoning would give VR a vested right to build workforce housing on the property.

Long term protection of the environment has always been a guiding criteria for land use and development decisions in Vail. Development of this property will necessarily destroy the natural state of the property, severely impact the wildlife of the area and raise a host of geological issues. This is a project that would benefit from slowing down and taking a hard look at the environmental factors before creating new rights for VR. Unfortunately, a decision may be made before the election takes place.

Are We Still Dancing On Open Space? Vail's review of its Open Lands Plan continues as the Town Council recently decided to abandon efforts to acquire U.S. Forest Service land for housing uses, and it would appear that the Middle Bench open space of Donovan Park is safe for the moment. As one Council member recently put it, the current Council has no appetite for putting housing on the Middle Bench. But this only prolongs the dance as housing special interests continue to maneuver to convert the Middle Bench to affordable housing.

These proposals seem to come back every few years hoping to take advantage of any changes in public or neighborhood sentiment. Neither has changed. The conversion of the Middle Bench has been danced about for nearly 25 years, much to

the exasperation of surrounding property owners. This gaming should be put to an end. This magnificent piece of Town owned park land open space needs to be permanently protected as “designated open space” (DOS). The public’s outspoken rejection of acquiring USFS boundary lands should be example enough that converting open space or park lands to housing is out of the question anywhere in the community.

Is Zoning Safe? Zoning and Master Planning play important roles in maintaining the integrity of neighborhoods. But now a Special Development District application is pending for approval for another mega building on the South Frontage Road that circumvents the Town’s master planning and zoning, and more may be in the offing. As [VHA has continually pointed out](#), this is a recipe for wholesale abolition of zoning regulations, allowing developers to “negotiate” with the Town to increase density, height and change neighborhood characteristics in a game that developers usually win. It should not be allowed.

No Decision on Rent By Owner. As social media increasingly shifts short term rentals into residential neighborhoods, displacing affordable housing and causing increasing complaints, the Town Council continues to mull what action it might take. As a [Town study shows](#), this is a recent development fueled by social media websites that are taking over the rental market by storm. On the one hand, there are the property rights of owners to use their property as they see fit. On the other, there are privacy concerns of peace and enjoyment, neighborhood displacement and congestion. Both views have valid concerns.

How the Town will strike a proper balance and resolve these concerns remains to be seen. As one Council member noted, “This is a tough one.” But at least two things are certain. This is not an issue that is going away, and this should not be used as an opportunity to engage in social engineering to force changes in the mix of Vail property owners.

Still Nothing On Congestion. Another year is about to past with no action on congestion as people continue to flood Vail, and on-street parking has exceeded the allowable number of days. While Vail has pursued environmental

sustainability and is on the verge of some important recognition in that regard, nothing has been done concerning other aspects of sustainability, most importantly, eliminating excessive congestion. The TOV has not come to grips with its carrying capacity, and while VR has a “manage to” number of 19,900 skiers per day on Vail Mountain, that is based in part on the availability of 3,000 parking places in the TOV.

[As set forth in the Vail Mountain Master Development and Operating Plans](#), that number includes a projected 750 spaces at Ever Vail and an additional 200 spaces at the Lionshead structure. Of course, neither of those has been built, and it doesn’t appear that there are any prospects of that happening in the



Unauthorized Booth Falls Trail parking - North Frontage Road – TOV has begun to issuing tickets.

future. In addition, some of the other parking spaces listed in VR's inventory of available parking has either disappeared or been reduced by intervening development. As a result, currently, there are 1000 less parking spaces than necessary to support 19,900 skiers on Vail Mountain.

What You Can Do. If these and the other matters that VHA has reported on concern you, get informed and get ready to vote. Check where the candidates stand on the issues. Remember you can either vote for candidates of your choice who represent your viewpoint, or others will elect the candidates of their choice. And if you are not already a member, join the Vail Homeowners Association. Together, we will continue to shine a spotlight on these issues that concern everyone.

VHA [Membership:](#)

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Post Office Box 238 Vail, Colorado 81658

Telephone: (970) 827-5680 E-mail: vha@vail.net Web Site: www.vailhomeowners.com