

# VAIL HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.



Winter Holiday Season Lighting – Main Vail Roundabout

## **2016 Annual Report**

**D e c e m b e r 2 9 , 2 0 1 6**

**Please attend VHA Annual Membership Meeting  
4:00 pm, Thursday, December 29, 2016 at Vail Town Council Chambers.**

### **VHA President's Message:**

Happy Holidays to you and may the New Year bring much success and happiness. As we look forward to 2017, a number of challenges face the Vail community. Some are of long standing; others only recently came into focus. The most pressing issues are outlined below in this report.

This is also a time we give thanks for the successes of the past year. Among some of the most important undertakings was shining a spotlight on the lack of attention to the dangerous issue of public safety due to increasing use of Frontage Road parking (which is caused by the lack of sufficient off-street parking). We raised questions about the lack of transparency in the adoption of a \$50M Housing Plan and the apparent rush to acquire open space lands; both initiatives raise more questions than answers. We also raised questions about the lack of specifics in the Eagle County ballot question to impose sales taxes for affordable housing; voters defeated the measure by 63%.

We continued to keep attention on the need for a sustainability focus by town leaders that benefits all of the Vail community, both homeowners and businesses, continuing to ask whether Vail is being oversold in a number of different respects. And we sought public debate over a host of other issues facing our community.

In terms of community outreach, we initiated a communication sharing agreement with other local non-profit organizations that are allied in advancing a well-balanced, fair minded and inclusive community, thereby, increasing the range of our voice.

All this and more was made possible by the support of the community and our membership.

As we look forward to the coming year, we are more convinced than ever that the way forward requires transparency of action, input from all affected stakeholders and the ability to forge constructive compromise. VHA plays a key role in that process by asking hard questions and providing an informed perspective to our members, constituents and the public. We intend to remain committed to making Vail the best that it can be.

If these issues concern you, get informed and become involved; join the Vail Homeowners Association and add your voice to our efforts. Government responds to the public; silence only enables those who would seek to profit in the absence of accountability.

Gail Ellis, President

### **Issues of concern for 2017:**

#### **Lack Of Transparency By Our Institutions:**

- The recent adoption of a ten-year \$50M Housing Plan and the current Town initiative to acquire open space lands to build affordable housing were both undertaken with cursory public notice or input. VHA opposes keeping the public in the dark on important community projects.
- As on-mountain skier safety concerns continue to mount, Vail Resorts steadfastly refuses to provide any data or information that could inform understanding of the issues or inform public discussion.
- VHA believes that the public has a right to be informed and provide input on these and other issues of vital concern to the community, including mail-in balloting for Town Council elections, which has a much higher rate of voter participation than Vail's traditional poll/absentee ballot voting.

#### **Affordable Housing:**

- Affordable Housing for middle class and low income wage earners and seasonal workers continues to plague Vail. VHA favors affordable housing but believes that solutions must be comprehensive, reasonable, non-confiscatory, respectful of existing property rights and within the Town's budgetary capabilities.
- The ten-year \$50M Vail Housing Plan raises more questions than it answers; funding is in serious jeopardy, and there is no provision for low income or seasonal workers.
- Vail has embarked on a plan to acquire open space lands for affordable housing, again raising more questions than answers. Aside from the obvious issues of whether invading open spaces benefits the community, there has been no attention to financing or the resulting impacts on surrounding neighborhoods.
- Although affordable housing is a county-wide issue, there has been no meaningful effort at forging a county-wide solution.
- The Roost Lodge redevelopment in West Vail proposes affordable housing and additional parking in exchange for higher densities that could change the character of the neighborhood. VHA believes this is a slippery slope that could sacrifice important community values. An area-wide master plan is needed for West Vail.
- VHA believes that public access and input is essential on all of these subjects if acceptable and workable solutions are going to be found.

#### **Public Parking:**

- Long-standing parking issues have been, again, kicked down the road by the creation of a parking task force. For ten years, Vail has had a \$4.3M commitment from Vail Resorts to build more parking. Each year that goes by, the value of that commitment is eroded as the cost of construction rises.
- Lack of sufficient parking causes increasing use of Frontage Roads, which creates public safety issues. It shouldn't take a serious accident or worse to bring action forward.

- In addition to building more structured parking, the Town could launch innovative efforts to use all current off-street parking—such as usage inventories and internet scheduling—but there seems to be a lack of political will to move forward.
- On-street truck parking throughout Vail Village continues to be unresolved to the satisfaction of VHA, efforts will continue to attain residential owners desires for more effective on-street truck parking policies, which include incentives for increasing the use of loading and delivery terminals.
- VHA believes parking is one of Vail’s most pressing problems and will continue to advocate for solutions.

**Open Space and Environmental Preservation:**

- A foundational principle of Vail is generous open spaces, both within and surrounding Vail. Proposals that would alter that principle are unacceptable and will be opposed by VHA.
- Proposals by the Town to buy open space US Forest Service land or reclassify parts of Donovan Park for affordable housing violate that foundational principle and will be opposed by VHA.
- Another proposal to sell open space land in the center of Vail to a private developer so that it can be incorporated into a luxury lodge development, also, violates that principle and will be opposed by VHA.
- The Town has begun the Gore Creek clean-up. Officials are gathering more detail monitoring data to further refine the potential locations of pollutant sources. VHA will monitor progress and as results become available, then press for additional public/private investment in remediation and restoration improvements.

**Over Selling the Vail Experience:**

- Inconsistent fluctuation in Vail’s qualitative guest assessments, increases in ever-larger special events and perceived declines in skier safety raise concerns about whether the Vail experience is being oversold.
- Special events should be maintained within the carrying capacity of the Town and conducted in a manner that adheres to standardized Town review procedures and does not cause congestion, have noxious noise levels, jeopardize public safety, or burden the Town of Vail with budgetary or operational costs.
- VHA believes that economic development initiatives should be balanced with environmentally sound sustainability and should serve the interest of the residents, as well as the business community.

**Social Engineering:**

- Vail is in a transformative process; whereby, many residential homeowners, who were once second homeowners, are becoming full time Vail residence as they reach retirement age. It appears that some are advocating mitigating that change by giving preference for affordable housing to younger middle class families.
- While VHA does not necessarily oppose social engineering, it does sound a cautious voice and urges careful consideration of potentially unintended consequences.

**What You Can Do.** If these issues concern you, get informed and become involved. Join the Vail Homeowners Association in shining a spotlight on issues that concern everyone.

VHA [Membership:](#)

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## Collaborative Organizations:

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The Vail Homeowners Association has entered into a sharing relationship with the following “community building” not-for-profit organizations. In this way we increase the reach of our advocacy and together we seek to improve our community in ways that will benefit all. From time to time VHA will report on the agendas and activities of these organizations. This is a non-exclusive relationship and other “community building” not-for-profit organizations may join our endeavors.

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Colorado Ski & Snowboard Museum and Hall of Fame  
231 South Frontage Road East  
Vail, Colorado 81657  
970-476-1876  
[www.skimuseum.net](http://www.skimuseum.net)

The museum’s purpose is to preserve and communicate the lore of the modern mountain winter sports movement in Colorado and its contribution to the evolution of Vail and the state’s mountain winter sports communities.

[Read more:](#)

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PO Box 100 | Vail, CO 81658  
P: 970-680-3525  
C: 970-315-2675  
[www.vailcentre.org](http://www.vailcentre.org)

The Vail Centre organization exists to provide learning experiences to those taking responsibility for inspiring Vail and the communities of the future.

[Read more:](#)

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Walking Mountains Science Center  
318 Walking Mountains Lane | PO Box 9469 | Avon, CO 81620  
970.827.9725  
[www.walkingmountains.org](http://www.walkingmountains.org)

The mission of Walking Mountains is to awaken a sense of wonder and inspire environmental stewardship and sustainability through natural science education for the Vail community and Eagle County.

[Read more:](#)

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