July 13, 2022

To the TOSV Planning Commissioners

I am hoping and praying that we have made an impact on the Planning Commission to make the right decision not to go forward with this current plan, because they now have a better understanding about the revisions we have requested to the proposed plan.

These words are from one of our young RFVHC members, “A rodeo arena is not just where contestants go to compete. It's where we make memories, conquer our fears, and learn life lessons that no other place can teach us. I’ve been attending the Snowmass Rodeo for 11 years as a competitor. It was the first rodeo I ever entered as a barrel racer when I was 13 years old. I ran the sponsor flags for 3 years, and I received sponsorships from the rodeo for my college education. It will be devastating to watch the rodeo suffer due to improper **planning for future use**.”

After several of us attended the site visit yesterday, we have a few more new statements to make. Last week I mentioned the rodeo is a three-month summer activity that uses the arena space, but for everyone in the valley from the third generation PRCA stock contractor – The Darce Vold Family to the bus drivers from the River Concession that we had to hire to move the spectators in and out – it’s an entire summer job. In total more than 22,000 people attend the events, they tell their friends, the realtors tell us they buy condos and homes to soak up the western lifestyle like they see on television, and after meeting a cowboy or two like Jim Synder or Marty Schlumberger– they raise their children to be more polite human beings – just like the cowboys at the rodeo that have said hi, and asked what their names are. Folks don’t come to Snowmass in the summer to play in the water – they come here – let me voice this loudly – for the western spirit. Snowmass can deliver it! The rodeo grounds will also be available for many kinds of other events. Built it right and they will come.

At the Town Council meeting last week, the vote was 3 to 2 in favor but the two had reservations – “it didn’t feel right”, and they asked what the Rodeo Board said. That letter has now been sent to each of you – and the Rodeo Board stands with the Horse Council. The current Plan is not good enough, not big enough, not safe enough and the liability consequences show that the designer and the builders have been provided with incomplete and inaccurate information in the current plan. The Plan has too many holes in it.

“Let’s build it right the first time” we are hearing over and over. The wetlands project in this high desert area that you toured yesterday is coming in with a $4.5 million dollar budget and the rodeo grounds is a bit less, but we have no bathrooms, no roof over the bleachers – and the Town Council said it was the Rodeo Boards job is to evacuate the spectators off the bleachers immediately because of lightening – and then the Town Council said horses don’t need a proper warm-up. It’s a fact, “There is not sufficient space being given to the rodeo **to operate into the future**.” says a RFVHC Rodeo Competitor that toured with you yesterday.

The Roaring Fork Valley Horse Council hopes that our written materials are enough – enough words, enough images, enough **proof** that the current plan is not good enough, and the plan should be denied.