

COMMENTARY

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Why can't the Basalt Planning Commission just say no?

I recently attended the Basalt Planning Commission meeting regarding the proposed Marriott Residence Inn at the old Movieland site in El Jebel, and I left utterly baffled.

During the hearing, a clear consensus emerged: each

and every planning commissioner expressed major reservations about the project. The overwhelming majority of public comment echoed these exact concerns, painting a clear picture that this massive extended-stay hotel is fundamentally incompatible with our community.

Yet, despite a room full of red flags and their own deep misgivings, not a

single commissioner could bring themselves to simply say "no."

Instead of denying a clearly flawed proposal, the commission voted to continue the discussion in one month, kicking the can down the road and giving the developer yet another bite at the apple.

Why are we continuing the agony? When a project is this poorly aligned with

the community's vision and the Master Plan, the standard shouldn't be "let's see how much the developer can patch up in a month." The standard should be a firm denial, allowing the developer to withdraw, regroup and come back in the future with a genuinely viable, community-minded proposal.

By bending over backward to accommodate a

mismatched development, the Planning Commission is wasting their own time, valuable civic time and stretching the community's patience thin.

It's time for our local leaders to listen to the public, trust their own instincts and find the courage to reject proposals that just don't fit.

Susan Sullivan
Carbondale

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LA GRECA

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Sticks and stones may break bones, but words can shape the way a child understands themselves and others. Maybe it is time to retire the old playground rhyme and teach

children something more honest: words matter. The words children say to each other matter. The words adults say to children matter. They can hurt, and they can heal.

And if we want children to use their words with care, we have to show

them what that looks like through empathy, accountability and repair. At the same time, we can teach them that while words may sting, they do not get to decide who they are.

Because the way children learn to speak to

others often begins with the way the world first speaks to them. And long after bruises fade, the words children hear often become the words they say to themselves.

Gabriela La Greca is the founder of Snowmass

Nannies, a boutique childcare agency serving Aspen. Originally from Argentina, she brings over 10 years of experience in childcare and education, along with a playful and intuitive approach to working with children. She continues to study

child development, with a focus on behavior and emotional well being, and mentors her team with an emphasis on connection, creativity, and trust. Her work is rooted in the belief that children thrive when caregivers step fully into their world.

KANE

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The amendment deserves scrutiny. So does the campaign promoting it. Campaign finance records show at least \$1 million came from the Wisconsin-based International Order of T. Roosevelt. On

the podcast of Montana hunting influencer Randy Newberg, campaign leader Dan Gates said the campaign expects to spend \$10-\$12 million. Out-of-state money is legal. But voters should judge the amendment by its language, not its advertising budget.

Ballot petitions don't settle constitutional questions; they simply earn a place on the ballot. The real decision comes when voters read the amendment.

Colorado's hunting and fishing traditions deserve respect, and they already do. So does

the Constitution — not because it should never change, but because it should change only when a genuine need is shown.

Coloradans don't have to choose between hunting and fishing rights and a sound Constitution. We can protect both.

Science evolves. Wildlife

professionals adapt. Constitutions endure. Before voting, read Initiative 302 and ask whether it fixes anything Colorado law hasn't already solved.

David Kane is a wildlife biologist, legal and policy advisor, and co-founder of Coloradans for

Responsible Science-based Wildlife Management. Based on both the Western Slope and the Front Range, he has conducted wildlife research, hunted, fished, mountaineered and backcountry skied throughout Colorado for more than three and a half decades.

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Flamenco Latin fusion

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