



Potential Game-Changing Land Exchange between the Evergreen Hotel and the Medical Center

## Vail Homeowners Association Advisory

Potential VVMC/Evergreen Hotel Land Exchange

December 16, 2014

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#### \* NOTICE \*

The Town Council will consider proceeding with VVMC's West Wing Conditional Use Permit Application at their 6:00 pm Evening Meeting Tuesday, December 16th. The Meeting will be held in the Vail Town Council Chambers at 75 South Frontage Road in Vail. Public input is encouraged <mailto:towncouncil@vailgov.com>.

#### Executive Summary

Attempts to redevelop portions of the Vail Valley Medical Center (VVMC) have been underway for most of the past five years. In conjunction with these attempts, adjacent property owners have requested that a long-term master plan for the VVMC be prepared and adopted by the Town of Vail. The most current version of the VVMC Proposed Master Plan is presently under review by the Town of Vail Planning and Environmental Commission (PEC). Both the Town of Vail and the Evergreen Hotel have expressed interest in redeveloping their sites which are adjacent to the VVMC campus. The Town of Vail had prepared a joint redevelopment Master Plan for its site in conjunction with a VVMC effort to use a portion of the Town municipal site for a medical office building, which was subsequently abandoned.

The Vail Homeowners Association (VHA) has participated on behalf of its members in the public review of the various versions of both the VVMC and TOV Master Plans. VHA advocates that public safety issues, with respect to both vehicular and emergency helicopter traffic need to be resolved in the master planning for all three sites. Specifically, VHA desires all VVMC vehicular traffic be removed from Vail Road and West Meadow Drive and relocated to a new access on the South Frontage Road. Secondly, that medical helicopters do not overfly occupied structures in the community, but instead fly over Interstate 70, accessing the community's emergency helipad at its current location or at a new location on the Town's municipal site, which gives timely and direct access to the VVMC emergency care facilities via a new sky bridge over the South Frontage Road, and additionally, that surrounding neighborhoods are shielded from the takeoff, landing and idling noise associated with the helipad. Thirdly, that VVMC make other necessary improvements consistent with those required of other new developments located in similar circumstances between East & West Meadow Drive and the South Frontage Road.

The Evergreen Hotel has been seeking a "land exchange" with VVMC for some time. Recently VVMC and the Evergreen Hotel agreed to have serious discussions about a potential exchange. If the exchange were to occur, it would give VVMC a much larger exposure along the South Frontage Road, enabling it to potentially attain compliance with the public safety improvements advocated by VHA and neighboring property owners.

The VVMC Proposed Master plan is nearing completion of its review by the PEC. VHA is submitting detailed language to amend the VVMC Proposed Master plan to include the goals desired by VHA and neighborhood property owners.

Recently, VVMC has requested that it be given permission to proceed through the final review for the West Wing expansion, the next phase of redevelopment. The VVMC request opens the prospect of beginning construction in the spring of 2015. Some are of the opinion that VVMC has a history of agreeing to certain improvements as a condition of approval by the Town of Vail for earlier buildings, but not completing the improvements and seeking to alter the agreed upon conditions in subsequent development applications.

The Vail Homeowners Association recommends that VVMC not be given permission to proceed with construction expanding the West Wing until it enters into a contractual agreement (Developer Improvement Agreement) giving financial guarantees that it will complete the improvements stipulated in an adopted master plan. Such an approach was used by the Town in their ongoing negotiation with Vail Resorts concerning the Ever Vail development in West Lionshead. The Town Council will consider proceeding with VVMC's West Wing Conditional Use Permit Application at their 6:00 pm Evening Meeting Tuesday, December 16th.

Because the condition for approving the VVMC Proposed Master Plan may be changed through a subsequent land exchange or related improvements on either the Town of Vail or Evergreen Hotel site, a provision to amend the Plan should also be included. The amendment provision should not preclude adjacent and affected property owners from initiating an amendment to the VVMC Master Plan.

### **Potential Land Exchange is Game-Changer**

The Vail Valley Medical Center (VVMC) and the Evergreen Hotel (EGH) have entered into discussions to exchange parcels of land. The exchange would give VVMC greater exposure along the South Frontage Road. The exchange could meet the Vail Homeowners Association's (VHA) goal of eliminating all VVMC vehicular traffic from Vail Road and West Meadow Drive. Also, it could attain the VHA and affected residential neighborhood's goal of relocating the existing and proposed VVMC truck delivery facility and its access from West Meadow Drive to the Evergreen Exchange Parcel and the South Frontage Road. The effect of the proposed exchange would bring the proposed VVMC Master Plan, with respect to access and truck deliveries, into conformity with all other developments that have been built in recent years on sites located between East & West Meadow Drive and the South Frontage Road. The exchange could alter other critical portions of the VVMC Proposed Master Plan.

## VVMC West Wing Expansion

### **VVMC Requests West Wing Approval before Master Plan Adoption**

The Town Council will consider proceeding with VVMC's West Wing Conditional Use Permit Application at their 6:00 pm Evening Meeting Tuesday, December 16th. VVMC, while it considers the land exchange, wants to proceed with the approval of their proposed expansion of the existing West Wing building, saying it wants to begin construction this coming spring (2015). VVMC says the West Wing must be completed before subsequent phases of their master plan can proceed. If the master plan fails to gain approval by the start of construction the Town could withhold the issuance of the building permit for the expansion, this according to Town officials.

## **VHA/Neighborhood Desire Changes to VVMC Proposed Master Plan**

While the potential VVMC/Evergreen Hotel exchange offers many advantages, VHA believes that the Town of Vail's (TOV) proposal to redevelop the municipal building site and the Evergreen Hotel's redevelopment proposal could offer an opportunity to improve the VVMC Master Plan. However, neither of these properties are advanced enough in their own master planning to make definitive commitments that could result in a much improved *joint* master plan that would benefit these three large properties and the surrounding neighborhoods. For example, the influence of the potential land exchange has caused the location of the proposed new South Frontage Road roundabout, shown above, to be moved further to the west.

**Suggested changes to VVMC Proposed Master Plan to attain VHA goals of ensuring improved neighborhood compatibility**

The ongoing land exchange discussion has resulted in the timeline for the VVMC master planning process to be lengthened. To avoid delays, [VHA text changes to the VVMC Master Plan](#) proposal have been prepared that would allow for amendment of the VVMC Master Plan as more becomes known about the redevelopment of the Evergreen Hotel and the Town of Vail municipal sites. The proposed text changes also include modification to the content of the VVMC Master Plan proposal that attains VHA's goal of ensuring public safety and enhancing compatibility with the surrounding residential neighborhoods. The VHA text changes are summarized in the diagram above.

### **Land Exchange Could Affect Location of New Roundabout and Helipad**

The proposed location of the new roundabout on the South Frontage road has been moved further west, keeping it totally on Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) right-of-way. The roundabout would improve access to the VVMC, Evergreen Hotel and Town municipal sites, while conforming to the two lanes of traffic flow in either direction planned for this section of the South Frontage Road. The new location would eliminate the existing CDOT helipad. Town officials are requesting CDOT to give a preliminary opinion on the roundabout location. VHA believes that the heliport should be relocated to the top deck of the Town proposed new parking structure on the municipal site, as it would conform to the Association's public safety goal of eliminating helicopter overflight of occupied structures like schools, office buildings, hotels and residences.

The proposed land exchange is affecting the location of the new SFR roundabout, moving it further to the west, would eliminate the existing CDOT helipad. To attain the VHA public safety goals of eliminating helicopter overflown occupied structures, the helipad could be relocated to the surface of the Town of Vail's proposed new parking structure on the municipal building site.

**The proposed land exchange could significantly alter the configuration and architectural treatment of the proposed VVMC office building, on which VVMC would like to relocate the community's emergency helipad, now located near the CDOT right-of-way.**

The VVMC proposed office building does not comply with the high standards of Vail's architectural design and is incompatible with the surrounding neighborhood, nor does it attain VHA's public safety goal of eliminating helicopter overflights of occupied structures and shielding the surrounding residential neighborhoods from objectionable noise pollution. VHA believes both the adverse effects on public safety and environmental impacts could be eliminated by relocating the helipad to the upper deck of the Town of Vail's proposed new municipal site parking structure or by leaving it in the existing CDOT location, while still meeting the desire of VVMC for speedy patient transfers.

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