

Cyndy King

From: Warren Benjamin <thebenj4@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 24, 2024 9:50 AM
To: Warren Benjamin
Cc: Participate
Subject: Re: KURA 6/24/2024 PUBLIC COMMENT

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Sorry
Warren Benjamin
Ketchum resident and work force employee

On Jun 24, 2024, at 9:28 AM, Warren Benjamin <thebenj4@gmail.com> wrote:

Thank you once again for this opportunity to speak on the issue of the Washington Street development.

As you can see from the overwhelming support here today, from the community, from business owners, from employee workers and nonprofit organizations, this issue has become a rallying cry for our community.

A lot is at stake moving forward with your plans to convert the parking lot into affordable housing. Let me be clear, nobody is debating the need for affordable housing. Let me repeat, no one is debating the need for affordable housing in Ketchum. What recently saw what happened in Jackson and the collapse of The Teton Pass and how that illustrates how resort towns need close and affordable housing.

But nobody is debating whether we need available parking for not only the businesses and work force that keeps Ketchum going but for locals, visitors, and second homeowners that spend money and keep the lights on in over 50 locally owned businesses while supporting the town with LOT and sales tax revenue.

The local businesses and work force in Ketchum have reached a tipping point on the future of maintaining their business operation. This has been the longest and most painful slack period to date and, coupled with the Project Main Street construction, has crippled revenue for our local businesses. The summer months ahead are unknown. The impact is yet to be known but local businesses are also being pressed by their landlords to sign leases at increased cost that most are saying, can we survive long enough to stay or do we move or close our business?

Please let me address select members of the KURA board:

Gary, I'm sorry we weren't here two years ago, as you have said many times before, to voice our concern over the Washington Street development. At that time, nobody was aware of the

exploding population growth in Ketchum and in the Valley. We didn't know and still don't know; the impact Blue Bird will have on the density and parking situation in the downtown corridor.

We also didn't know that the Main Street project would eliminate valuable parking spots in close proximity to the businesses in town. And we didn't know that the only legitimate parking lot at Washington Street is being discussed.

These decisions will result in approximately 118 parking spots being lost without a reasonable plan to replace or accommodate our local business needs

Amanda & Courtney, I know how much you both love the community and have been a proponent for local businesses. Many people here today are your constituents that have put you in this position to examine this issue. I've heard you say that perhaps there is a compromise position for this issue. Now is the time to consider that.

Susan, I've heard you comment "why can't our fit and outdoor community walk several blocks to get to our local businesses.?" I for one am a 75-year-old pretty fit person that cycles and skies regularly. and I can tell you that I like my fellow workers, I work 4-5 days a week, long hours, late at night and when my shift ends around midnight, the last thing I want to do is walk 4-5 blocks, especially during the winter when streets are icy or with snow. I'm tired and I'm beat. Yes, I want convenience and right now, the Washington Street lot is our savior and also not to mention how visitors feel about this.

Finally, let me give you one scenario that may drive my point of available parking and its impact on local businesses.

Tonight, at my place of employment, we have three private parties with over 45 guests attending between 5:30-10:00pm. In addition, we will have over 40 reservations and possibly 15 walk in guests. And not to mention the over 20 workers that will attend to these guests. That's 120 guests and workers at just one of the businesses along Main St.

Then imagine, if The Argyros Theatre would have an event that same night with over 300 people in attendance. That's a total of over 420 people supporting our local business with much needed revenue. Sure, this doesn't happen every night but it does happen.

I ask you, if this was June 24 2025 where would these guests find parking? If there was no parking at Washington Street and limited or no parking on Main Street? Hard to imagine these guests would walk several blocks to support us.

Its obvious the town has both a short- and long-term parking problem and I am asking that we RETHINK and PAUSE the decision to develop the Washington Street lot and come up with a win-win scenario for both housing and our parking dilemma.

Thanks

Cyndy King

From: Pat Higgins <pathiggins@cox.net>
Sent: Sunday, June 23, 2024 6:58 PM
To: Participate
Subject: KURA Washington St Parking Lot - public comment

It was my pleasure in the last few days to distribute petitions and collect signatures to help the Ketchum Business Advisory Board. They are a great group of business owners, many are over 40 years in our community who have a passion to make Ketchum a better place for all. Without business, you don't really have much of a town. Without customers you really don't have much of a business. These small businesses are very important in our community. They are also the ones who donate goods and services to non profits, SVSEF, Higher Ground, Stella, YMCA, Schools, etc... They are the backbone of what makes our town a Community.

These small business owners understand the need for affordable housing for their employees, however they also understand without parking they won't have customers.

Ninety- nine percent of the business' I spoke with were in favor of "putting a pause" on any decisions for the Washington Street parking lot until the new comprehensive plan is updated and any new zoning ordinances are completed and approved by P&Z and City Council.

One person suggested " plans for a huge subterranean parking structure" . City staff have suggested that the cost of building underground is too costly. I have heard this for the last 40 plus years , I can bet it's way more expensive today than it was just a few years ago. At some point you may need to bite the bullet and build a parking garage. How can you have let a performing arts center like the Argyros be built and not have parking? The council has had plenty of warning according to the articles below.

Mountain Express Dec. 2016

"We firmly believe it should be a parking structure," Frick told the council during a workshop on the city's proposed overhaul of its parking code Monday.

https://www.mtexpress.com/news/ketchum/city-administration-pushes-for-paid-parking-downtown-garage/article_6ff4751c-c714-11e6-8b58-fb26bbc3d281.html

Mountain Express March 2017

' Ketchum city administrator Suzanne Frick worn the city on Monday of a looming parking crisis in southwest downtown due to hotel and theater development in the area'

https://www.mtexpress.com/news/ketchum/ketchum-looks-at-paid-parking-in-lots/article_60d79dda-0e80-11e7-929b-8bdad4af6370.html#comments

The city has taken 25 parking spaces off of Main Street. The quadrant parking plan puts pressures on outlying businesses and actual residents in the town core. The 2 hour parking limit penalizes people who want to go to dinner and a movie.

Right now most of the parking in Ketchum is taken up by the construction workers and journey men because of the building boom. Most of the traffic on Highway 75 is construction traffic. Are you going to house all these people too?

When is enough , enough? Once the boom is over then what?

Some folks I spoke with were part time residents and tourists , they had no idea that parking was going to be gone from Main Street. They were very upset to learn that Washington St was going to be like another Blue Bird . Returning Tourists come because of wonderful memories, they don't want to go on vacation to a city that's turning into Aspen . Ketchum has character, if they want Aspen they would go there. The Main Street beautification project is a real but temporary turnoff right now. Those of us who don't have a business can skirt around Ketchum, and go to Hailey to shop and eat..... but the business owners and their employees can not. Your efforts are really making it difficult for any business in Ketchum to survive.

One of your surveys asked "if you had a magic wand and could change one thing what would it be? " The consensus from residents and tourists alike was build a parking structure. Another one of the cities studies said people would need \$60 an hour to afford to live here, what business is going to be able to pay that?

At what point is the council going to listen to the business' and citizens?

There is just too much going on....Let's take a pause .

Pat Higgins
Ketchum, ID.

Sent from my iPad

Cyndy King

From: Janet Nathanail <jnathanail@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 23, 2024 5:13 PM
To: Participate
Subject: jan 24 meeting

Importance: High

Although we are not fulltime residents, we have owned our home in Ketchum for 20 years and spend as much time here as possible.

We came here because of the charming authenticity of the community, the breathtaking natural scenery, the laid back relaxed scene and the high octane sports environment.

Lately we have been feeling concerned about all the changes simultaneously taking place in our little town. While we all agree that affordable housing is a MUST...for the obvious reasons....we also recognize that establishing enough of it will impact our town in positive as well as in negative ways.

Affordable housing needs to serve its main purpose... which is to provide housing for essential workers for businesses, restaurants, hospitals, schools... all of which are fundamental to the life of our town. It also needs to be located in areas where those workers will want to live which isn't always in the town center.

We also need to consider the impact of that housing especially when looking at parking. Most people own and need a car. Bicycles are useless in December. Building apartments with too few parking spaces is a mistake, taking away so much street parking is a mistake, not providing designated parking for shoppers and restaurant is also a mistake.

Before we jump into taking away the Washington street parking and adding another 'affordable housing' complex shouldn't we PAUSE and consider all the ramifications for the town.

Shouldn't we wait till we open BLUE BIRD and see the results before we embark on another in-town housing unit.

Should the city consider selling expensive downtown lots and use the money to instead build affordable housing in the industrial area which would be near the schools thus attracting families and putting less pressure on limited downtown parking.

With so many other critical items to consider....such as the forest service park, the lift tower lodge, the town square, covered bus stops....I feel we need more input from the small business owners and from the community at large who live here in order to form a unified plan going forward.

Ketchum's unique character is at stake and we can't afford to rush these decisions.

Thank you
Janet Nathanail
Ketchum

Please consider your environmental responsibility before printing this email or any other documents.

Cyndy King

From: jmontague9289@gmail.com
Sent: Sunday, June 23, 2024 5:50 PM
To: Participate
Subject: Washington Lot Development

As a Hailey resident that likes to come to Ketchum for shopping, dinners and entertainment, the LAST thing the town needs is LESS parking. Having attended the Advocates Gala on Friday night, the lack of parking within two blocks of the Limelight was very evident – and that was with the FULL Washington lot. Taking those 60 spaces and adding 48 residences (or whatever the number) with their corresponding 40+ cars is not in the best interest of residents of the Valley or businesses in Ketchum. And given the proposed building is NOT really for workers at restaurants, etc., but also retirees, people that currently have to drive >30 minutes, etc. etc. compounds the frustrations we residents feel.

Please hit PAUSE before it's too late.

Thank you.

John E. Montague
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Cyndy King

From: Bob Block <bobbblock1@pacbell.net>
Sent: Saturday, June 22, 2024 1:36 PM
To: Participate
Subject: Ketchum Building

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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I don't know exactly who to send this email to in the Ketchum city government, but I want to protest the continued construction of new buildings in the downtown Ketchum area. The specific item I'm aware of is the plan to build at the "Washington Street Lot Development" at Washington and Second. But also today I saw the rectangular and ugly building going up on Leadville next to the Vintage restaurant, destroying the look of the street.

Overall there is simply too much building activity in Ketchum, spoiling the look of Ketchum, increasing the crowding, and reducing the available parking. I want the city to stop new construction of commercial and multifamily residences in Ketchum, and develop a coherent plan for future development that addresses overcrowding, parking, and the general esthetics of the community.

Thank you,

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