

Dear Commissioners,

This is my second letter in response to the Application Request: Villas III Subdivision.

Over thirty years ago, the town decided to clear cut a forest to make way for a private 18-hole golf course and luxury second homes, presumably, motivated by a lack of broad consensus, greed and entitlement. It was a bad idea thirty years ago and it is a terrible idea today.

I am a native Californian. And like tens of thousands of visitors, I have been recreating in Mammoth and the surrounding Sierras for most of my life (over fifty years). I enjoy, skiing, snow shoeing, hiking, camping, backpacking, bicycling, kayaking and swimming. However, I have never once had the desire or the inclination to play golf at 8,000 feet.

The forest is home to Mammoth's abundant wildlife. Wildlife includes bears, coyotes, rabbits, squirrels, birds, deer and mountain lions.

The proposed Villas III project would destroy this last remainder of forest and a necessary corridor for such wildlife. The proposed luxury condos would displace wildlife habitat and prevent wildlife from having a safe migrating corridor. Furthermore, a fence along Joaquin Road would force wildlife onto busy Main/Hwy203 and Meridian Streets. In INYO County in 2021 alone, 13 bears and about 140 mule deer were hit and killed by cars.

Not only will building 33 condominium units and three single family residence take up valuable wildlife habitat and create a nuisance for neighboring residents but increasing the height to the three single-family residences by two and half feet tall (to 36'6") will require more resources to build, maintain and heat.

I do not think Mammoth aspires to become an over developed Park City or an exclusive Aspen.

Mammoth does not need more second home luxury condos. Most of the condos in Mammoth sit empty for more than half of the year as it is.

Instead, the town should offer homeowners of existing older condos like many that were built in the 1960's and 1970's an incentive to remodel and/or renovate; to put in more modern and energy efficient and water efficient appliances and fixtures; furnace; windows; doors; insulation, etc.

Finally, our resources are limited. Future predictions for the Sierra snowpack are dire. As the most recent (April 1, 2022) *Los Angeles Times* article reported the Sierra snowpack stands at just 38% of the long-term average. Warmer temperatures mean less snow and more rain. Rain in the form of runoff as the ground where forest once stood whether by the devastation of wildfires, drought, bark beetle or man-made will be more susceptible to erosion. Aquifers will be over pumped and will less likely refill. Perhaps it is time to have a conversation about restoring the golf course to a more natural state, like a meadow or a forest with plants and trees that are native and more tolerant to drought, wildfires and bark beetle. Expand the Valentine Reserve. Perhaps install a wildlife viewing station or two...

The effects of climate change cannot be ignored. Mammoth has amazing wildlife and wildlife can be an economic advantage.

Gina Varieschi, SJV D6