

AGENDA
Equity Task Force
February 16, 2023 – REGULAR MEETING
3:30 PM

PLEASE SILENCE ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES DURING THE MEETING

- I. ROLL CALL**
- II. REVIEW OF MEETING MINUTES**
 - A. January 19, 2022
- III. NEW ITEMS**
 - A. Presentation about ‘Senior Assisted Living Planning’ SPET Item by Kevin Cochary
- IV. DISCUSSION AND/OR PROPOSED ITEMS**
 - A. Affinity space discussion
 - B. Work on Equity Audit
- V. NEW ITEMS**
 - A. Presentation about ‘Transportation Planning & Equity’ by Regional Transportation Planning Administrator Charlotte Frei
- VI. ADJOURN**

**EQUITY TASK FORCE
MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 19, 2022 – REGULAR MEETING
3:30-6:30 PM**

ROLL CALL: PRESENT: Stacy Noland, Rosa Sanchez, Jean Day, Brandon Hernandez (left at 5:00), Jason Fritts, Miki Aristorenas, Jean Day, Jade Krueger (arrived at 3:45/left at 6:10), Marcela Badillo (arrived at 3:45), Pierre Bergman (left at 6:10)

VIRTUAL: Miki Aristorenas (left at 5:45)

STAFF: Aaron Carrillo, Susan Scarlata

II. REVIEW OF MEETING MINUTES: December Meeting Minutes – Minutes approved.

III. NEW ITEMS

A. Debrief of presentation to Town Council & Recommendations

- a. Glad everything was approved, more than just accepted even.
- b. Clear there are different levels of familiarity with these topics among Councilmembers. Council could benefit from training on equity and inclusion.
- c. Interesting that some staff members attended and were there to answer questions.
- d. Feel more outreach to certain Councilmembers about certain recommendations is needed.
- e. Query if the Task Force has 'played it too safe,' and should be bolder?
- f. Wondering if Council can/will provide more direction to the Equity Task Force
- g. Should we be requesting a budget and funding to move equity work forward?

B. Presentation from Public Works Director on Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

- a. CIP currently has a 4-year outlook with all the potential projects listed. Public works tries to align capital projects so planning happens one year and construction the next.
- b. Priorities can be shuffled due to Councilmembers and their priorities, or due to private developments and necessary infrastructure to accommodate these projects.
- c. Goals is always to dig up streets as few times as possible so work to coordinate projects above and below ground.
- d. Currently have a number of 'Anchor Projects,' which are particularly large and have been stalled because of all of their moving parts –goal to get these done.
- e. Also opportunistic, tackling infrastructure if other projects are slated in a specific place.
- f. Gregory Lane is happening, some community engagement and transportation studies have happened and more is being planned
- g. Envision is a sustainability-rating system for infrastructure projects that includes metrics on social equity, Floren will share links to consider applicability.
- h. Parking should be considered holistically across Town, and a pilot for shifting the on-street winter parking program would make sense to see what works in our community.

IV. DISCUSSION AND / OR PROPOSED ITEMS

A. Affinity Space discussions

- B. Discussion about recommendations, next steps toward implementation, and committees going forward. Planning and practice for presentation to Council on December 19, 3:00-5:00pm.**

- a. The group decided that the former committees will no longer meet so that the entire group can work to further refine the recommendation for an 'Equity Audit.' That recommendation was proposed by Rosa, Pierre, & Stacy, so they will take the lead on what might be needed to flesh this idea out more. For now, working on the audit will take the place of monthly committee meetings, which are a part of Task Force member's duties. So, there will be a 'committee' meeting for all 9 of you to figure out how to work on planning for an equity audit. The group also decided that we will have some time at the monthly meetings to discuss further recommendations and may decide committees are needed to work on new ideas as those are generated.

V. ADJOURN at 6:30pm

An out-dated term that is a real bummer

Recently I had a conversation with a friend about whether there are any ski bums left.

After all, think about just how much money it takes to get fully kitted out for a day on the slopes. Your parka and ski pants probably cost several hundred dollars each if you bought them retail.

Base layers add up as well, especially when a pair of socks costs \$30, a merino wool top is more than \$100, and most ski gloves will set you back at least \$100. Ski boots retail anywhere from \$300 to more than \$700, and skis with bindings are probably a minimum of \$1,000.

If you are going out of bounds, you also need a backpack (\$100-\$200), shovel (\$50-\$70), probe (\$45-\$100) and transceiver (\$350 and up). Not to mention extras like a helmet (\$80-\$200), goggles (\$60-\$320) and sunglasses (the sky's the limit!).

My rough calculation is that most of us are walking around with at least \$3,000 worth of gear on our backs. If you are truly a bum and living hand to mouth, \$3,000 is a lot of money, and that doesn't include lift tickets, transportation, housing and all the other things that add to the base cost of hitting the slopes.

Of course, prices are higher these days, and it's hard to compare the out-of-pocket expenditures of today's skiers with those of the generation before. Still, I haven't seen a lot of people with duct tape on their jackets, and no one I know takes pride in their antiquated gear anymore. We recognize that good gear makes a difference in performance, and most of us want the best we can get. Furthermore, the challenge of finding affordable housing and inexpensive food is an issue in every mountain town.

So financially, it's hard to be a ski bum in today's economy.

I can get a bit nostalgic about the good old days, when people crowded into substandard housing, grabbed leftover food off other people's trays, worked odd-hour jobs to leave their days open to ski and found most of their gear at See and Save.

There was something free, reckless and youthful about that lifestyle that is appealing. Who doesn't like the idea of jumping out of the 9-to-5 rat race to ski 100 days a year? Who doesn't secretly believe that there is something pure and joyful about living the dream rather than pushing paper for a big paycheck? In our hearts, I think a lot of us would still like to be ski bums.

I've never thought about that appeal critically until I read a Jan. 20 article on OutsideOnline by Mardi Fuller titled, "If We Want Skiing To Be More Diverse, Let's Stop Celebrating the Ski Bum."

Fuller, who is Black, points out that voluntary poverty is a privilege that many people can't afford.

"The narrative around the ski bum romanticizes a life characterized by forgoing economic ladder-climbing to achieve the joy of skiing 100-plus days a year," Fuller writes. "The ski bum cares only about skiing, and they institutionalize a culture of rule-breaking, or at least bending, to do so, all because they can. Therein lies the problem. "This garish flaunting of social capital and privilege in the face of the barriers that most people, with comparatively less socioeconomic mobility, face, is offensive. There is only one subset of the population who can safely, comfortably, and consistently pull off this lifestyle: white, cis-gendered skiers, usually middle class or wealthier, usually men."

Fuller's comments hit me. She is right. We see very few people of color on the ski slopes, and when we do, their presence stands out. Although we pride ourselves on being a socially progressive community, the barriers for entry into our way of life mean that we remain pretty homogenous. Read: white. According to National Ski Areas Association figures cited by Fuller, 88% of downhill skiers are white, and more than half earn a salary of

more than \$100,000. Even so-called ski bums often know they have family wealth to fall back on, and if they don't, their whiteness makes the experience of poverty very different from their Black counterparts.

Sneaking into a fancy resort's hot tub is a prank for a white person. For someone who is Black? The consequences are likely to be severe. Getting a job in a fancy ski town? Pretty easy if you are white and college educated, less so if you are not.

I read Fuller's article at the same time I'm reading Clint Smith's "How the Word Is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America." Smith's book, which I highly recommend, takes readers on a tour of American landmarks — Thomas Jefferson's Monticello Plantation, the Whitney Plantation, Louisiana State Penitentiary and Blandford Cemetery — to tell the story of the effects of slavery on the American people, as well as on our country's social and economic systems.

It's a complex examination of the way so much of what we take for granted as quintessentially American is rooted in slavery. The implication of those foundations remains unexamined and unquestioned by many of us.

Especially those of us who are white.

I consider myself well educated, and I studied history in college. My professors were cognizant of the way our history has been viewed through the eyes of white men, and most of my courses made great efforts to try to broaden our perspectives, so it's not as if I've never considered the way race has shaped and still shapes our world.

But it's been easy to view it as something other, something that isn't really about me, because I live in this bubble of economic security surrounded by a homogenous community of really great, smart, nice people who, like me, love to recreate in the outdoors.

I haven't spent a lot of time pondering the fact that most of these really great, smart, nice people are white. I never questioned the way our lifestyle is an outgrowth of the inequities set in place hundreds of years ago — inequities that Black people continue to struggle against.

I'm not saying we need to stop skiing. I'm not even saying we need to give up our fancy gear. I am saying we — or at least I — need to be a little less careless about the way I use language and the way I view my privilege.

Words have incredible power, and we often wield them with little consideration for their impact. All of us are guilty of this.

I remember my father insisting that when he said man, he meant all humans, not recognizing that I didn't consider myself a man and so he was leaving me out of his equation. In the same way, I have a hard time with pronouns. I am such a grammarian that I find saying "they" for one person awkward, although I am trying.

And now I have learned that terms like ski bum, trustafarian and dirtbag — words I used with fondness and humor — are offensive to Blacks. Does it matter that these words don't bother me? No. After all, it's not about me, it's about making the people I'm talking to feel safe and welcome. If I struggle a little erasing certain expressions from my lexicon, so be it.

Ultimately, my goal is to be respectful of others. I've never meant to be hurtful or offensive with my language, but that doesn't change its impact when I ignorantly use words that mean one thing to me and something very different to someone else. If I want to live outside the boundaries of my own little homogenous community, I need to learn to speak new languages.

So, Mardi Fuller, I will try to stop romanticizing ski bums without recognizing just how lucky I am to even toy with the idea of having such a lifestyle.

Contact Molly Absolon via 732-7065 or columnists@jhnewsandguide.com.



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BRADLY J. BONER / NEWS& GUIDE FILE



Mountainside

Molly Absolon

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