

“Smoke, Mirrors” is NOT Fabrication

At the Foothills Fire Protection District’s 2/21/2023 board meeting, developer Jack Buchanan accused the author of making up a story printed in the Canyon Courier.



Kathryn Mauz, who I think is on the phone call, and I’m sorry I don’t mean to offend anybody but I heard her comment from last month or whatever it was, I read her op-ed, I didn’t mean to read her op-ed, I had a couple of people call who said hey, I see you changed your plan, I said what are you talking about, and read it. I’m sorry, it’s non-sensical. I’ve never met her, I’ve never talked to her, she has, she’s made up stories about grading, whatever else, it’s coming out of thin air.

SEE: 2/21/2023 FFPD BOD Meeting transcription, Lines 176-181

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rIOX6pf-YEbdCZmoh66XTdt5vJd972T/view?usp=share_link

This is the letter to the editor to which he was referring, with line numbering added for reference:

<https://www.canyoncourier.com/stories/letters-to-the-editor,416784?>

1 **Letter: Smoke, mirrors**
2 *Canyon Courier, 1/26/2023, page 8*
3 *Posted Tuesday, January 24, 2023 8:44 am*
4 Jack is back. Two years ago, developer Jack Buchanan came in like a wrecking ball with a proposal
5 to raze the El Rancho park-n-ride, the Alpine Rescue Team building and the Rainbow Hills fire
6 station to construct what he envisioned as a miniature downtown Vail west of Highway 74 and
7 north of U.S. 40.
8 Now, he has decided the ideal site for his proposed hotel is in the valley below U.S. 40. His new
9 scheme called “Option B” still entails removing the fire station to a site a quarter mile away, this
10 time on a proposed 40-foot deep platform of fill dirt. He still intends to create a permanent,
11 quarter-mile detour for the public Rainbow Hill Road.
12 While the plan on its face “provides” the fire department a new station, it requires them to
13 sacrifice their excellent site and facility only to gain 400 square feet in the proposed new
14 building. Crucially, it asks the Foothills Fire Protection District, a public agency, to participate in
15 the developer’s broader scheme in exchange for this donation.
16 The developer has portrayed his proposal to the county and CDOT as a public service and has
17 explicitly requested setback relief, expedited rezoning, expedited concurrence review, and direct
18 transfer of land (avoiding a public bid process required by state law) in return.
19 In addition to acquiring adjacent right-of-way, his ultimate reward is the corner property
20 containing the park-n-ride lot—a second taxpayer-funded asset that would be sacrificed for his
21 private benefit.
22 Beyond that brazen objective, he has recently submitted a contract to the FFPD that articulates a
23 second scheme, explicitly requiring them to deceive with the expressed intention of interfering
24 with CDOT’s property rights enshrined in the language of the deed to the parcel the fire station
25 occupies.
26 Alternatively, Buchanan’s newly formulated “Option A” entails developing only the private land
27 north of U.S. 40. This innovative idea entails no harm to existing public assets, nor does it embroil
28 a special district in the morass of complications, delays and ethical ambiguity that is Option B.
29 The watershed decision is the FFPD’s to make. The developer has for two years sought to
30 convince them that he alone can fix their infrastructure needs, and the only way forward is his
31 “free” offer. The people of this district are better, smarter and more resourceful than that.
32 FFPD’s decision should be obvious, but incredibly it is still pending.
33 *Kathryn Mauz, El Rancho and Evergreen*

If Mr. Buchanan had had a legitimate objection to anything contained in this letter, he could and should have lodged it in the same place of publication where it had originally appeared (simultaneously in print and online). Instead, he chose to broadcast his grievance through the FFPD BOD meeting recording, including asserting without offering basis that the author of the letter had fabricated its contents.

Every statement but the concluding paragraph (Lines 29-32), which is clearly editorial, and see notes below regarding Line 10, draws directly from and summarizes Mr. Buchanan's own correspondence with, and documents he has provided to, FFPD, CDOT, and Jefferson County. The following are the same sources below that were offered to the Courier's editor, who did not request them.

Letter, Lines 4-7

Rezoning application: Public Meeting presentation, 5/19/2021

https://drive.google.com/file/d/10S9q7DFdJL86WY-JBmrxyVRdSbbTRs3/view?usp=drive_link

3/16/2021 FFPD BOD Meeting transcription, Line 128

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CawllnppcbgJL6e-whQbTqu8Qyd5AM55/view?usp=share_link

Letter, Lines 8-11 (and see Line 10, below)

12/13/2022 FFPD BOD Meeting transcription, Lines 55-63

https://drive.google.com/file/d/13rw7sLvHcKI7Mht_RmznH6Bc1WYROBgG/view?usp=share_link

Letter, Line 10

In reference to the proposed site entailing a platform of fill dirt, the author repeated information having been sent by an FFPD Board member, T.J. Carney, following the 12/13/2022 FFPD BOD meeting. With that correspondence, Mr. Carney wrote: "That site will be brought to level with U.S. 40 for this footprint and provide direct US 40 Access for the Station."

Carney to FFPD CSC, 12/14/2022

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MFLv5KeYdfmv0QC94ga8T6AFgV488IY7/view?usp=share_link

Subsequent scrutiny of the "contract" that had been submitted by Buchanan to the FFPD revealed that there was no reference to the grade of the proposed site in that document or its addendum.

"Contract" and Addendum, 12/4/2022

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1py6psnPId2Pjz9VAb25jOTOHbCAm0HPw/view?usp=share_link

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nS50IQ9DAeN4V8fbrLGA0MnEknszYhzJ/view?usp=share_link

Likewise, there had been no mention at the 12/13/2022 FFPD BOD meeting of the configuration of the proposed site or access to the hypothetical lot being at grade with U.S. Hwy 40.

12/13/2022 FFPD BOD Meeting transcription, Lines 209-215

https://drive.google.com/file/d/13rw7sLvHcKI7Mht_RmznH6Bc1WYROBgG/view?usp=share_link

A memo was then prepared for the FFPD to illustrate that the configuration of the lot had never actually been discussed (https://drive.google.com/file/d/14l6A28lMVsxDhZJ8Rt23-2rRaHbAjbpo/view?usp=drive_link). The developer himself has never committed to how the lot would be configured, or even specifically where it would be.

Letter, Lines 12-15

12/13/2022 FFPD BOD Meeting transcription, Lines 288-295

https://drive.google.com/file/d/13rw7sLvHcKI7Mht_RmznH6Bc1WYROBgG/view?usp=share_link

Letter, Lines 16-21

Buchanan to CDOT, 10/27/2022

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tx_FziYHDSjPhoPy3xn9eKXpzQOcDntk/view?usp=share_link

Buchanan to CDOT, 10/28/2022

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rpTAKokKQ-L1g1oxFqN9SZcU05oOYII2/view?usp=share_link

Buchanan to Jefferson County, 12/6/2022, and fwd to CDOT, 12/8/2022, with Attachment

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mg9LyX8ZVCL75BKI2073Y4fsWDa6Miwl/view?usp=share_link

https://drive.google.com/file/d/11ILxBGz7vjdZpOmwGyei0A4oZdyvSlok/view?usp=share_link

Buchanan to Olson only, 12/13/2013

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mg9LyX8ZVCL75BKI2073Y4fsWDa6Miwl/view?usp=share_link

Buchanan to CDOT, 12/13/2022

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cc8NQLC8ZURczexQGqzI322tdP7xqFyV/view?usp=share_link

Letter, Lines 22-25

“Contract” and Addendum, 12/4/2022

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1py6psnPId2Pjz9VAb25jOTOHbCAm0HPw/view?usp=share_link

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nS50IQ9DAeN4V8fbrLGA0MnEknszYhzJ/view?usp=share_link

Deed to FFPD parcel, via CDOT

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vMqi7c5FLhAHRz5NmPDby0sURcQzNriL/view?usp=share_link

12/13/2022 FFPD BOD Meeting transcription, Lines 37-119

https://drive.google.com/file/d/13rw7sLvHcKI7Mht_RmznH6Bc1WYROBgG/view?usp=share_link

CDOT Olson reply, 1/17/2023

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_9HBcpjvWC3kz0-IJb_0GOZScZErde0-/view?usp=share_link

Letter, Lines 26-28

12/13/2022 FFPD BOD Meeting transcription, Lines 53-55

https://drive.google.com/file/d/13rw7sLvHcKI7Mht_RmznH6Bc1WYROBgG/view?usp=share_link

The author prepared the 400-word letter to the editor from these sources, in the context of the entire scope of correspondence between Mr. Buchanan and CDOT leading up to and including his latest offer, and thus made these statements with full knowledge and understanding of their wider context and of the process involving his efforts to obtain CDOT-owned property.