

Dear Mayor and Members of Rapid City City Council,

I am here to address my concerns regarding safety of the Chapel Valley Communities and Red Rock Canyon residents. The issue regarding adding additional numbers of individuals in this area is mainly an issue of safety, egress in an emergency. Infrastructure for the safety of everyone south of the bridge MUST be in place before adding the ability for more people to be there overnight. The city has acknowledged this need by not allowing any property owner to build a new residential home. The City formed a task force made up of representatives from all the communities and representatives of Rapid City Government and Safety agencies. The outcome of that task force was: No second entrance/exit would be built and no new homes, duplexes, apartments, motels, hotels, resorts would be allowed.

Each of you in this room can tell a story about a natural disaster and your involvement. Remember those as the individual experiences are what are important. I have experienced FOUR floods that were either 100 year or 500 year floods in 41 years.

I was born and raised in Newcastle Wyoming and remember well my fear and anxiety when learning of the Rapid City Flood of 1972.

I lived in Johnstown Colorado in 1976 during the flash flood of the Big Thompson River. 142 people were killed. The officer rushing up the canyon with his bull horn warning of the coming wall of water, telling everyone to CLIMB to HIGHER GROUND. He died when the wall of water hit his patrol car. He died just like the officer died in 1972 trying to warn people.

I was a head nurse at the hospital in Greeley Colorado. I was covering the hospital as Nursing Administration that weekend. I remember watching the lighting storm over the mountains for hours the night before, waking to the news of the devastating flood. The hospital disaster plan was in effect. I remember an elderly patient had survived by hanging on to a metal bar in a doorway, he watched his wife being washed away. A family told of being on the phone with a family member that was eating in restaurant, they heard his screams as the water struck. A group of young people attending a church camp at the entrance to the canyon were told to evacuate but instead of climbing to higher ground they loaded into a van, drove to the highway, made a wrong turn and drove directly into the raging water full of boulders, propane tanks, and debris. They were all killed as were many others that got in their cars instead of climbing up the canyon walls in the mud, rain, lightning.

The hardest part of those weeks was the death. On the morning of the flood we learned that a young hospital resident and the health unit clerk from my unit had gone camping and no one could make contact with them. The residents and many of my staff joined others in the search for bodies and then the identification of bodies by dental records. The resident's body was identified about three days later. The unit clerk was found two weeks later, her body hanging in

a tree.

My husband was a volunteer fireman and searched the river bed and the irrigations ditches for days (a body was found in the ditches). I will never forget as those involved with the Rapid City Flood will never forget.

In 1986 we lived in an older one story brick home on a hill in Cheyenne Wyoming. One afternoon a thunderstorm like those of 1972 in Rapid and 1976 in Colorado hit. A tornado touched down at the airport just a mile from our home. The storm was so severe we sought shelter in our crawi space until the water started coming in along the sill plate and any other opening. When the storm left there was 6 inches of water on our lawn (remember we were on a hill, the empty lot next door was a lake. We later learned of the deaths within blocks of our home. An elderly lady had gone into her basement to rescue anything she could as the water was streaming through the window wells. A bedroom door slammed shut behind her and she drowned.

2013 brought another horrific flood to Colorado. The same type of storm system. My sister-in-law was stranded at a church camp above Lyons Colorado for over a week. The property damage was tremendous but the loss of life was minimal because of the changes made in those canyons. The roads were destroyed but people survived. We drove through Johnstown (40 miles from the mountains) about two weeks later. A train had been washed off the tracks, a trailor court destroyed. Water is a powerful force that man can not stop.

I become upset when people say well it was a 100 year flood or a 500 year flood so we are not in danger. That flood can happen tomorrow. I have experienced FOUR in 41 years all from the same type of storm. Rapid City Government you need to be ready for the next one.

My final comment is the individual property owner is not allowed to develop their property by building private homes (average 2.5 individuals per home) but the big business person is being allowed to develop their property, adding 40 overnight guests. The City has determind that the population density is already putting everyone south of the bridge in danger yet the planning board approved the plan to add to that density.

I believe the City made a mistake in 1972 in not buying the low lying land and structures that are one the edge of the lake and turning it into a park. I believe they made even a bigger mistake when they approved that area for increased commercial development when they knew there was a major egress problem from the area. It doesn't matter if it was a restaurant or a motel or a lodge it all adds to the safety problem that exists.

I recently learned that a property I thought was a private home in that area has been changed into a lodge. I just drove by the edge of a nearby property and observed two large motor homes in NEW RV spots. These properties are on the edge of the major drainage ditch for

Chapel Valley. With any large rain that ditch is full, running across the street. The last flood (in the last 10 years) flooded that area as the water rushed down the streets and drainage ditch on its way to the lake. Significant damage was done in that low lying area. During that flood the bridge was closed briefly. During that time an elderly woman, a permanent resident living near the laundry, developed severe anxiety, she had severe lung disease. Emergency services were delayed due to access, she was hospitalized, critically ill, survived but never regained enough strength to live independently and went to a nursing home.

Do all of these properties that are meant for tourists have an evacuation plan. Are these visitors told that if a flash flood they are to go to higher ground and are they told how to do that. Is there a path, are there flash lights and rain gear? Is there a plan on where they are to go. Or is the plan what we were told the plan was for the lodge being considered. Get in your car turn right, go across the bridge and turn right?? The explanation regarding fire was the commercial property has sprinkler systems and private residents do not. Of course the commercial property has to meet safety requirements for building fires. MY concern is the safety of the entire Valley in the event of a fast moving forest fire and the need for rapid evacuation. Ask any family of a forest fire fighter who died, was the fire moving slowly?

How do you approve any further development in the area?

Thank you for your time and consideration

Donna Bunnell

May 18<sup>th</sup> at City Council Meeting - Ron Bunnell

Tonight, this is all about the Rapid City Flood of 1972.

It is about the Black Hills Flood of 1972.

It is about all of our City when it happens again.

It is about people sleeping, driving and dying in the Flood Plain.

It is about Paying Attention, Understanding Risk and making Good Choices.

Here is a quote - "Rapid Creek can swell so fast.... The banks are running full and with localized heavy rainfall, the water can go over the banks. Even ankle deep water, with the right velocity, can take you off your feet." That from the Rapid Journal on May 18, 2015 - it is about Rapid City. It is about today.

As a former Human Resources Manager & Safety Manager with Black Hills Corporation, Campbell County Memorial Hospital, Thunder Basin Coal Company (ARCO) and Wycon Chemical's Anhydrous Ammonium Plant in Cheyenne, Wyoming, I have analyzed risk to prevent lost time accidents and loss of life.

The Big Thompson Flood in Colorado took 143 lives in 1976. It was a 500 Year Flood.

The NEXT Big Thompson Flood was two years ago in 2013. It took 2 lives in the same Big Thompson Canyon. It too, was a 500 Year Flood.

The chances of a 500 Year Flood is .02 %

The chances of a 100 Year Flood is 1.0 %

When you are in these floods, you just won't know the difference and the boundaries are not pre-determined.

A Rule for Evacuation: "You don't direct people into the path of a flood. You must direct them to seek higher ground as they did in the Big Thompson Floods.

A Rule for Over-Night Sleeping: You don't lodge people over-night in a known

flood plain. Giving them a radio will likely not affect the outcome when the flood comes in the middle of the night.

The building called the Chop House is built in the Flood Plain of Rapid Creek. It has never been approved for over-night lodging.

The City Planning Commission in 2008 voted (0 to 7) "AGAINST" over-night stays or lodging in this same flood plain.

The City Planning Commission LAST MONTH voted ( 9 to 0) "FOR" over-night stays or lodging in this flood plain.

The City Council in 2008 also voted to deny over-night stays or lodging.

Then the Courts upheld the city's right to vote to deny putting lives at risk in this way at this location.

Not much has changed in the area since the 2008 application for over-night lodging. The notable exception is that a new category of lodging has been created. A "re-unification Cabin" with virtually no planning or commitments.

Nothing has really changed in the region from Rapid City to Pactola Reservoir as noted at the Planning Commission Hearing in April 2015.

A similar rain storm will bring a similar flood. The Hydrology Report stating that, "The flood event f 1972 would occur much more often than 100 years. More like thirty years." they said.

The 24 page Appeal that I have written has been researched and written to support the views before the City Council today. It includes expectations & recommendations for the City Council to consider.

Expectation #1) Chapel Valley still needs another exit. The Planning Commission discussed reviving the consultant's earlier report and reviewing the best options. More on page #21

Recommendation #2) Emergency routes to the top of the ridge above Chapel Valley need to be defined. This includes the bottleneck area with evacuation routes going away from Rapid Creek. More on page #21.

Recommendation #3) As I see it, we need to eliminate the 40 Unit Rule as it applies to all of Chapel Valley. To say that a re-unification cabin with sprinklers does not fall within the 40 Unit Rule when a single family residence needs to abide by the 40 Unit Rule is, in my opinion - pure nonsense! More on page #21.

Expectation #3a) Not being able to use or develop one's own private property is a trap inerrant when the so-called 40 Unit Rule is applied to this Community. There were already more than 500 residences in these Chapel Valley communities when this rule was thought up and applied by earlier Administrations. This was before the three lane bridge was constructed.

Expectation #4) Review and listen to the Advice of Hydrologists and the Hydrology Reports for the Area. More on pages #21 & #22.

Observation #5 "Overnight Stays" & "Relative Safety" are terms which seem to be "Chemically Incompatible". They don't pass the smell test. More page 22.

Recommendation #6) The "Major Amendment to a Planned Development" as administered by the Community Planning and Development Service needs to be tuned-up and revised for public safety considerations. More on page 22.

Recommendation #7) Derby Advertising, Inc. is urged to consider changing the name from the Chop House when/if this over-night lodging is approved in this known flood plain. More is on page #22.

Observation # 8) Originally, this Major Planned Development was thought to be something we were all just going to have to live with - but it is not. It is just not morally right to place large families in such a widely held scene of destruction some 43 years ago. So, my research and thought offers an alternative in #9 which follows in part. More on page #23.

9) It is recommended that the City of Rapid City look into the possibility of purchasing this property at fair market value and bring it into the list of Greeway Properties owned by the City. There may be help along the way to do just this very thing. Much more on page # 23 & 24.

This is in memory of Officer Danny Wichard and all others who lost their lives or were injured in the Rapid City Flood of 1972. ....

Best Regards, Ron Bunnell