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EPC PLAN (Cont. from 1)

public or agency comments had been thoroughly discussed or vetted. He said, "For anyone listening, for the public to understand that yes your comments, your voice, has been heard throughout this and we have this forum and another opportunity later for overflow for people to weigh in yet again but we have taken that, the importance of public participa-

tion, public comment, we have taken that very seriously and will continue to do so until the end of this process, but your voice has been heard and I just want to make sure that people understand that."

Judy van Ahlefeldt, a long-time Black Forest resident, has frequently challenged the robustness of the public consultation process. At the May 5 meeting, she raised concerns over the public review period from both a time frame and access point of view. She stated that there had been only five days, from April 28 to May 5, to review the updated draft and pointed out that some of the documents online were large and that broadband speeds in parts of the county made it difficult to download them.

Calling for the commissioners to seriously consider delaying the plan's

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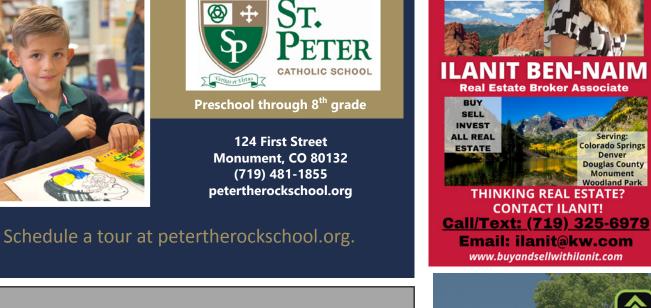
adoption, van Ahlefeldt said, "I think this is an inadequate public review opportunity for a document of this physical magnitude, complexity, and importance." The Planning Commission did not agree to the request.

Terry Stokka, representing the Black Forest Land Use Committee and the members of the Friends of the Black Forest, whose preservation plan will be superseded by the Master Plan, said the new plan strips Black Forest of the last protection it had for lot densities. Describing the timbered area of Black Forest as rich in history and wildlife, and having a unique rural nature, he requested a continuation of the Black Forest Preservation Plan's 5-acre density rule in the Master Plan. He said the draft plan's 2.5-acre minimum lot size for large lot residential effectively changed the RR 5 (rural residential) zoning to RR 2.5 (rural residential) for thousands of acres of county land and stated 2.5-acre lots mean more roads, traffic, tree clearing, and congestion that destroy habitat and natural features.

Responding to Stokka's comments made earlier in the day, Bailey said the timbered area of Black Forest already had a number of lots much smaller than 5 acres. He said, "The key to this in my mind or what swayed me against putting language like this into this Master Plan is again the distinction between an advisory document and a regulatory document. Zoning does not have a place here." He further said, "Zoning can change, but for zoning to change it takes the people that currently own that property to want to do something with it, and if Black Forest residents want to preserve Black Forest the way it is, the way you do that is to pass your property to your children and make sure they want to live on it, and not sell it to a developer or subdivide it."







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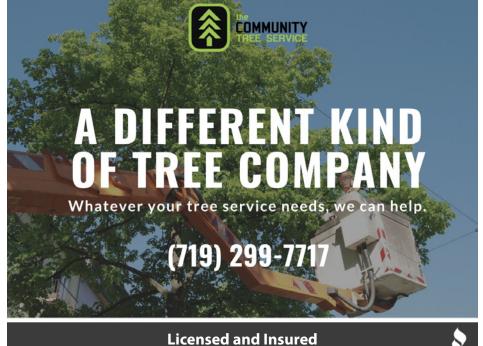
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