



## Development Focus Shifting to Aspen's West Side

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Aspen developer Mark Hunt gets most of the attention for his various in-the-works projects around town, but attention may soon be shifting to the long-quiet Lift 1A area, where specific proposals are now rolling to revitalize the neighborhood. In [this post](#), we gave you an update on ten of Hunt's buildings — read on for summaries of the latest development news not tied to the Chicago transplant.



After years of intense activity on the eastern edge of downtown, the development focus is moving west — in particular to the Lift 1A area, where details of a plan to redevelop the base were recently unveiled. At the center of the plan is the ski-in, ski-out **Gorsuch Haus hotel**, with 61 rooms, which climbs up the slope toward the Norway ski run adjacent to a new Lift 1A. The hotel project also includes seven restricted condominium lock-offs, six free-market units for sale, and a spa and rooftop pool for hotel guests. There will be a slopeside restaurant with several decks for apres-ski, a skier-services plaza, lift ticket offices, a finish area for ski competitions, Aspen Skiing Company offices, and some space for Aspen Valley Ski and Snowboard Club.

The partners in the Gorsuch Haus project — Jeff Gorsuch of the eponymous family retail chain, realtor Bryan Peterson, and Lowe Enterprise's Jim DeFrancia — are under contract with the Aspen Skiing Company to purchase a lot at the base of Lift 1A for the project. A land-use application is expected to be submitted to the City of Aspen in a few weeks.

According to materials on the project, "This is an opportunity for Aspen to bring back vitality and best in class to a part of town that was just that, more than 60 years ago when Aspen emerged as the top ski resort in the country with the launch of Lift 1."



Across Aspen Street, construction has begun on the first phase of the **One Aspen luxury townhomes**, 14 mountainside residences ranging from \$8.5 million to \$16.2 million. All five of the residences in the first phase are under contract, with completion expected in spring 2017. Three of the remaining nine units have recently been listed in the MLS, and a building permit is expected soon for this second phase, located on the upper portion of the parcel just below the slopes. If all goes well the project could be complete by the end of 2017.



A third piece of the development puzzle in this sleepy neighborhood is the site of the long-defunct Skiers Chalet lodge and restaurant. Approved for an **84-room timeshare hotel** in 2011, the property changed hands in May 2015. Michael and Aaron Brown, owners of the Hotel Aspen and Molly Gibson Lodge, have yet to publicly share their plans for the parcel, but they're reportedly in talks with the Gorsuch Haus partners about developing complementary projects.



Development of the Lift 1A base area is key for Aspen Skiing Company to be justified in **installing a new high-speed chairlift or gondola** at this now-quiet western portal of Aspen Mountain. Skico

needs to secure approvals from the Forest Service, Pitkin County, and the City of Aspen, a process that could conceivably be completed in time to have a lift up and running for the 2016-2017 ski season.

And the entire package — chairlift, lodging, and guest amenities — is key for final approval from the FIS (the governing body of skiing) for **Aspen Mountain to host the World Cup Finals** in March 2017. FIS officials have been putting pressure on Aspen for

years to upgrade the ski racing base area, both to absorb the logistics of and to reflect positively on this significant, multi-discipline, 200-athlete event.



In this rendering, the Mountainside Building is in the center right of the image.

Just a few blocks away, the **second and final building of the Dancing Bear Aspen** is nearing its February 2016 completion. The Mountainside Building, which is connected by an underground tunnel to the completed Parkside Building, contains ten 3-bedroom, 3.5-bathroom, 1,800 sq ft units, plus a 4-bedroom, 3,900 sq ft penthouse with a large private rooftop deck. The residences are being sold in 1/8th shares, starting at \$785,000, which comes with amenities such as a private spa grotto with steam room, underground parking, ski lockers, and the ability to trade vacation weeks to other Timbers Resorts properties in Maui, Napa, Cabo, and Tuscany.



Further down from Lift 1A on South Aspen Street, the Hotel Lenado's days appear to be numbered as the city's Planning and Zoning Commission approved a redevelopment proposal for the site in

November. **A 10,885 sq ft, mixed-use building** is planned, with four to nine lodge rooms and two wholly owned residences. Although the proposed building does meet the requirements of the land-use code, Aspen City Council has the option to "call up" the project, which it has done with a recommending boards' decisions lately, and ask that any issues it identifies be resolved. P&Z will also see the application once more for final design review, which is typically a quick checklist of technical details.

Finally, **zoning regulations in downtown Aspen are slated to be scrutinized** by Aspen City Council in a process that will look at design guidelines, allowed uses, and parking. With an eye toward sticking points over recent applications (including, most recently, the failed Base 2 Lodge), the council wants to better match its land-use code with the Aspen Area Community Plan.