
**Electoral Area “E”: Cultus Lake, Columbia Valley,
and Lindell Beach
Advisory Planning Commission**

July 14, 2010 6:30pm

Columbia Valley Fire Hall

Meeting Notes

Present: APC: Rolf Soth, Loretta Gretler, Gord Spencer, Lauren Spilsbury,
Heather Ward, Bruce Millar, Don Parshyn, David Huesken

FVRD: David Lamson, Director- Electoral Area “E”, Dawn Smith- Planner,
Lisa Grant- Planner

1. Welcome

Director David Lamson opened the meeting at 6:35 pm and welcomed the APC members.

2. Election of a chair

Gord Spencer was elected as chair and Rolf Soth was elected as vice-chair.

3. Agenda Review & Housekeeping

Following a discussion regarding scheduling, it was agreed to reschedule the August meeting for September. FVRD staff will follow up with APC members by email to confirm a new date.

A review of the APC bylaw, and the role and responsibilities of the APC was provided.

There were no agenda additions.

4. Review future agenda topics

Staff and APC members reviewed future topic issues. It was noted if a non-agenda issue arose; it would be tabled till the corresponding meeting and brought back for discussion.

5. Topic #1: Water Quality

Dawn Smith introduced the water quality survey results, it was noted that drinking water was ranked very important by 59% of respondents – making it the highest ranked value in the community. It was noted that the Columbia Valley aquifer has been studied by a number agencies over the years from Fraser Health to more recently by the Ministry of Environment in January 2000. The MoE study characterized the aquifer as large, deep, fast moving with good drainage in Columbia Valley. Two locations were identified as

having nitrate contamination likely from agricultural activities, but could improve with minor changes to the manure management activities. A MoE map showing the aquifer was circulated at the meeting.

There was a discussion regarding the content of the aquifer study, including the methodology and reliability. It was agreed that the study provided a useful characterization of the soils profile and rapid drainage, however some members felt that the drainage patterns were inaccurately described as flowing north-south. Further study is needed due to the impact of the creeks at the permeable edge of the aquifer.

The large volume (130.5 billion litres of groundwater) of the aquifer reservoir was discussed, and the relatively little quantity of water used by residents. The MoE report found that residents only use 0.6% of the actual water. There was concern about the potential for commercial access to the aquifer i.e. by a water bottling company given the large reservoir size. APC members felt OCP policy should emphasize the priority of water use for residents and local business (ie. agriculture) ahead of commercial users such as bottling plants. APC members also concluded that the OCP policy should recognize that if a commercial bottling operation or any commercial activity is present the demands on local infrastructure (ie. roads) will increase and as a result there should be a way to financially offset these impacts.

The provincial approval process for commercial water licensing was discussed, and the commenting role the Regional District has in the provincial water allocation. It was noted that the Province is reviewing the Water Act called Living Water Smart (LWS) and may result in changes to how the provincial government allocates water even for individual users. Staff noted that the OCP policy will be reviewed in context to any legislation changes.

Members discussed the impact of climate change (ie. melting snowpack) and human activities such as logging on the aquifer. APC members recalled past logging activities in the USA which caused significant impacts to the water quality and quantity of Frost Creek, its tributaries and ultimately Cultus Lake downstream. This could eventually reduce the quantity of water and we need to be aware of this and not take it for granted.

There was agreement that that land uses affect water quality. Members discussed the impact of the Columbia Valley aquifer on Cultus Lake and the City of Chilliwack/Sardis aquifer. The plan should recognize the importance of the aquifer and Cultus Lake, and policies should protect the quality and quantity of water in the community. OCP policy could recognize the impact of human activity on the water quality of the aquifer and the need for care and assessment in the case of large scale development. Water quality should be maintained to a post development level.

It was noted that other Lindell Beach residents have already been taking steps to limit their impact on water quality by minimizing the building footprint, new sewage disposal fields to replace aging systems and using pervious surfacing like 'grass-crete'. The Lindell Beach Residents Association has been testing lake water quality for years, but has concerns about coli-form from the geese. There was a discussion about well water testing, which is largely the individual property owner's responsibility, and whether a community testing program is feasible or desired. The Columbia Valley aquifer has been the subject of testing through the various studies over the years, and some members noted that local farmers have been testing water quality since the 1980's to ensure health & safety. It was agreed that existing residents should be made aware of

their responsibility to monitor their water quality and take steps to maintain water quality, through education and communication to the community. However large developments should be held to higher standard to provide technical reports which assess impact to the water quality and measures to ensure development does not degrade water quality, which could include limiting impervious surfaces, on-site retention, etc.

6. Topic #2: Environment and Sustainability

Lisa Grant provided a brief overview of survey results and some green initiatives that could be incorporated into the Plan; such things as a LEED standard or a rural green standards. A question was asked concerning sustainable development and future proposals. What standard should development proposals be held to?

An APC member noted that LEED type standard is desired for Cultus Lake area but not in Columbia Valley. The APC acknowledged that they want to have high standards for new developments which would include stormwater management (pre/post same). The APC members requested best practices for stormwater management. Moreover, an APC member found it important that tree cover and mature trees on new developments be retained. They also want the nature and the flavor of the community to be maintained.

The APC members discussed surface run off and limiting it with a decrease in paved surfaces as well as at Lindell Beach requesting soak away pits for new construction. The APC also requested more information for green building and practices.

In regards to development the APC members had a number of wide ranging concerns, including; how/when rezoning notices are distributed to all residents, having the recreation property tax rate tax impact based on full time vs. part time, new developments should be retrofitting, no more seasonal densities, new development should provide community amenities ie: trails, sidewalks, parks, aquifer and septic disposal on new development should be designed for full time occupancy and scaled to density for example areas like Spring Creek should be rezoned and upgraded and that there is no limit on occupancy i.e. at Spring Creek or The Cottages. Staff noted this is a broad topic that will be discussed again at a later meeting when addressing the issue of resort development and housing demands. And further that issues such as re-zoning and occupancy should be tabled for that meeting.

7. Topic #3: Recreation

Lisa Grant provided an overview of recreation in Cultus Lake and Columbia Valley. She referred to documents such as current OSP policies, Regional Parks Plan and Cultus Lake Master Plan. The APC felt that Cultus Lake Provincial Parks Board, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and local residents all need to work together to address recreation.

Parking was a major concern raised as an associated problem from the recreation demand during summer months. Coordination by agencies is needed in order to try and remove the bottleneck. Another APC member noted that there is a major issue with traffic around the lake and illegal parking because it interferes with potential for linear park access (i.e. bike lanes) to lake at the south end. 'No Parking' areas around Cultus Lake on Columbia Valley Hwy are not being enforced- this is an issue that should be addressed.

An APC member explained that Columbia Valley is a nice bike ride however there is a lack of bike lanes through the park area. Director Lamson responded that the province needs to assist with bike lane funding up to Leisure Valley.

The Galloping Goose Trail on Vancouver Island was cited by APC members as a model trail network that connects a variety of jurisdictions and crosses a wide range of tenures, from right of ways, roads, rail lines and actual trail paths. Finding a way to connect the dots and establish a trail network around/to Cultus Lake is a desire of the APC, including access to Maple Bay year round. The APC members noted that it would be nice to have a resident linear park between Columbia Valley and Cultus Lake.

Lindell Beach and Lake Access

The APC discussed the unique circumstances and challenges of the Lindell Beach foreshore. The winter is not a problem, however, in summer it's busy and everyone moves down to the beach. Lindell Beach has 30 lakefront homeowners. The Lindell Beach Ratepayers Association (LBRA) owns docks and has foreshore lease. The beach front area is public but an issue with public access to the privately held docks has been an on-going problem, as the LBRA carries the liability for these docks.

The Frost Creek fan in Provincial Park was noted as problematic as it draws in young party goers who walk along the road with alcohol and transport people back and forth in vehicles. Management of provincial park lands near adjacent residential areas needs to be better managed. The police do not enforce this area and BC Parks does not want to enforce this area either. Is there a way for the plan to address this issue? Staff suggested that they would look into ways the plan can respond, perhaps by advocating for co-operative management between agencies and a something similar to the Chilliwack River Valley's citizens on patrol.

Forest Fires and Recreation Users

APC members raised concerns about illegal camping and subsequent garbage or fire hazards. In response, Director Lamson provided an overview of the S.58 management area in the Chilliwack River Valley. It was suggested that a similar management area could be encouraged in the OCP policy as means of discouraging camping. However this would result in a lack of access to crown land for camping activities for law abiding citizens. APC members discussed the management of crown lands and expressed an interest in some management of crown land camping activities in a proactive manner. The Canyon Road area was cited as problematic for local landowners as illegal dumping and parties have occurred on the lands, causing safety concerns for residents. The Canyon Road area was raised as a possible park acquisition site. Staff advised this would require further consideration.

8. Public Works Fund

Director Lamson introduced the community works fund and discussed the possibility of a fire hall hydrant and water service to fire hall area, but explained that nearby residents were not interested. He asked APC members to consider other potential projects the funding could be used toward. He explained the requirements and what type of projects would qualify for the funding. Interested community members are encouraged to contact him directly for further discussion or information.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:30 pm.