
**Electoral Area “E”: Chilliwack River Valley
Advisory Planning Commission Meeting #3**

**October 18, 2010 6:30pm
Chilliwack River Valley Fire Hall**

Present: APC: Orion Engar, Ernie Plett, Susan Federspiel, Kevin Antonishen (part), Glen Thompson, Phil Belisle, Edna Hobbs, Dan Myrah, Ralph Belisle

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

1. Welcome

Kevin Antonishen (chair of the APC) opened the meeting at 6:30pm and welcomed the APC members.

2. Agenda Review

The agenda for the meeting was reviewed and supported with no changes needed by the APC members.

3. Approval of September 13, 2010 meeting notes (APC meeting #2)

APC members were given copies of the meeting notes from APC meeting #2 and asked to notify staff if there were any changes that needed to be made. Members requested a contact list of stakeholders/recreation users that were contacted during the initial introduction phase of creating an OCP for Electoral Area “E”.

4. Discussion

Resource Use & Sustainability

To provide context for the discussion, Dawn Smith gave an introduction to the Chilliwack River Watershed Strategy, Local Government Act S.879 and the draft OCP from Electoral Area “F”. It was noted that the key resource industries active in the Chilliwack River Valley include; forestry, mineral and mining extraction uses (ie. gravel/aggregate) and independent power production from local watercourses. While many of the comments and concerns raised will be common across all industries, there will be some concerns specific to an individual sector or use.

APC members inquired if the OCP boundary for Electoral Area “E” could be expanded to include crown land or even cover the entire Electoral Area. Staff explained that there would need to be rationale for the expansion. Members discussed two potential OCP boundary expansions; the first near existing settlement areas at a minimum, and a second based on a watershed boundary.

APC members identified important view corridors and how they should be protected. The Ministry of Forests and Range visual quality objectives were cited as one source of identifying important views but should be considered a minimum. One suggestion was creating a list with analysis of important visual corridors. FVRD staff suggested identifying those areas along roadways and trails, and popular recreation sites (ie. fishing or kayaking). Also those viewpoints which are sustained along a stretch of trail, lakeshore or roadway, such as the mountain views looking west from Larsons Bench.

It was suggested that term 'recreation or community watershed' should be used in place of 'recreation corridor' to emphasize the environmental values of the Chilliwack River Valley. Staff noted that in some instances the term 'community watershed' carries legal implications and further investigation is needed to determine if there is a benefit to having the area called a watershed.

APC members brainstormed a wide range of concerns about resource activity impacts that they do not want in the Chilliwack River Valley. Comments ranged from concerns with clear-cutting in limited use areas, safety hazards, visual impacts and more. APC members felt that the plan needs to address second access routes, alternative routes or sensitivity to peak traffic areas without altering the character of the area. A complete list of comments is attached as Appendix A.

In order to identify goals and policies for the OCP, APC members also brainstormed about what they want in the Chilliwack River Valley. Suggestions covered a wide range topics including protecting visual landscapes and sensitive areas, transparent consultation from the FVRD with residents and ratepayer groups, levies, best practice guidelines, recognizing the importance of the recreation industry, interface policy to manage crown lands impacts on homes, limited intrusion on local residents and protecting key features in the area. For a complete list see Appendix B.

Staff explained that the processing of aggregates may be controlled or prohibited under zoning controls, however extraction is within the Provinces domain. New policies could be addressed only through site specific application. Slash piles from logging activities were also a concern from APC members who would like to see a no burn regulation for these piles in the OCP. In terms of private lands, Director Lamson explained that restrictions could apply to address air quality based on new policies being created by the provincial government.

Independent Power Projects (IPP's)

APC members acknowledged that IPP's have a large potential impact on the landscape and it would be beneficial if the IPP corridors could offer recreation and public access. APC members felt that energy security is crucial in Electoral Area "E" and that IPP's should only be used to support the Chilliwack River Valley. Staff explained that the Regional District does not have the authority to say no to these operations, however, the Regional District and residents can try and make sure that the operations operate at the highest standard and are limited to a few locations which could be evaluated on a watershed basis. Discussion also took place regarding the need for a Regional Energy Plan which would be more proactive for this area of the region.

5. Next Meeting

The next APC meeting date is expected to be in January 2011, after draft policies have been created by FVRD staff for the OCP and stakeholder groups have been consulted.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:30 pm. FVRD staff will prepare draft notes for distribution and public access on the FVRD website.

Appendix A

What we do not want:

- Bad aesthetics from resource extraction.
- Ignores impact to recreation and habitat.
- Safety impacts from run-off, mudslides, loss of tree cover and decreased absorption.
- Long term impacts are felt long after logging has gone.
- Lack of recognition for ongoing accumulation of extraction industries.
- Forestry planning doesn't set AAC for Chilliwack Watershed only for the Fraser/Chilliwack District.
- Clear-cutting in Limited-Use areas (should be selective logging) and in visually sensitive areas. Larson's Bench is an example.
- Mining in sensitive areas which includes recreational, residential, visual and environmental.
- Extraction and shipping should be outside of school travel times.

Appendix B
What we want:

- Protect visually sensitive areas – trails (especially formal trails), roadways and fishing sites.
- Habitat protection for protected and endangered/species at risk.
- Archeological site protection.
- Special geologic formations protection (ie.karst).
- Consideration of air quality (no burning?) (use chipping or processing).
- Transportation which limits intrusion on local residential areas: noise, safety, hours, limitations, where possible alternative routes.
- Transparency and information sharing on decision making and information used in decision.
- Interface policy to carefully manage crown lands effect homes with respect to water quality, geotech, infiltration. Further attention to areas beyond residential to include recreational use areas.
- Upstream impacts need to be included too.
- Third party assessments for large proposal funded by proponents (consultant selected by FVRD).
- Direct proposals to consider technical background information at FVRD (ie. geotechnical studies and environmental).
- Resource industry should favour recreation industry.
- FVRD and local residents shall be consulted on resource extraction proposals in the Chilliwack River Valley (ie. community meetings, mail outs (pro-active), key stakeholders (ratepayers), society groups).
- Expanded forms of communication between FVRD and residents (ie. email list subscription – facebook).
- Resource companies should be part of larger industry group to encourage adherence to best practices.
- Levies to help offset impacts and address community concerns.
- Transparency-know what agency said what and how it was addressed.
- IPP
 - Energy production should be solar focused.
 - Public access should be maintained to creeks under IPP development.
 - Energy security for local area should be a priority.
 - Watershed strategy policies should be included in OCP.
 - Sharing of resources/infrastructure (ie. access roads/transmission lines).
 - Environmental protection for all species/organisms.
 - Cumulative investigation of IPP in watershed/set threshold.
 - Minimize visual impacts to high value recreational areas for development (ie. post development close to pre development in terms of aesthetic values).