

Fraser Valley Regional District

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MEMORANDUM

To: Hugh Sloan, Director of Planning
From: Graham Daneluz, Manager of Forward Plans
Date: May 27, 2008
Subject: Consultation Strategy for the Update of the Hatzic Prairie – McConnell Creek Official Community Plan (EA “F”)
File No.: 6480-20-603

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Regional Board adopt the memorandum dated May 27, 2008 as the consultation strategy for the update of the Official Community Plan for Hatzic Prairie - McConnell Creek (Electoral Area “F”) AND THAT consultation with:

1. Electoral Area “F” residents and landowners be early and ongoing and involve a public information meeting, a community planning survey, an Advisory Planning Commission, an open house and a public hearing;
2. the District of Mission be early and involve a written notification of plan development, request for input, invitation for meeting, and referral of a draft Plan;
3. Leq’a:mel First Nation, Stó:lō Nation, Kwantlen First Nation and Stó:lō Tribal Council be early and involve written notification of plan development, request for input, invitation for meeting and referral of a draft Plan;
4. School District 75 (Mission) be early and involve written notification and request for input and referral of a draft Plan; and,
5. relevant provincial and federal agencies be early and ongoing and involve notification of plan development, request for input, discussion and exchange through existing staff committees if required and referral of a draft Plan.

ISSUE

Update of the Hatzic Prairie – McConnell Creek Official Community Plan requires broad consultation efforts. A strategy to guide consultation is necessary to ensure that legislated requirements are met and that appropriate consultation is undertaken.

BACKGROUND

FVRD plans to update the Official Community Plan (OCP) for Hatzic Prairie and McConnell Creek, Electoral Area “F”. The Local Government Act (s. 879) sets out requirements for consultation with persons and organizations that may have interests affected by the adoption of an OCP. Certain organizations - adjacent municipalities; the school board; first nations; and, provincial and federal agencies – must be considered for consultation. Other groups not defined by the legislation should also be considered. At a minimum, all persons

or organization with interests affected by the proposed OCP must be provided at least one opportunity for consultation in addition to the public hearing of an OCP bylaw. Various means of consultation may be employed.

When developing a consultation strategy, the Regional Board must consider whether consultation with each group should be *early and ongoing*. The Act does not define these terms and consequently they are somewhat ambiguous. *Early* consultation may involve providing an opportunity for interested parties to identify issues or concerns before a Plan is substantially developed, and for certain, prior to the draft Plan receiving first reading. *Ongoing* consultation may involve providing a forum for continual involvement throughout the Plan process.

DISCUSSION

A consultation strategy for the update of the OCP for Area “F” (Hatzic Prairie – McConnell Creek) is outlined below. It follows the approach used successfully in other electoral areas. General principles to guide consultation are discussed first; strategies for consultation with specific groups follow.

1. General Principles for Consultation

The following general principles should guide consultation efforts:

- the purpose of consultation is to produce a Plan that has broad public support and reflects the values and aspirations of the community;
- public communications should be easily understandable and presented in plain language;
- a tone of openness, accessibility and respect should be maintained throughout the planning process; and,
- opportunities for consultation should not be denied to any party that expresses a desire for input.

2. Residents and Landowners

EA “F” residents and landowners are undoubtedly most affected by the development of a new Official Community Plan. Consultation with residents/landowners should be extensive, early and ongoing. It will include:

- a. a public information meeting to:
 - notify residents and landowners that a new OCP will be developed for their area;
 - outline the purpose and role of an OCP;
 - preliminarily identify major issues to be addressed in the Plan; and,
 - request volunteers to serve on an Advisory Planning CommissionNotice of the meeting will be placed in two consecutive issues of a local newspaper.
- b. community planning survey distributed by bulk mail
- c. the formation of an Advisory Planning Commission pursuant to s.898 of the Local Government Act and in accordance with *Advisory Planning Commission for Electoral Area "F" Bylaw No. 0858, 2008*. The APC will be a ‘working group’ which will participate in detailed discussions respecting the development of the Plan. Planning staff will work closely with this group throughout the planning process
- d. after a draft plan has received first reading from the Regional Board, an ‘open house’ will be held in the community to present the Plan to residents and interested parties. The ‘open house’ format provides a casual atmosphere and opportunities for questions and discussion with individuals or small groups. It will be advertised in two consecutive issues of a local newspaper
- e. the public hearing of a bylaw to adopt the OCP should be held at least one week after the open house so that ample time is provided for review of the draft plan before comments must be given at the hearing. Notice of the public hearing must be provided in accordance with *FVRD Procedures Bylaw No. 0041, 1996* and the requirements of the Local Government Act

3.0 Organizations Identified by s. 879 of the LGA

Section 879 of the Local Government Act identifies a number of organizations that must be considered for consultation when developing an OCP. These organizations are identified below and a strategy for consultation with each is outlined.

Consultation will normally include the following components:

- Notification and request for early input - early in the planning process a letter should be sent to interested parties to:
 - notify that an OCP for Area “F” is under development;
 - request pertinent information that may be useful in developing the OCP;
 - provide an opportunity to identify issues of concern early on;
 - offer to meet to discuss issues of concern; and,
 - inform that a draft Plan will be referred after it has received first reading.
- Referral of Draft Plan – referral for comments after the draft OCP has received first reading from the Regional Board

3.1 Local Governments - District of Mission

Electoral Area “F” shares a border with the District of Mission. The Board must consider whether the interests of the District of Mission would be affected by the adoption of an OCP for Area “F” and, if so, whether consultation should be early and ongoing.

There are a number of ways the adoption of a new OCP for Area “F” could affect the interests of Mission. For example:

- EA “F” residents utilize commercial, social and recreational services in Mission;
- the Mission tree farm is adjacent to EA F and includes watershed areas that drain to Hatzic Prairie; and,
- traffic and transportation concerns cross jurisdictional boundaries.

Accordingly, consultation with Mission should be early. It will involve:

- a. notification and request for input
- b. meetings - planning staff will offer to meet with District of Mission staff early in the planning process, then at key times, to identify and address matters of interest or concern
- c. referral of draft plan
- d. the District of Mission will be kept informed of matters relating to development of the Area “F” OCP through normal reporting through the EASC to the Regional Board and have opportunity for input at the Board table

3.2 Local Authorities - Dewdney Area Improvement District

The Dewdney Area Improvement District (DAID) owns, operates and maintains the flood protection infrastructure which protects the Hatzic Prairie area from Fraser River flooding. Consultation with DAID should be early. It will involve:

- a. notification and request for input
- b. meetings with staff or trustees of each authority to identify and address items of concern
- c. referral of draft plan

3.3 First Nations

The EA “F” OCP area lies within the territorial boundaries of the Leq’a:mel First Nation and within a “core interest area” identified by Stó:lō Nation.¹ The Leq’a:mel First Nation is a member of Stó:lō Nation. The EA “F” OCP area is also within the traditional territory of the Kwantlen First Nation who are represented within the Stó:lō Tribal Council. Both groups assert interests that could be affected by the adoption of an OCP for Area “F” and, consequently, must be consulted. Consultation with one should not be taken to constitute consultation with the other. Consultation should be early and involve:

- a. notification and request for input
- b. meetings – if requested, planning staff will meet with representatives from Leq’a:mel, Stó:lō Nation, Kwantlen First Nation and Stó:lō Tribal Council to discuss matters of interest or concern
- c. referral of draft plan

3.4 School District #75 (Mission)

Electoral Area “F” falls within School District #75 (Mission). Understanding residential densities and population projections is critical for planning the provision of school services. The School District may also be interested in safety issues such as roads, routes to schools and other matters that affect the delivery of the services they provide. Moreover, the School District is an owner of land within the Plan area.

The Local Government Act (s. 881(2)) requires that input be sought from the School District respecting:

- the actual and anticipated needs for school facilities and support services;
- the size, number and location of sites anticipated to be required for school facilities;
- the type of school anticipated to be required;
- when school facilities and support services are anticipated to be required; and,
- how the existing and proposed school facilities relate to existing or proposed community facilities in the area.

Consultation with the School District should be early to provide an opportunity to raise issues of concern before the Plan is developed. It will involve:

- a. notification and request for early input
- b. meeting, if desired by SD#75
- c. referral of draft Plan

3.5 Provincial and Federal Agencies

A number of provincial agencies, including the Ministries of Environment, Transportation, Forestry, Energy & Mines, and Agriculture, as well as the Land Reserve Commission, may have interests affected by the adoption of an OCP for Electoral Area “F”. Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) and Environment Canada may also have interests affected by the adoption of an OCP. Area “F” contains fish-bearing streams, wetlands, and other watercourses which fall under the jurisdiction of the Fisheries Act and provides habitat for species-at-risk. Consultation with the agencies mentioned above should be early. If desired by the agencies, existing committees can provide opportunities for ongoing consultation. Consultation with provincial and federal agencies will involve:

- a. notification and request for input
- b. existing committees - established forums for information exchange and discussion between FVRD and provincial and federal agency staff provide an opportunity for relatively frequent OCP consultation that should be exploited. These forum include:

¹ Stó:lō Nation Treaty Table. *Statement of Intent* (map). May 1, 2006.

- The ‘Environmental Review Committee’ (ERC), which involves representatives from MoE, DFO, MoT, FVRD and other agencies as required, meets quarterly.
 - The ‘Development Committee’ involving Ministry of Transportation, the Provincial Approving Officer and FVRD staff meet on a quarterly basis to discuss common files and issues.
- c. meetings with ministries and agencies as requested or required
- d. referral of draft Plan

4.0 Consideration of Consultation Results

The results from the consultation opportunities should be considered in the following ways:

- written submissions, survey results, etc, will be received by the EASC and Board;
- notes from APC meetings will be received by the EASC and Board;
- all submissions and consultation documentation will be available to the Board when it considers giving readings to, or adopting, an OCP bylaw; and,
- staff will compile and analyze input and summarize the information for the EASC and Board.

COST

The update of the OCP for Hatzic Prairie – McConnell Creek is identified as a priory project for 2008. It is budgeted for in the 2008 EA Planning budget.

COMMENTS

Director of Planning: reviewed and supported

Chief Administrative Officer: reviewed and supported