



Electoral Area 'H' North

May 2022 Community
Planning Conversations
Summary – Hills

Thursday, May 5th, 2022

6:00PM to 8:00 PM at Hills Fire/Community Hall
4480 Highway 6, Hills BC

Attendees: approximately 15 community members (including Marcy Mahr from the KCP); Electoral Area 'H' Director, Walter Popoff; RDCK Staff: Nelson Wight, Planning Manager; Paris Marshall Smith, Sustainability Planner; Corey Scott, Planner.

- Director Popoff and Nelson Wight, RDCK Planning Manager provided opening remarks
- Corey Scott, RDCK Planner gave presentation on "Planning 101" – the Land Use Planning Toolkit (question breaks provided following Official Community Plans/Development Permit Areas and Zoning Bylaws. Questions included in key themes listed below)

After the presentation, more information was provided on the following initiatives, which are separate from land use planning and the upcoming Official Community Plan (OCP) Review:

RDCK Sustainability Initiatives

Paris Marshall Smith PMarshallSmith@rdck.bc.ca, RDCK Sustainability Planner, introduced the following RDCK sustainability initiatives currently underway:

- *Slocan Lake and River Partnership (SLRP)* is an initiative to convene Slocan Lake and River partners (First Nations, Provincial, Federal and Local Government) and stakeholders (stewardship groups and utilities) to influence development on the lake and river and protect important Indigenous cultural and ecological places.
- *RDCK Climate Action Plan (CAP)* for 2023-2026 – the RDCK will be working with climate action groups across the RDCK to refine the Plan and then will be reaching out to rural areas to support neighbourhood level climate action.
- *2021 State of Climate Action (SoCA)*, the annual climate action reporting mechanism that can be found by following the link : <https://www.rdck.ca/assets/Services/Sustainability~and~Environmental~Initiatives/SoCA-2021-DIGITAL.pdf>
- *Watershed Governance Initiative (WGI)* is an initiative to create conditions for collaborative decision making regarding drinking water and watershed protection through a focus on relationship building, planning, mapping and monitoring as outlined below:
 1. Engage with the Indigenous Nations whose traditional lands lie within the Regional District;
 2. Engage with the Province of BC to better understand how to engage with decisions impacting water;
 3. Make information more accessible, beginning with collecting and displaying existing data through the [WGI Web Map](#); and,
 4. Sharing community stories through the [WGI Story Map](#)

Electoral Area 'H' Local Conservation Fund (Kootenay Conservation Program)

Marcy Mahr, Stewardship & Kootenay Connect Manager for the Kootenay Conservation Partnership (KCP), provided information on the proposed Electoral Area 'H' Local Conservation Fund. The Fund will be decided on by referendum at the time of the local government elections in October 2022.

The Fund, if approved in Area 'H', would be used to provide grants to support local conservation efforts focused on sustaining clean water and aquatic systems, as well as abundant wildlife and habitat, with the ultimate goal of supporting actions that provide healthy communities for future generations. If the Fund is approved, property

owners will be charged an annual parcel tax of \$15 per year. In areas in the Kootenays that already contribute to a Local Conservation Fund, it is often leveraged to apply for larger grants to achieve more impactful conservation benefits. For more information on Local Conservation Funds in the Kootenays, visit the following links:

- KCP's FAQ factsheet: https://kootenayconservation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/KCP-FAQ-LCF-General_2May2022.pdf
- Kootenay Lake Local Conservation Fund: <https://kootenayconservation.ca/kootenay-lake-local-conservation-fund/>

The remainder of the meeting was spent with residents asking questions and discussing land use planning and the upcoming OCP Review with RDCK staff and Director Popoff. The key themes raised in that Q&A and discussion period included:

- Protection of natural features and concerns for the natural environment
 - Can be done with a number of planning 'tools', more notably is Development Permit Areas (DPAs)
- Where do Development Permit Areas apply in Area 'H'?
 - Along riparian areas of watercourses (within 30 metres); Where intensive residential development is proposed (5+ new lots or buildings/dwelling units); where Industrial development is proposed on Industrially designated lands
- What effect does the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) have on planning?
 - RDCK regulations cannot supersede the ALR, and they are often aligned. Local governments have the ability to restrict on some kinds of farm uses in the ALR through zoning.
- How does the Watercourse Development Permit Area (WDPA) interact with other legislation (i.e. the *Riparian Areas Protection Regulation*)
 - The *Riparian Areas Protection Regulation* is not currently mandated by the Province in the RDCK. The WDPA requires that the same methodology be used when assessing impacts of development on riparian areas.
- The ability to have some sort of committee of community representatives for the duration of the OCP Review
- Can Development Permit Areas (DPAs) be used to direct where different uses go where in a community?
 - No, this can only be done through zoning or ALR regulations. DPAs guide how that kind of development takes place on the land (ex. Where it is located, how parking is oriented, lighting, landscaping, buffering from neighbouring properties, etc.)
- ALR already controls land use in many ways (ex. You would not be able to build a Tim Horton's in ALR)
- If zoning were introduced and there were minimum lot sizes, how does that impact properties that are smaller than the minimum lot size in their zone?
 - They become "existing non-conforming". Note: see point on non-conformity from New Denver meeting
- RDCK staff outlined what zoning has the ability to regulate
- Overview of land use bylaws that currently apply in Electoral Area 'H'
- The current floodplain bylaw is getting to be dated
 - Will be updated using the flood and steep creek hazard information collected and compiled during 2018-2019 by BGC Engineering
- What kinds of projects are funded by a Local Conservation Fund? Could it be used for something like the Snk'mip (Bonanza) Marsh Sanctuary?
 - Ecosystem and wetland restoration projects, invasive species monitoring and removal, grizzly bear coexistence solutions for rural property owners, etc.
 - Yes, it could have been used for something like the Snk'mip Marsh Sanctuary if it were in place when that work was being done

- Watershed health and water security; responding/adapting to climate change
- What will engagement look like for the OCP Review?
 - Mix of different outreach/consultation methods – in-person meetings, survey(s), online engagement tools, etc.
- The importance of an inclusive engagement process & outreach to seasonal residents
- How can an OCP affect change? Can it address environmental conservation?
 - Policies in an OCP guide decision-making for the RDCK and can play a role in advocacy to higher levels of government
- An OCP is a very broad document that attempts to accurately reflect a community's long term vision
- How does something like the Zincton proposal factor in this planning work?
 - Crown referrals (like the Zincton proposal) are responded to using policies and plans in place in the RDCK. This is why a robust planning process is key in any OCP creation/review.
- Importance of addressing climate change and cumulative impacts of Crown land uses in OCP Review