

Area Planning Committee
Sep 29/15
Meeting regarding Laketown Ranch proposal

Meeting starts 19:00

Membership introductions:

Jeff Abbott
(Aspen Gainer)
Don Beledessi
Larry Leischner
Orest Smycniuk
Mike (CVRD)
Margaret Syban?
Andrew
Paul Harder-fisheries
Greg Adams
Jennifer Kay
Nadine Kay
Mark Mitchell

Jeff Abbott: welcome guests. you can observe but not comment.

Greg Adams: our festival is 14 yrs old. growth is happening. growing pains 2-3 yrs ago, festival grew 100% per year. Last year grew 15%. exhibition grounds is not quite our ideal spot. majority of attendees come south, had to make left hand turns. some parking was offsite. raised \$20,750 for Cops for Cancer. site isn't perfectly conducive. actively looking for new site 2-3 yrs. Me and my family are from Cow Valley. originally looked at the Pallid turn off, wasn't ideal because near residential, and left hand turn. got site plus additional lands, everything lined up right. the reason this site...1) wanted to keep in Valley. 2) it's forestry land in bad shape, dump and debris site. borders on forestry and mountains, on other sides are govt lands, industry, first nations, and some residential, etc. existing noise and activity, existing recreation, existing industry... has a natural amphitheatre, sound shoots towards Saltair. back of site doesn't get the acoustics. family has a vested interest in bringing this to the property.

Jennifer: land use planner. (gives context, explains handout package). the proposal is to create a purpose-built venue. to have a purpose built venue means that all of the considerations can be addressed up front, and at the end there will be a venue that brings benefits to the community. The potential to use this as a catalyst for further development in the area. I felt that last night, the project vision was reaffirmed by the people that spoke in the meeting. we've spent a considerable amount of time assessing the land use considerations. lots of thought and research behind application to get it to this point.

Shawn Carlow: to further discussion, I would like to make a motion to approve discussion of the application.

seconded by Orest.

Shawn:

- Elk--wants info on how they will be addressed. Also want to discuss the pedestrian and bicycle traffic. I believe to say there is little of this type of use is inaccurate.
- Number one concern from community is traffic issue. Concern, not so much left/right turn but more what happens at the Lake Cow turn off, and hi way 18. I believe it is a badly designed intersection. how do we mitigate traffic there without traffic light, because consensus is a traffic light is totally unwanted. what if others try to reroute and also block up other roads.
- I am not a fan at all of country music, nor of large festival. But I'm an air show fanatic. Noise doesn't really concern me...But I know noise is an issue for some people. But I look at it as a trade off. I go to Abbotsford and expect them to put up with noise from what I like, I'll do the same here.
- I'm looking for a year-round economic opportunity...will a campground open for a few weeks of the year do that? will this venue be open for more of the year? I haven't seen that mentioned at all. we need more than just a splash in the pan to make a real diff in the community.
- limiting number of events? I agree for large events, but I disagree for smaller events, do we need to limit smaller events?
- I open discussion to APC.

Greg Adams:

- large venue that we use for music....we anticipate 10-15 days make to level of Sunfest or lower (eg vic symphony, tom cochrane, etc). other events...we've talked about recreation/music venue...we've talked about marathons...already had discussions for weekend runs with wrap-up festival. crankworks (bicycles), car shows, lake days, fundraisers, yes we fully support a certain amount of recreation. no to family reunions. large functions.
- not a silver bullet that will solve all problems. but this can be a shot in the arm to jump start. we need to jump start things here, improve economics.
- econ. development office just got a big shot. promote your area, which will have nothing but benefits.
- in Victoria, saw airshow, drove a 15-min drive, took 1.5 hrs because roads were shut down etc.
- this is the beginning.

Margaret: transportation...that lake cow/youbou will be a headache. most likely flaggers there for the entire weekend, letting locals go through before festival goers. flaggers will be important. depending on size of event, may not need individual traffic management plans. Each event will need to have traffic considerations associated with it. I agree that there are pedestrians and recreational users that walk along the highway and ride bikes. not a lot of shoulder and buffer. yes, that will need consideration.

Greg Adams...jump in. we will be paying police to work at our event. you're used to having 3 rcmp, now there will be 8-11. at large events people will slow down. youbou/lake cow highway, and north shore road...we've never been mandated, we were the ones that initiated the traffic plan, not local govt. we will proactively address. discussion of personal experiences...we will have flaggers, which will be really useful.

Shawn: concerns I've heard are about traffic moving very slow, making drive to Duncan into an hour. heard from daughter that traffic management was amazing, just wondering how it will work for us specifically.

Paul...: I wasn't saying there is no elk, was citing past research. what I tried to convey in my report was that highest habitat use in summer was small, and in other areas.

Shawn: well, I think there's lots of elk there, just wanted to ask can you guys deal with that? how are you going to mitigate it?

Paul: we can definitely take a look at that.

Jeff Abbott: what's crankworks?

Greg Adams: downhill pedal bike racing. what we were thinking here is having a camp space for those cyclists, draw people who don't want to pay Whistler/Bear Mountain prices.

...

When Andrew does the acoustical study, he shows the peaks between 930?-11?...that is in contract that they play at 100%...the other acts play at lesser volume.

Don Beledessi: concerned about zoning that its going for...a P5. how can you rationalize that Sunfest is in the same areas as non-profits?

Mike: that's a question for me. it's one of these unique uses that is sort of commercial, but sort of not. example, the campground could be a C4. that zoning was all me, but that zone can be discussed. other P zones are institutional, parks, we can talk more.

Don: lack of info on Phase 2. some concern about size of roadways in campsite.

Greg: sat down with Mike, took existing camping bylaws, more or less ran with those, so in that zones there will be a max of 350 campsites, recreational green sites, some sites for RVs and park models, camping cabins with no bathrooms (like KOA). roadways we adopted the numbers directly from existing CVRD bylaws. any water or sewer, we will have to meet VIHA standards... the bylaws will be written with half of this in there. the other modification we made was a max of 350 camp sites. only thing we modified was about the community washrooms. these will be serviced with water and sewer. we lowered the expectations for how many showers and toilets required because people use rvs that have their own toilets and showers.

Mike: a lot of the old bylaws are redundant these days, so we've made some changes.

Don: do you have a map or more info for phase 2? people are feeling concerned for the future and for future details.

Greg: some is site specific, affected by topography. Mike, I have to come back and get permits and proper zoning, right?

Mike: yes.

Greg: think combining high quality camp ground with Mexico resort. that is sort of our vision. pool, sand pits for volley ball, etc etc.

Mike: I think at this stage, they're asking for approval for 350 camp sites, but it depends on planning. if they were to have a very detailed plan right now, if they have to deviate, people might be upset because things are different from the overly exact plan. We could have a more detailed review by identifying that area as a "development permit required" area in the future. failing that, it will just be basic parameters, and will only need building permits associated with basic zoning.

Greg: we talked about hits. we're not building wooden decks, not leaving car on blocks for weeks. we had criteria in the plan how long campers are allowed to stay, what condition the site needs to be left in once campers leave, etc.

Don: 15 days of use is reasonable for festival use. I think 15 is plenty and the rest should be under an event permit.

Mike: you're alluding to the draft bylaw which says 30. it was a draft and I just wanted to throw in a number. we don't really want to try to regulate volume (sound). we thought we'd take a diff approach instead and have a maximum number of days where that event is permitted, as well as a number of hours per day where volume levels are permitted. The number of 30 is currently just a draft, we can talk about it more later.

Greg: why we came up with 30 days is, so if we do run 15 days, and then 16,17 days we could get Victoria symphony, we want to be able to accept. at different time of year. and that doesn't limit us from other types of events, just high noise events.

Larry Leishcner: I'm in favour of this proposal. I'm impressed you're local. I can think what happened to Merritt...that should have been something that grew and became a huge festival but they dropped the ball, and it became raunchy and unpleasant. it came to an end and they've been trying to resurrect it better. it's an example of poor management. I'm not a huge fan of such events, keep your drunkenness to yourself and I'm fine. reputation of Sunfest however is good.

You brought up crankworks. for example, Burns Lake...

Cowichan Valley ain't Merritt, and it ain't Burns Lake. We're a pristine area and we want it to be maintained, but we need economic development.

Yount school--YCA has talked about Yount school...discusses example of Wells, an old mining town. took over school and turn it into an arts school and festival headquarters, workshops, etc. I'm thinking out loud...I've really enjoyed Coldsnap (winter music fest). What they do there is put on arts and music events for all sorts of audiences.

I could see that the school could benefit from this sort of thing. Given a jump start from Sunfest, I could see that happening. I'm in favour of anything that is going to assist the community staying vibrant. I looked at the demographic of the meeting. Old. everyone there. and I'm an old person. that alarms me. so anything that we can do to invigorate the entire Cowichan valley and specifically the lake communities...maybe even a few kids don't have to leave. even a few can stay. eg. Tim Horton's.

I'm in favour. I have some concerns. I think they will be answered. I hope we move forward, eyes wide open. I hope onwards and upwards.

Greg: I was hoping the M-word wouldn't come up. but in our camp, we've used Merritt as the poster child for what not to do. Previous owner destroyed what could have been great. we are the exact opposite. last year as an example, cops called and said what is the policy on confederate flag? we said no. we can make our own rules and we don't want bad feelings.

Orest: I've been here for 30 yrs. I gotta give you kudos for not just saying "oh you'll be fine, don't worry". My question is about fire protection.

(lady): if there is a fire at the site, there is no coverage by Lake Cow.

Orest: how will that be addressed.

Mike: I raised it in the APC report. precondition of adoption for this is that they are in the process of adopting this as a detail. sounds like lake cow is presuming it will be in the Lake Cow fire protection area. there is an administrative process that needs to be followed.

Greg: we've had discussions with Doug Knott about dry chem etc. we don't want to even start clean up until we go thru this process. we do have 24-hr fire patrol, with equipment. we bought our own fire truck. for initial response, we didn't want to tax existing fire departments.

Orest: you have a truck. anybody know how to run it?

Greg: short version. connected through acquaintances, purchased truck. my intention is to put resources together to work out resources, fully trained volunteer fire fighters that will trade time for bonuses.

(lady): once you get water on the site, and access improved, vegetation management, improves site conditions.

Greg: current site conditions are one big campfire. piles of wood, tires, etc.

Jeff: Orest is Youbou fire chief. WE have a mutual aid agreement.

Greg: clarify that I meant to say Youbou AND Lake Cow...

Jeff: going to meeting, I gauged about 70 for, 30 against. discussion was good. you answered a lot of my questions that people brought up. medical, fire, police, etc. Are you folks always going to be in charge? will it always be in your jurisdiction? eg hell's angels.

Greg: one hell's angel showed up. cops said what's policy? I said, welcome, but no colours, no vest.

Jeff: what if someone wants to rent facility?

Greg: Jack Peake asked this question. My family has a vested interest in making this work. I don't know how you could put a bylaw in, but if one can be drafted I'll consider it. We have a vested interest. but we're not looking for raves, not electronic music. I'm looking for Michael buble, vic symphony, Carrie Underwood, etc.

Jeff: so won't be able to phone Travelocity and book whole thing.

Greg: example of small hippie festival in Renfrew, 2500 people. he's had some issues. maybe someone like him could use space. he would have to meet all criteria such as traffic management, medical...we're not going to let someone in that doesn't know how to run an event because it'll look bad on us.

Jeff: can you see yourself ever selling campsites?

Greg: don't see us selling., one of the things we've thought of is selling a 20-yr membership to 100 sites, which helps you get some capital together.

Jeff: beer gardens? liquor permits?

Greg: all permits are mandated. other option is licensing an area of the site. I think you're able to get a dozen or 15 permits per year. if we do that, a percentage of \$ goes back to community.

Jeff: myself, I'd rather see it all on site, so that people don't get drunk and drive. ballfest-mesachie lake. we know the drill. I think it will take about 3 yrs to figure out the demand.

Greg: we have had discussions already to say get ready. Wal-Mart for 2 yrs in a row have sold out of chips, cheeses, etc. there's been lots of discussion around how to make things happen. we're open to everything. Calgary stampede. same thing can happen. whole town embraces it. we don't drive the whole bus, we bring the bus we need others to get on board.

Jeff: Mike, bylaws?

Mike: I need a reasonable community plan, and a reasonable there's a few loose ends. if the APC wants to get into that level of detail, we can but it's not mandatory. maybe on the fundamentals. should it be called p zone, etc, and everything else anyone wants to discuss. I'm looking for policy direction on details.

Jeff: can we separate the bylaws out to another meeting?

Mike: we could. last night, I presented a possible timeline. I was originally hoping to get report to an oct 6 meeting, but I don't think it's going to happen. we shouldn't rush. let's have time and go over details, have another meeting if APC wants.

Don: yes, sounds good.

Shawn: sure. I'll amend my original motion that we give approval in principle to project, and work on bylaws at next meeting preferably sooner than later. don't want to delay applicants any longer than necessary. no gains in delays. don't want to delay 10 yrs, don't want to ram it thru.

change motion that we'll agree in principle, and address bylaws as soon as possible.

Mike: next meeting is 6, can't make it, next is 20th. deadline would be a week prior to 20th.

Jeff: I can call deadline for 1 wk tonight.

Mike: yes, I can be here, or someone can.

Jeff: yes, some people feel that it's a rush but you've done a lot of homework. I don't think it's been rushed. you've had all your info in line.

Mike: an example from last night, someone said they applied in 2013, and this application has gone through faster. the consideration is the quality of the application, and higher quality applications can be passed faster.

Jeff: any more questions?

Don: calls question

Jeff: question called.

Shawn, Don, Orest raise hands.

Shawn moves to adjourn meeting, Larry seconded. 822 pm.