

Summary of August 20, 2015 CAG Meeting

Based on early stakeholder input, work is progressing on the Municipal Development Plan. The Town has drafted the Municipal Development Plan and will seek feedback from the community through a series of engagement activities over the next month. It is anticipated that the Plan will go to Council in October for first reading.

Discussions with the Province regarding the location of the wildlife corridor through the Smith Creek area are ongoing. The Town is at the table and active in the discussions.

Technical studies are ongoing and will be discussed further at the workshops in September as opportunities and constraints.

The CAG received presentations from two CAG members representing the wildlife constituencies in Canmore.

- A history of the conversations regarding corridor locations, the outstanding issues and the previous proposals for the location of the corridors provided a good background for CAG members.
- A couple of studies were highlighted to show how animals move through the corridors. CAG members had a discussion of motivation for wildlife movements through and around existing corridors.
- TSW met and notes from that meeting were presented. They continue to have concerns over the process and the perception that there is a lack of transparency. More work will be done to clarify and detail the engagement activities proposed.
- All agreed that a focus on solutions is critical to the success of the Smith Creek process. Past issues form part of the discussion but solutions must be the focus.

TSMV presented four very high level concepts for the Smith Creek area. These draft concepts were intended to show CAG members the possibilities and provide a foundation for the workshops in September.

No plans exist at this moment in time and TSMV is looking forward to working with the CAG and the community to develop a plan for Smith Creek area.

Development Principles and the Recreation Presentation were tabled to the next meeting in September.

SMITH CREEK ASP Community Advisory Group Meeting Number Three: AUGUST 20th, 2015 Elevation Place

In Attendance

- Wanda Bogdane, Recreation
- John Borrowman, Town Council - Mayor
- Kyla Conner, Canmore Resident
- Ken Davies, Recreation
- Karsten Heuer, Environmental
- Pat Kamenka, Canmore Resident
- Sean Krausert, Town Council – Councillor
- Paul Lessard, TSMV Resident, Canmore Business
- Chris Ollenberger, Owners Representative for TSMV

Regrets

- Andrew Nickerson, Canmore Business and Tourism

CAG Support

- Lori Van Rooijen, Facilitator
- Tracy Woitenko, Town of Canmore
- Jessica Karpat, QPD
- Kate van Fraassen, Town of Canmore
- Alaric Fish, Town of Canmore

Agenda

1. What are we Hearing?
2. Approval of the Meeting notes July 16, 2015
3. Town of Canmore – MDP Presentation
4. Update on Wildlife Corridors
5. CAG Presentations
6. TSMV Vision and ideas/concepts
7. Development Principles

The meeting started at 7:05 pm.

The facilitator made some opening remarks. There are many items on the agenda so we may not get through all of it. She was encouraged with the amount of dialogue that was occurring between the meetings and asked members of the CAG to continue these important conversations.

Agenda Item Number One: What are we hearing?

Several members provided insights to what they were hearing within the community. A summary follows.

- Desire to see planning occur with the Resort Centre ASP - why do one without the other?
- We need to deal with infrastructure and congestion in the Town centre with additional development – some are concerned with how the current pressure can be addressed.
- There may be an opportunity to develop almost a sister town so people don't have to come to town centre for all services.
- A desire and need for affordable housing
- Lots of myths and confusion around existing trails, perception that TSMV feels like a ghost town. How can we ensure there are more activities in the development area?
- Three Sisters is only hospitable to young families in certain areas, concerns around multiple "towns being created" cautionary tale from Squamish has three "quasi" towns don't want that need to keep connection to town centre.
- Lots of curiosity in the environmental community as to where discussions are at with the Province. People are generally pleased that the Town is involved in the discussion but there is an interest in amending Term of Reference for the ASP to change wording to ensure town remains at the table until development proceeds.

Update: What is happening with the MD of Bighorn's proposed industrial ASP?

At this time, the Town has let the MD know the Town is interested in mediation. While Bighorn has not approved the ASP yet, if they do the Town of Canmore may decide to appeal the decision. This appeal process is outlined within the Municipal Government Act – a municipality can appeal a decision of another municipality if they feel they are negatively impacted by that decision. If the Town proceeds, the first required step is mediation. Once an appeal is made, development cannot move forward until an agreeable solution is found through mediation or it could proceed to the Municipal Government Board for a decision.

Agenda Item Number Two: Approval of the Notes from July 16, 2015

The draft notes were reviewed and approved by members of the CAG. In future consideration should be given to the following points.

- CAG member: Would really like a one page summary of the notes that can be used in their own consultations. The notes provide good detail for what was discussed at the meeting but a summary could serve a key talking points
- CAG member: Provide a one page summary on the engagement notes, so one page summary would help with that too!
- CAG member: We need to be careful with the wording. The CAG is not making decisions so make sure to note it as a recommendation.
- CAG member: need to ensure the notes don't suggest full agreement when perhaps we haven't gotten there yet.

A hard copy of the Phase One Public Engagement Report was distributed at the meeting.

Agenda Item Number Three: Town of Canmore – Municipal Development Plan (MDP) Presentation

The Town provided a presentation on the draft Municipal Development Plan and the process for public consultation, revisions and approval. The Presentation is attached for CAG Members. A copy of one of the draft MDP brochures on “Developing near Steep Creeks” was also handed out at the meeting. A number of questions were asked during the presentation. A summary follows:

What are the acronyms LUB and ARP?

LUB refers to the Town's Land Use Bylaw and ARP refers to an Area Redevelopment Plan, for example Bow Valley Trail and Teepee Town.

What is the relationship between the timing of draft MDP and the Smith Creek ASP process? What do we use in the interim?

The draft MDP has been released to the public for input. It is anticipated that the Plan will be revised and will return to Council for first reading on October 20th, and a public hearing tentatively scheduled at the end of November. Until this draft Municipal Development Plan is given third reading we operate under current policies. As we plan for Smith Creek we will want to keep the directions of the new MDP in mind as it sets the future direction of the Town. It is anticipated that the Smith Creek ASP policies will be drafted following the adoption of the new MDP and will be in alignment with it.

Who was involved in the MDP process? Who was the typical stakeholder interviewed?

Based on the extensive work that was recently undertaken in drafting the Community Sustainability Plan, the direction from Council was to target initial public consultation around four major issues that were identified. The engagement took place in August 2014. There were a range of stakeholders including CB&T, CCHC, the Environmental Advisory Review Committee & BOWDA that were consulted to create the draft.

Can you provide some clarification on the change to have scope of an EIS in the EIS policy versus in the MDP itself?

The purpose of the MDP is to provide high level guidance and policy direction for future land use decisions. One goal in drafting the new MDP is to remove any “regulations” that impact day-to-day planning activities. The Town uses Policies to guide decisions that involve technical considerations, for example the Engineering Design and Construction Guidelines. Administration is proposing to retain the details of when an EIS is required to be prepared in the MDP (which includes development within a habitat patch or wildlife corridor or a new ASP). The details of preparing an EIS and the scope/content of that EIS are contained within the new EIS Policy. The new EIS Policy would be presented to Council for approval at the same time as the MDP is adopted.

The Town suggested that they were happy to have more detailed conversations with anyone about this change in focus.

The EIS policy conversation sounds really granular and detailed to have it in the MDP, is that a correct understanding?

That is correct.

How does a developer work when there are two MDPs at the moment? Are we expecting TSMV to follow both the existing MDP and the proposed?

The two documents are not too far apart however, the proposed MDP has much more clarity. The decision on the MDP will likely be made before the Smith Creek ASP policies are developed. The plan is to seek first reading in October, a public hearing in November and then gain approval after that. There is a risk for the developer and we could wait but we may end up waiting and waiting and this will impact the timing of the Smith Creek ASP. Timing is also good for topics like the wildlife corridor, when it gets resolved through Smith Creek process it can feed into updating the final draft of the MDP.

Why do we have Conservation Easements?

Conservation Easement layers within the Three Sisters area were shown in a GIS program and provided clarification of what lands are contained within Conservation Easement – there is a portion of Stewart Creek Golf Course for example. Conservation Easements are applied to limit the type of development in a particular area. There are a few organizations that can hold an easement and the government is one of them as are organizations like the Nature Conservancy. There are very clear requirements for conservation easements. However, the rules have changed, and new provincial legislation allows the Province to assign the easement to any other qualified organizations under the Alberta Land Stewardship Act and this is problematic.

A CAG member expressed that the recent changes to Provincial legislation, the ability to assign an easement to a different party can happen very easily and quickly and at the complete discretion of the government. As a business operator dealing with the Province and dealing with a different entity can have drastic impacts on your business model.

A CAG member did some research on the benefits of a conservation easement compared to, for example, a Wildland Park designation which is a little bit more binding. The issue is with the ability to assign an easement under the Alberta Land Stewardship Act to a different party to it which can happen very quickly.

Agenda Item Four: Update on Wildlife Corridor Discussions:

In Camera

Agenda Item Five: CAG Member Presentations: Wildlife Corridors

Karsten Heuer provided a presentation on Wildlife Corridors based on his experience in the area. [The Presentation is attached for CAG Members.](#) These presentations allow members of the CAG

to present their views and the views of their constituents to the rest of the Group. A summary follows.

- Corridors are important for the continent, not just about linking Canmore to Banff and Kananaskis but to other areas in North America.
- We are trying to reverse the pattern of extinction (corridors are the antidote to wildlife extinctions) and once you cut connections and species left on islands that is when extinction happens.
- Example animal - Pluie the wolf and her movements are 20X the size of Banff National Park.
- Individual protected areas are not enough – corridors are part of larger systems.
- There are lots of direct examples of regional and continental importance of our local corridors.
- Canmore is a trailblazer in trying to accommodate and balance wildlife corridors with development.
- Generally, what we have assigned as corridors are not the preferred routes for animals. Development is displacing animals from where they would prefer to be.
- Karsten suggested that there is a preference for low and flat although wildlife will use steeper slopes even if their usual preference is not to do so. The question is how much can we push them? There were conflicting views and observations on this issue.

A number of questions were asked during the presentation. A summary follows.

What about the attraction of food? Does that impact movement?

There was a general discussion around the motivation of animals to use the established corridors. There was some discussion that animals will default to what is easiest – cost vs benefit. When the berries (i.e. food source) are removed from the power lines, we see less animals travelling through. If we can reduce “lunch box” options (i.e. berries and human garbage) within the Town, the better the chance the existing corridors will function the way they are supposed to. There was some discussion that despite the motivation, we could be displacing animals from where they might prefer to be.

What do the BCEAG Guidelines say about Corridor Widths?

As corridor length increases so too does the width of the corridor. The BCEAG has a sliding scale regarding the corridor widths. If BCEAG applied in full extent the corridor extends across to north of Highway 1. BCEAG doesn't apply to TSMV, however, conversations about movement of across valley corridors have been discussed with Province for a number of years. And, while there were many on the CAG that believe the conversations around the location of the corridors are headed in a positive direction, it is the hope that we will be able to come to a reasonable compromise. TSMV is open to these discussions and that is why they are at this table. Also, having the Town participating in the discussions with the Province is positive.

What about the functionality of existing corridors?

There was a debate about this around the CAG table. Some suggested that animals use the corridors in different ways at different times of the year but that the corridors are not functioning the way they were intended to because of steepness, the width of the corridor and the types of

human activity that occurs in the corridors. Others believed that some of the reasons carnivores use lower slopes is because that is where their food is. One interpretation is that the tracking map shown indicates more where food is not where movement preference is. The existing corridors have the ability to function but we are reducing its function due to availability of food. This needs to be differentiated in the discussion. Some members appreciated the conversation and the ability of this Group to have robust discussions about difficult issues from different perspectives. If Corridors are wide enough animals can navigate around the development that is there, and "attractant management" needs to be an important consideration. We can also ensure use of the corridors through things like true fences or development fences to discourage or encourage movement by both animals and humans. Conclusion was that this is a complex issue.

CAG Presentation: TSWF Meeting – Paul Lessard

July 27th Karsten Heuer and Paul Lessard met with Three Sisters for Wildlife (TSFW). Notes from this meeting were provided in hard copy for members of the CAG.

- Concerns were raised by TSMV about the appearance of "secrecy" with the CAG, the ASP process and particularly discussions regarding the Wildlife corridors. There was some concern at the TSWF meeting as people struggled with the process and the apparent lack of transparency.
- It was reported that TSWF has 500 followers on Facebook and this provided a large number of stakeholders. Others cautioned the weight given to the 500 likes – it doesn't mean support or even representation. Regardless, the Facebook page may be a way of engaging this group in the process. It may be a good step for actually engaging with group and to keep working with them so the process doesn't feel so "secret" to them and they see the value in the process.
- There were questions by the TSWF about the experience of those around the table. Did CAG members truly represent the community? The issues? Others on the CAG were concerned about the statements made by TSWF suggesting that the issues and constituencies were very well represented and the CAG as a whole was well balanced.
- Some members of the CAG felt we need to be able to focus on solutions and not just complaining about the process or the past. The development will go forward and the key is how to develop solutions that balance the a) the desires of the community, b) the constraints of the land, c) the Towns requirements for development and long term sustainability and d) the owners need for a return on investment. It is not just about one single issue such as wildlife, it is about balance of all issues but also capturing opportunities.
- Based on the intensity of the discussion at the CAG meeting, there is a need to deal with this over the next month. The Facilitator will work with parties to find a way through some of the issues and the Project Team will put more thought and detail into the opportunities for public engagement.

CAG Presentation: Recreation

Members of the CAG decided to leave the recreation presentation for another night and just go through the vision piece from TSMV and Three Sisters for Wildlife meeting notes. [A presentation on recreation was handed out at the meeting.](#)

Agenda Item Six: TSMV Vision and Concept Ideas

- Members of the CAG heard that the ownership group is open to discussions and that is why we are all here. They do, however, need to see rationale for different ideas. It is important that the financial goals of the ownership group are met.
- Members of the CAG were presented with high level ideas for the vision of the development for the Smith Creek area. None of the concepts are set in stone and all are intended to promote discussion amongst CAG members. In the end, there may be parts of each that will end up in the final concept for Smith Creek.
- Topography plays a role in all of the concept ideas. Wildlife is a key focus of the vision interesting options from around the world were shown and discussed (e.g., the ha-ha wall idea from the UK). Each of the concept ideas provided a different level of density, for example, a retail park, which might not work but is worth exploring. And, one showed the majority of the unfinished golf course as developed.
- What was shown in the Resort Centre generally aligns with what is within the Resort Centre ASP. Some of the concepts/ideas shown and discussed would require some changes to the Resort Centre ASP and others no change at all.

What impact, if any, would these concepts/ideas have on the interchange at Deadman's Flats?

Alberta Transportation is already discussing this and it is more driven by development in Deadman's Flats than in Smith Creek.

What about commercial elements?

There are different potentials in different areas, but likely no mini downtown. We don't want to significantly impact the established commercial area downtown. There are some opportunities for light industrial particularly by the quarry or potentially a different type of commercial development. Timelines for the quarry operations will depend on what we come up with as a concept. If one of our ideas is more economically viable than a quarry, then we could change it.

How much financial viability has been calculated at this stage of the game?

These are still concepts that need to be modelled financially. We hope to have some of this done at least at a high level as a result of the September workshops.

What is the market or what segment of the markets? What demographics are you trying to appeal to?

Usually, we would look at this up front. However, this time, we are starting with Town and community to develop ideas. The intention is to complete a feasibility on the concept once

developed to see if the concept is economically viable and then come back to the group with any changes. We are trying to not let the market fully guide what is going to happen here. There is no question that market is a key factor and will be a strong guide. We can build the plans if there are no buyers.

Will there be details clearly showing development constraints at the workshops?

Yes, there will. Tonight's presentation is like a primer for the workshops so CAG members have a sense of what will be seen, the kind of work that will happen, and the kinds of outcomes we can expect.

What is the overall vision for the land? How does this development support or grow the vision for the Town?

CAG members discussed the need for a better understanding of the vision for the development not the pieces that will make the development. For example, what is the development trying to do? How does the development fit into the vision of the Town and its citizens for the future? Is it environmental sustainability, if so, what does that mean? Is it financial health through increased tax base? Is it an opportunity for families to live and stay in Canmore through affordable housing? Who is the market (s) for the development? Is it a world leading resort centre and tourism attraction? Is it recreation opportunities for Canmore and visitors to the area?

"Mining the Future" may be a document that can help guide the bigger picture for this development – an opportunity to nest the concept for Smith Creek development within the context of the longer-term vision for Canmore. Although it was noted that "Mining the Future" more or less injured the financial feasibility of some key ideas.

Agenda Item Number Seven: Guiding Principles for Development

Item was tabled for discussion at the Workshops.