

Minutes of a Public Hearing in regards to By-law No 992/14, held in the Clearwater County Council Chambers on August 12, 2014.

The Public Hearing was called to order at 11:00 A.M. with the following being Present:

Deputy Reeve:	Earl Graham
Councillors:	John Vandermeer
	Theresa Laing
	Kyle Greenwood
	Jim Duncan
	Curt Maki
Chief Administrative Officer:	Ron Leaf
Director, Planning:	Rick Emmons
Director, Community & Protective Services:	Ted Hickey
Recording Secretary:	Tracy Haight
Administration:	Keith McCrae
	Kim Jakowski
	Dustin Bisson
	Whitney Sosnoski
Media:	Sarah Maetche
Public:	

Richard Livingston	Eva Livingston
Roy Buckley	Dan Eckford
Warren Hall	R. Guenther
Stacey Grantham	Chris Cassin
Shirley Hagerman	Hilda Gamble
K.D. Brown	Kerry Marsh
Lori McKeown	L. Blanchard
Jude Johnston	Stan Johnston

Deputy Reeve Graham outlined the hearing agenda and process to be used for the Public Hearing.

Kim Jakowski provided history and an overview on the application from The Whole Life Institute Corporation to amend the land use bylaw on SE 17 35 05 W5M, containing 152.61 acres to redistrict 10 acres of the 152.61 acre parcel from Agriculture District "A" to Institutional District "P".

Ms. Jakowski noted legal and physical access exist for the property and surrounding land uses.

Ms. Jakowski presented information on Clearwater County's Land Use Bylaw; noted sections of the Municipal Development Plan applicable to the application; and noted boundary amendments to the original application from 10.0 acres to 18.0 acres.

Ms. Jakowski stated at the regular Council meeting held on June 24, 2014, Council reviewed and granted first reading to Bylaw 992/14. As required by legislation, comments were invited from the adjacent landowners and referral agencies. Upon consideration of the representations made at the Public Hearing, Council may consider whether or not to grant second and third readings to the bylaw.

The Chair invited questions of the Development Officer regarding the application from Council.

No questions were asked by Council.

Comments received from agencies.

Clearwater County Public Works – Eric Hansen

Generally Public Works has no objection to the development. Access to the existing parcel is currently obtained via Highway 22 which is under the jurisdiction of the Province of Alberta.

FortisAlberta Inc.

Fortis has no objection and they require no easement.

Alberta Transportation – Sandy Choi

Further to the above referral, we would offer no objections to the land use redesignation of the subject land from Agriculture District “A” to Institutional District “P”.

A Roadside Development Permit was issued for the proposed operation of a wellness centre on January 15, 2014, when the first original development permit was applied for.

Municipal Planning Commission

The Municipal Planning Commission reviewed the application on July 10, 2014. The Municipal Planning Commission recommends that Council favorably consider granting second and third readings to the subject Land Use Bylaw Amendment.

Clearwater Regional Fire Rescue Services – Cammie Laird, Fire Chief

Setbacks from buildings and forested areas are sufficient and meet the intent of Fire Smart principles. Two designated smoking areas are well maintained and away from forest, combustibles, and buildings. Installation of smoking receptacles and fire extinguishers to follow.

Property owners have indicated intent to install a pump and access for water from a nearby pond.

Installation of an approved Fire Department lock box at gate is recommended.

Chief Laird wished that the weight capacity of the private bridge weight determined if bridge structure is capable of bearing Regional Fire equipment.

The Chair invited the applicant to speak to the redistricting application.

Christopher Cassin, President, Whole Life Institute (WLI), stated the application to redistrict is to allow for increased client capacity. Mr. Cassin noted WLI is looking forward to working with and in the community.

Stacy Grantham, General Manager and Co-founder, WLI, stated on July 17, 2014, WLI held an open house to provide information and address concerns regarding the addictions treatment centre. She noted attendees, efforts taken to notify neighbours and the public of the open house, and that representatives from WLI met privately with several of the neighbours.

Ms. Grantham noted efforts taken by WLI to address public and client safety concerns as follows:

- Designated smoking areas are equipped with fire extinguishers.
- WLI will adhere to guidelines as referenced by the FireSmart program and implement an emergency response policy.
- WLI will complete minor improvements as recommended by Alberta Health Services for food, adult care, and drinking water safety.
- WLI will provide clients with information on Shell's Emergency Response Plan upon arrival.
- All employees hold valid first aid certificates.
- WLI will provide clients with a wildlife awareness guide, bear packs, and updated reports of bear and/or cougar sightings as they occur.
- WLI will complete minor building improvements immediately, as recommended by the building inspection report.

Ms. Grantham noted efforts taken by WLI to address public and client security concerns as follows:

- Cameras monitor the building and plans are underway to install cameras at the gated property entrance.

- Walking trails will include directional signage.
- Procedures and policies for client admission, drug/alcohol testing, and personal/property searches are in place.
- Fully trained employees and on-call medical/psychiatric services are in place to handle medical emergencies and mental health issues.
- Procedures, including hourly bed checks and perimeter searches, are in place for staff to monitor clients at night.
- A site inspection, conducted by the RCMP, noted WLI established procedures to ensure the security of clients and employees.
- Clients will not have access to ATV's or snowmobiles.

Ms. Grantham stated proposed future development is for a maximum of 20 clients only.

Ms. Grantham stated future meetings for the local "12 Step" members have been postponed pending discussion of possible solutions to decrease the amount of traffic on the shared road.

Ms. Grantham stated WLI is developing a communication strategy that would involve a community member as a liaison and that WLI's goal is for transparency within the community.

The Chair invited anyone in favour of the application to speak.

Dave Brown noted the location of his property and stated that although he has concerns with future development and increased traffic, he believes the centre provides opportunity to assist people in need of treatment. Mr. Brown noted he does not think WLI would be objectionable neighbours.

Shirley Hagerman stated there is a need for additional treatment facilities such as WLI, as government-funded facilities are overcrowded. Ms. Hagerman stated she is in favour of the facility and the treatment that it provides to people in need.

Hilda Gamble stated the facility would serve the community and noted she believes disruption of quality of life on neighbouring properties will not be an issue. Ms. Gamble noted WLI thoroughly addressed all concerns and there is a need for a treatment facility such as this.

The Chair asked for written comments in favour of the application from the public.

No written submissions in favour of the application were received.

The Chair invited anyone in opposition of the application to speak.

Kerry Marsh noted the location of his property and stated his concerns with risk of fire, clients encountering wildlife, "drug drops" on the property's perimeter, the facility's close proximity to Highway 22, and that the proposed cabins are not visible from the main building.

Mr. Marsh noted concerns with violent client behavior; trespassing on his property; the number of proposed clients; and that the private facility is unregulated by the government.

Mr. Marsh noted concerns with the effect of the development's rezoning on the value and future development of his property.

Roy Buckley noted the location of his property and stated concerns with increased traffic on the shared property access road; trespassing on his property; employees' qualifications and credentials; and the effect of the proposed facility on the value of his and neighbouring properties.

Lori McKeown noted the location of her property and stated her concern with a private facility unregulated and unlicensed by the government; experience of employees; potential relaxation of standards; and questioned the necessity of another private treatment centre in the Province.

Ms. McKeown noted concerns with risk of fire; client drowning and suicide; wildlife encounters; clients getting lost; and criminal/violent activities on the property; facility's close proximity to Highway 22; trespassing on neighbouring properties; increased traffic on the shared access road; and property values in the area.

Ms. McKeown stated should Council approve the redistricting, she recommends perimeter fencing, orange vests and electronic monitoring bracelets for clients, lock up of lighters, cigarettes, vehicles, and phones from clients, and obtaining a traffic study from Alberta Transportation.

Richard Livingston noted the location of his property and stated concerns with the operation of an addiction treatment centre in a rural area and the consequences of addiction behaviour.

Mr. Livingston noted concerns with the facility's close proximity to Highway 22, wildlife encounters, private facility unregulated by government, and the operation of an unlicensed business in Clearwater County.

The Chair asked for written comments in opposition of the application from the public.

Kim Jakowski presented a letter from Ron and Karen Edwards that noted concerns with the following: emergency planning; fire; wildlife encounters; shared access road; supply of electricity, water and septic system to the expanded facility; increased traffic; monitoring of clients; and the suitability of a multi-dwelling facility in the area.

The Chair invited the applicant to express any final comments on the application.

Mr. Cassin thanked everyone for their comments and stated WLI's treatment philosophy offers a complete package that is incomparable to other treatment centres.

Mr. Cassin noted concerns with staff's ability to operate a treatment facility are unwarranted. He noted all staff hold valid first aid certificates, addictions counsellors are accredited, and other support staff are certified in their area of expertise.

Mr. Cassin noted WLI will address increased traffic concerns by admitting clients one day per week.

Mr. Cassin stated WLI apologizes for any inconvenience caused by increased traffic resulting from hosting a 12-Step Program meeting. Mr. Cassin noted as WLI's intent is to support and assist community members by hosting one meeting per week, WLI will consider a traffic study to determine solutions to mitigate increased traffic prior to hosting future meetings.

Mr. Cassin responded to questions regarding the 12-Step Program meeting and stated WLI is not a "drop-in centre" and confirmed WLI's intention was to host weekly meetings to aid community members, albeit possibly in a different facility.

The Chair closed the Public Hearing at 12:13 P.M.


DEPUTY REEVE


CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER