

Smith Creek and Resort Centre Community Conversation Canmore Communities

Coast Hotel and Conference Centre

August 10, 2016

Attendees

Dawn Saunders-Dahl- Town of Canmore Arts & Events
Meagan Stewart- Bow Valley Immigration Partnership
Kyla Connor- Community Advisory Group (CAG)

Support

Jessica Karpat- QPD/Facilitator
Kent McDougall- QPD
Mitch Braun- QPD
Jenn Giesbrecht- QPD
Tracy Woitenko- Town of Canmore

Agenda Item #1: Welcome and Introduction

- The facilitator welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that the purpose of the meeting is not only to inform people about the two applications being put forward to the Town, but to also get input on certain aspects of the plan and the visions that TSMV is putting forward.
 - The Project Team wants to understand what people's perspectives are, incorporate feedback when possible and, when appropriate, address the feedback at a different phase of development.
 - Overall, we are working to identify concerns, how they impact various stakeholders and ultimately, highlighting how the proposal we are discussing today was developed.

Agenda Item #2: Overview of Projects

An Area Structure Plan (ASP) is a high level, generalized planning process that guides development long term. The policy identifies land features and constrains to determine where development could go. The ASP provides a framework for the subdivision and development of an area and contains policies that allow the Town of Canmore to review and evaluate specific development proposals against. Following the approval of an ASP, the buildout of a Plan Area can occur over 5 to 25 years.

Smith Creek

The Smith Creek Project Team presented information pertaining to the proposed Smith Creek ASP.

- The Smith Creek ASP is being developed through collaboration with QuantumPlace Developments (on behalf of TSMV) and the Town. The collaborative process has allowed QPD

and the Town to work with other stakeholders to create a policy that is mutually agreeable to the Town and TSMV.

- Through the collaborative process, the Town and QPD have been working with a Community Advisory Group (CAG) to develop the plan that is being put forward today.
- In conjunction with preparing the Smith Creek ASP, an application for the wildlife corridor that has been made by TSMV to the Province for approval.
 - The proposed WLC involves a realignment of the Across Valley Corridor to align with the Stewart Creek steep creek hazard area. This would involve the creation of a new underpass subject to Provincial approval of the wildlife corridor realignment, and the Provincial Transportation department.
- The western portion of the Plan Area is proposed to be predominantly residential. The development “pods” or developable area (shown on the map displayed at the meeting) were determined based on existing area attributes. For instance, extremely sloped areas are not identified within the development pods.
- The proposed breakdown of housing in Smith Creek:
 - 40% detached and semi-detached
 - 25% townhouses
 - 25% stacked townhouses
 - 10% apartments
- There is a mixed use node towards the center-east side of the Smith Creek ASP Plan Area while the commercial, industrial and office space is located on the most easterly portion of the Plan Area.

Resort Centre

- The Resort Centre ASP amendments are an applicant driven process and are not part of the Smith Creek collaborative process. In contrast to Smith Creek there is an ASP that exists for the Resort Centre land. It was approved in 2004.
- The original ASP envisioned a golf course as being a key component of the Resort Centre Plan Area. As of 2008, 15 of 18 holes were completed. However, when the land went into receivership and construction of the golf course was halted indefinitely.
- In 2013, TSMV purchased the land and explored what could be done with the nearly completed golf course. It was determined that finishing the golf course would not be a viable investment given that in addition to finishing the remaining three holes, the existing 15 would need to be restored. It was also determined that it was not feasible for the Resort Course to integrate with the Stewart Creek golf course.
- TSMV decided to amend the ASP to seek approval for different types of uses on the land formerly envisioned as a golf course.
- The amendments will not interfere with the original vision established for the Resort Centre in 2004. The amendments will primarily address the former golf course lands and will reflect changes in wildlife science since the 2004 ASP was approved.

Attendee Question: What other uses are you looking at for the Resort Course?

- Resort Accommodation uses including permanent residential, short terms stays and a potential seniors area

- Public and private recreational opportunities

Agenda Item #3: Recreation Open Space and Transportation

Smith Creek Recreation and Open Space Concept

- Recreational amenities in Smith Creek largely consist of trails. The reason for this is that the Recreation Master Plan is currently being developed and Canmore residents have identified trails as the most desired recreational amenity. Additionally, the Smith Creek ASP Plan Area has areas with steep slopes that are not ideal for development or recreational activities that require flat land but are good places for trails. Finally, the provision of trails provides people with the ability to recreate in the developed area as an alternative to recreating in the wildlife corridors.
- Within the Smith Creek ASP area there are trails connecting the development pods. Not only would this trail system connect the individual pods, they would facilitate the connection of one end of the Plan Area to the other.
- There are three systems of trails: a paved trail, a gravel trail located along the wildlife conservation fence and technical dirt trails on steeper terrain within the Plan Area.
- There are three proposed connecting points from the Smith Creek Plan Area to access the Highline Trail.
- There are also small recreational “nodes” along the pathway system that provide the opportunity to have benches and allow people to stop and enjoy their surroundings.
- Within the pods there is also open space for off-leash dog areas as well as a terrain/bike park facility.

Resort Centre

- The Resort Centre is envisioned as having a high level of pedestrian connectivity within and beyond the Plan Area. Not only are areas such as the Resort Village envisioned as being pedestrian friendly and highly walkable as vehicular traffic will be kept to a minimum, there will be connection to existing trails such as the Highline.
- Similar to Smith Creek, recreation within the Resort Centre ASP area will serve to deter people from recreating in the wildlife corridor.
- Through engagement TSMV has heard that there is a desire for trailheads, parking lots, information/interpretive signage and wayfinding signage. This is something that will be enabled within the ASP.
- There are a number of private recreational opportunities being considered for the area as well. These include mountain bike circuits, indoor mountain biking opportunities, zip lining, ropes courses etc. TSMV is open to hearing about what sorts of recreational options will be desirable and will address perceived need.
- Overall, recreation in Resort Centre is envisioned as attracting both visitors and locals. While some of the recreational amenities will be privately owned, they will be publically accessible. The objective is for Resort Centre to be a vibrant place for visitors and locals alike.

Discussion:

Pirate Trails

During the discussion about the trail amenities offered within the Smith Creek ASP area the group discussed whether or not the trails offered within the Plan Area would be enough to deter people from building pirate trails. Overall the Project Team hopes that there will be enough recreational amenity within the developed area to deter people from building pirate trails to access the Highline Trail. Additionally, the group expressed the opinion that in Canmore people will always build pirate trails because it is a culture.

Trail Users

During the discussion about the trail amenities offered within the Smith Creek ASP Plan Area, the Project Team clarified that the trail system within Smith Creek has been designed with a number of users in mind. The paved trails are intended for multi-use, while gravel trails serve the dual purpose of recreation and maintenance access for the fence. The technical trails on steeper terrain can be used by mountain bikers and hikers.

Safety was an important theme that emerged during the discussion. The group discussed the importance of having paved paths and lit trails to ensure safety. It was noted that safety (in particular wildlife safety) is a huge concern for immigrants in the Bow Valley. With regards to wildlife safety, the Project Team made it clear that in addition to the paved trails, the proposal also includes a wildlife conservation fence to separate humans from wildlife.

Consultation

The groups also talked about the consultation process for the proposed recreational and open space concept in the ASP. The project team has arranged a meeting with recreational groups in the Bow Valley next week. However, the challenge is that the groups that will be represented at the meeting are primarily trail advocacy or maintenance groups and not the groups that are building pirate trails. Typically individuals involved with building pirate trails are difficult to identify and do not want to engage. In addition, the group talked about indigenous engagement during the ASP process. While there has not been specific First Nation consultation during the Smith Creek ASP process, there has been previous consultation during the NRCB decision to develop the land.

Later in the discussion attendees asked the Project Team whether an effort has been made to engage with hotel associations in the Area. While TSMV did a presentation at [the former] a Canmore Business and Tourism event, we have not engaged with Canmore Hotel and Lodging Association directly.

Attendees suggested that we engage with the Canmore Hotel and Lodging Association, the Alberta Hotel and Lodging Association and groups representing hotels in Banff and Lake Louise.

Public Art

During the discussion the group talked about the opportunity for art in public spaces. Not only would this provide an opportunity for public art to visually showcase Canmore's history at information stations, but also, public art can serve as a landmark along trails. Canmore has art on utility boxes. The group suggested to look into the possibility of using utility boxes in TSMV as wayfinding signs. Furthermore, the group highlighted an opportunity to install interactive public art in public spaces as a means to

create a space that engages the community as well as provides a venue for events and other seasonal programming.

Transportation

During the discussion about trails and recreational space, the group also discussed access to transit and how that would be facilitated in the ASP.

In the Town of Canmore transportation strategy, there is a plan to develop transit to serve these new areas. A currently planned local transit service will be up Three Sisters Parkway as well as around Cougar Creek. At the time that Smith Creek and Resort Centre are built out, there will be transit accessible along Three Sisters Parkway (as it extends into the new areas). This route will connect with the regional transit system.

Within the Smith Creek ASP, pedestrian pathways have been conceptualized while considering transit to ensure that transit is accessible to residents and visitors by foot.

Commercial Uses

Attendees asked the Smith Creek and Resort Centre Project Teams to describe the commercial opportunities within the two ASPs. Overall, commercial in Smith Creek is envisioned as offering goods and services that residents typically have to go to Calgary to access. This does not mean “big box” stores, it is envisioned as mid-sized retail and service. In Resort Centre, the commercial services are envisioned as offering opportunities for existing businesses to open satellite locations as well as opportunities for new business to locate there. For instance, a gallery on Main Street could open a studio in the Resort Centre.

- There is a perceived lack of opportunity for art studio spaces in the Bow Valley currently.

Proposed Recreational Amenities

- Informal gathering spaces (community centres) are very important to take the financial pressure off people with regards to recreation and the costs associated with it. During the discussion it was pointed out that many of the most popular recreational amenities are not the most affordable activities (i.e. golf or skiing) for new Canadians.
- The idea of a multi-use, flexible sports or community facility was brought up. Given the perceived lack of informal gathering spaces in the Bow Valley (for birthday parties, sporting activities and for multi-cultural groups to meet), the group felt that this type of amenity would go a long way to facilitate a sense of belonging in the Bow Valley.

[Agenda Item #4: Affordable Housing](#)

Smith Creek

The Smith Creek Project Team provided an overview of the affordable housing options enabled within the proposed ASP.

- **Entry Level Housing:** market-based, middle range rental and for purchase units. Overall, entry-level housing is geared towards an affordability index of median income in the area. There is an entry-level housing requirement of 25% entry level housing in the Smith Creek ASP. Perpetually Affordable Housing also counts towards this requirement.
- **Perpetually Affordable Housing (PAH):** is housing that through restrictions is removed from the influence of the open market. PAH units are controlled in such a way as to make them perpetually affordable and are administered by the Canmore Community Housing Corporation (CCHC). Land for PAH (or community lands) is obtained through land transfers between the Town and developer. Typically theoretical road allowances are transferred from the Town to the developer in exchange for community lands.
- **Employee Housing:** dwelling units provided for employees (both full-time and seasonal) of a commercial use. The amount of employee housing built is based on an employee generation analysis at the development permit phase of development.
- **Secondary Suites and Suite Ready Units:** a private, self-contained unit within an existing dwelling. A suite ready unit is a unit such as a single-family home or duplex that is constructed ready to accommodate a secondary suite should the owner choose to construct one. These would be enabled in low density housing forms.

Three Sisters land has always had entry-level housing requirements (for example Peaks of Grassi was primarily entry level housing- smaller homes on smaller lots). The challenge with addressing affordability is keeping the housing affordable long term. Affordability is not just the initial costs of a home but it is the maintenance fees as well. The Smith Creek Project Team has been working to identify tools to address this challenge including:

- Size limitations (i.e. smaller lots and smaller homes)
- Using more affordable building materials
- Limiting the amenities that would require increased condo fees.

The Smith Creek Project Team also discussed housing variety in the Plan Area:

- The proposed ASP will enable secondary suites and suite ready units add to the diversity of housing in Smith Creek.
- The housing variety is enabled in the ASP (townhouses and stacked townhouses make up the majority of the housing).
- Because the Smith Creek ASP area is technically challenging due to slopes, the Project Team is looking at matching the housing type with the topography to limit disturbance to the landscape. This will facilitate a mix of housing throughout the Plan Area.

Resort Centre

- Given that permanent housing is not the primary focus of housing in Resort Centre, employee housing may be proposed to accommodate workers within the Resort Centre Area. There will be some flexibility as to whether employee housing is located within the Resort Centre or whether it is located in Stewart Creek or Smith Creek areas.

- As in Smith Creek, an employee generation analysis will be done as new businesses are established in Smith Creek and will depend on affordability in Canmore and the median income as well as the number of employees. This will occur at the Development Permit stage.

Discussion

Employee Housing for Existing Communities in Canmore

- The group discussed why new developments are required to implement affordable housing (such as employee housing) in new communities while there is no current requirement for existing businesses to do this.
- While it is possible to hold new developments to higher standards (this is not uncommon in development), it is more challenging to implement employee housing in areas of Town with existing businesses. However, the Town is looking at a Town-wide strategy to facilitate employee housing for existing businesses. The hope is that this is forthcoming.

“Tiny Home Movement”

- During discussion, the group talked about the tiny home movement and the ability for this type of accommodation to facilitate more affordable housing in Canmore. Overall, both the Smith Creek ASP and Resort Centre ASP amendments could enable this type of development within the ASP areas, however, at the ASP level it is not possible for the developer and the Town to specify exactly how or where this would occur.
- It was noted that these types of units would not be ideal for families but would be good accommodation for retirees or singles. Overall, affordability in Canmore is a challenge because of the price of land in Canmore. TSMV is looking into enabling tiny homes, however the discussions surrounding this are in preliminary stages and nothing is concrete.

Housing Competition, Marketing and Signage

- During the discussion, the group noted that the competition for housing is largely between locals and people who are coming externally. The Project Team noted that in TSMV, entry level housing is available only to Bow Valley residents for the first 45 days. While the Town cannot legally require this type of initiative, developers are able to dictate who they sell homes to because they own the land. The Canmore Community Housing Corporation (CCHC) can also dictate who they sell or rent homes to because they are acting as the landowner and not a government body.
- It was also noted in discussion that diversity in communities can be facilitated through marketing and more inclusive signage. The group talked about the idea that in Canmore there is segregation between demographics and that there is potential to address this type of segregation through marketing campaigns for new development. In particular, it was noted that immigrants do not necessarily want to live in a luxury development. That being said, QPD noted that during the sale of Ravenrock, the experience was that many were attracted to the development because of the use of the word “luxury”.

Agenda Item #5: Access to Services

Overview

- At the ASP level it is possible to identify the types of businesses and services that would be desirable within the Plan Area and enable them through policy. The policy can provide for a daycare within the ASP area and encourage that future a land use district permit this type of use, however, the Town and QPD cannot make someone want to start a daycare when the area is developed.
- The Project Team asked the group what types of services should be enabled in the ASP to ensure that we do not create any unnecessary road blocks to these types of initiatives later in the planning phase.

Discussion

Services and Amenities

- It was noted that childcare provision is an important component of keeping people in the community. The group discussed the idea that for immigrants, childcare needs to have flexible scheduling to accommodate different work schedules. The experience in the Bow Valley has been that immigrants do not typically use formal daycare and therefore, within the ASP it would be useful to have a space for informal childcare.
- During the discussion the group talked about the opportunity for the ASP to enable art studio space, a space for community classes and a space for artists to showcase their art. It was noted that this was done in Canmore a few years ago but the art facility went under after nine months because it was not affordable for people to use. It was suggested that a flexible community space (such as a community centre) would provide space for artists but also would address the need for more informal community space.
- Amenities such as grocery stores and health clinics were also highlighted as priorities for enabling to make a community more livable.

Schools

- The group also discussed classroom space in the Bow Valley. It was noted that there is an appetite for adult education (especially language classes for immigrants). The group discussed whether or not Canmore schools rent out space to community groups after hours. In Calgary, the school boards partner with communities and the municipality to rent out space for sport teams, adult learning classes and community meetings after hours. In Canmore, some schools own their land so they do not necessarily have to engage in partnerships with municipalities.
- With regards to a school in Smith Creek, the Town circulates the plans to the school boards and they identify whether or not there is a need for a school in the area whether there is available land. The decision to build a school in a community is a negotiation between the Town and the school board at the time of development.
- In Smith Creek and Resort Centre there is an ability to enable institutional uses within the commercial areas. Institutional uses could include a satellite campus for an art school (such as

Alberta College of Art and Design), a polytechnic institution (Such as SAIT), a culinary school, a school specializing in hospitality or even a health and wellness centre.

Municipal Reserve

- During the discussion about community amenities, it was asked whether these types of amenities would be developed on municipal reserve (MR) land. Overall, the Project Team clarified that these amenities could go on MR, however there may be opportunities to enable or encourage private businesses to provide community amenities or create public-private partnerships to take on these types of initiatives.
- It was noted that MR is a particularly good opportunity to have amenities such as public art or interactive art and recreational space.

Immigration in the Bow Valley

- The idea of diverse communities was a key theme in the discussion. The group discussed what factors bring immigrants to the Bow Valley, and what factors influence whether or not immigrants stay in the Bow Valley. Overall it was noted that immigrants often come to the Bow Valley to work and typically arrive with temporary work visas. Some immigrants come with the intent of becoming a permanent resident, others arrive to the Bow Valley and determine that they want to stay after experiencing the lifestyle. However, the lack of affordable housing in Canmore makes it difficult for immigrants to stay and is often the result of them relocating to Calgary or Cochrane.
- The group also discussed what family housing looks like to newcomers. It was pointed out that there is a common assumption that newcomers are willing to cram into a smaller home because they are used to higher densities at home. However, based on consultation in the Bow Valley, immigrants and Canadians desire the same type of family housing.

Agenda Item #6: Conclusion

- The Project Team thanked attendees for coming to the session. Overall, it was a great discussion and we value the input.
- Draft notes will be circulated to attendees for comment and clarification to ensure that the notes are reflective of the conversation. After the notes are approved they will be posted to the project websites (www.smithcreekcanmore.ca and www.smithcreekcanmore/resortcentre.ca) to maintain transparency as we go through this process.
- The Project Team encouraged the group to subscribe to the mailing lists for updates on the Smith Creek ASP and the Resort Centre ASP Amendments (<http://smithcreekcanmore.ca/contact> and <http://smithcreekcanmore.ca/resort-centre>)