



WARDNER, MAYOOK & AREA PLANNING PROCESS INTRODUCTORY NEWSLETTER

This is the first newsletter for the Wardner, Mayook and area planning process. The newsletter will provide information on the planning process that will be occurring over the next 18 months and will also provide some general information on Official Community Plans (OCP) and Zoning Bylaws. A questionnaire to assist in identifying the major planning concerns in the area has also been included with this newsletter.

INTRODUCTORY MEETING

You are invited to attend an introductory public information meeting which will initiate the Wardner and Mayook area planning process.

Tuesday, January 28th

7:00pm to 9:00 pm

**Steepleview Community Centre
Wardner, BC**

The introductory meeting, questionnaires, and visioning workshops are opportunities for residents to work together with RDEK staff to provide the history of and envision the future of their communities and to have that vision drafted into a bylaw that provides long range direction and helps guide future decision making.

For further information, please contact Michele Bates, Planner, at 250-489-2791 or toll free at 1-888-478-7335 or mbates@rdek.bc.ca.

We Need Your Input!

Please take the time to complete and return the attached questionnaire to the RDEK by:

March 3rd, 2014

The questionnaire can also be completed online at:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Mayook_Wardner

Your input is very important and will help shape the future vision of your community.

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF EAST KOOTENAY

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BACKGROUND

The RDEK Board identified land use planning for the Wardner and Mayook area as a priority project for the RDEK Board in 2014. The Wardner and Mayook area is unzoned and not covered by any RDEK long range strategic plans. Currently, the only regulated development in the plan area is property within the Provincial Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).

Over the past few years the plan area has seen an increase in development pressure. With this increased pressure members of the community have expressed their desire for a planning process within the area. The intent of the process would be to develop a long term vision for land use preservation and change and establish land use regulations in the form of zoning to assist with implementing that vision.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Public input for this planning process will primarily be gathered through the establishment of an advisory group, questionnaires, participatory workshops, and open houses to present the draft OCP and zoning bylaw. This process will provide opportunity for interested area residents to become involved and express their viewpoints throughout the development of the documents.

Advisory Group

A volunteer advisory group of interested community members will assist in the development of the OCP and zoning bylaw. The group will play a key role by providing feedback on the policies and regulations, gathering information and providing information to the community at large. Interested individuals will be asked to submit an application form outlining their interest in the community and why they wish to participate. Staff and Director Rob Gay will then select up to twelve (12) advisory group members to represent a range of areas and interests.

If you are interested in applying to be a member or for more information about the advisory group please contact Michele Bates by **February 24, 2014**.

STEPS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

Board Authorization	November 2013
Newsletter #1 / Questionnaire	January 2014
Introductory Meeting	January 2014
Advisory Group Selection	February/March 2014
Newsletter #2	Spring 2014
Visioning Workshops	Summer 2014
Newsletter #3	Winter 2014
OCP Drafting	Winter 2014
Open House Draft Presentation	Spring 2015
Draft Revisions	Summer 2015
Final OCP Adoption	Summer 2015

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WHAT IS AN OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN?

The Official Community Plan (OCP) is a long term strategic planning document. Objectives and policy statements will be drafted based on the consideration of balancing public and private interests with local and regional considerations.

The OCP will provide policy framework and guidelines to promote certainty in land use decision making by the Regional District Board on such topics as residential land use, commercial land use, interface fire hazard, environmentally sensitive areas, solid waste and utilities, public safety, water resources and transportation. An OCP identifies and promotes a local vision for development and conservation within the community. An OCP assists in preventing incompatible land uses and identifying issues of importance or concern.

An OCP will not affect land uses existing at the time the Bylaw is adopted and will not affect existing permit requirements.

WHAT IS A ZONING BYLAW?

A zoning bylaw is a regulatory document. The zoning will reflect existing conditions and proactively provide direction for future growth where appropriate. Zoning assists in limiting incompatible neighbouring land uses and provides certainty to land development opportunities.

Properties are divided into zones for different land use purposes, i.e. residential or commercial. Permitted uses and other provisions are established for each zone and can include setbacks from property lines, maximum building heights and number of dwelling units permitted.

The zoning bylaw will also contain general regulations which apply to all properties. General regulations can include provisions for things such as off-street parking, regulation of home based businesses and placement of recreational vehicles.

AMENDING THE OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN & ZONING BYLAW

The OCP and zoning bylaw are living documents which can and will change over time. Amendments may occur in response to a change in the needs of a community or individual development proposals initiated by a property owner. The RDEK can also initiate amendments to address issues that arise at that time.

All proposed amendments are subject to an application process which includes a public hearing and an opportunity for the community to comment on the amendment. All amendments require approval by the RDEK Board and the appropriate Provincial Ministries.



OTHER INFORMATION

Impact on Property Taxes

The taxable value of property in British Columbia is based on market-based assessment and is determined by the BC Assessment Authority. The new OCP and zoning bylaw should not have an impact on property taxes. For additional information on property assessment contact the BC Assessment office in Cranbrook at 250-426-8901.

Non-conforming Uses & Siting

Uses and siting which do not conform to the new zoning bylaw and legally exist at the time of adoption are grandfathered in as legally non-conforming.

A legally non-conforming use will cease to be legally non-conforming if:

- The use is discontinued for a continuous period of 6 months;
- The building or structure to which the use applies is damaged to an extent of 75% or more of its value; or
- The scale or degree of the non-conforming use is undertaken to a degree that is higher than that which occurred at the time of the adoption of the bylaw.

If the use of the property complies with the zoning bylaw, but the siting of a building or structure is legally non-conforming then:

- The building or structure may only be repaired, altered, or extended to the point that no further contravention of the bylaw will occur.

Legally non-conforming status is not impacted by:

- A change in ownership; or
- The discontinuation of uses, which are associated with seasonal or agricultural practices.

An existing use not in compliance with the ALR regulations or that has not been approved by the Agricultural Land Commission would not be considered legally non-conforming.

Zoning & OCP Designation of Crown Land

Provincial legislation takes precedence over RDEK bylaws on Crown land. However, OCP designations and zoning can and will be assigned to Crown land within the plan area. Private use of Crown land, such as the construction of buildings on land under tenure is subject to RDEK regulations. In addition, if the land becomes privately owned, the policy and zoning regulations are in place to guide the type and form of development that can occur.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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