

FEBRUARY 27TH COUNCIL UPDATE

- COCHRANE NORTH GIVEN FIRST READING
- CO-OP GAS BAR GIVEN APPROVAL IN DIVISION 6
- SETTLERS' GREEN IN LANGDON GIVEN APPROVAL

COCHRANE NORTH TO MEET CONDITIONS BEFORE MOVING BEYOND FIRST READING

After a lengthy hearing, Urban System's application for the Cochrane North ASP was held to first reading. There were a number of residents who presented in support of the application as they believed the development would help give the surrounding community a much-needed boost. While no one disagreed with those sentiments, those in opposition felt that many of the assertions being made by the developer should be backed by actual commitments.

There is no denying that the area has had its share of problems. A few years ago, Cochrane Lake flooded. The reason for this was that the original developer of the Monterra development, immediately south of Cochrane North, did not install an outlet pipe from Cochrane lake. An initial concept plan for Monterra indicated that a pipe to discharge water from the lake to the Bow River was necessary as the lake lacked natural outlets. However, municipal and provincial approvals were later granted without such system as a further engineering study noted that evaporation would be a sufficient enough mechanism to effectively address any water issues.

After the flooding occurred, the county wanted to introduce a Local Improvement Tax as Monterra's developer was bankrupt. Councillors of the day, Jerry Arshinoff and Al Sacuta approached the province for a grant to remediate the situation. The grant monies were used to create an outflow pipe to Horse Creek. While this has no bearing on Cochrane North's developer, it reinforces the need to ensure any future water issues will be fully addressed.

Given the Horse Creek pipe is at capacity, any future development requires that an additional outflow pipe must be constructed to the Bow River. Residents questioned when this would occur. They also wondered if the existing water treatment plant could sufficiently handle additional development. Residents raised concerns about the servicing of the current internal road system and about future road connectivity, as well as proposed access to Hwy 22X.

As a result, area councillor Crystal Kissel provided direction to allow for first reading. However, to proceed beyond first reading, Kissel asked Council to support a four-part motion that the developer must complete by June 26th of this year. The four criteria are:

1. provide clarification on the time of the earliest construction and installation of the storm water outlet pipe to the Bow River
2. reconsider the road network design including questions of access
3. prepare detailed policy regarding necessary licensing and approvals to ensure appropriate water and waste water servicing
4. a comparison of density levels with other areas of the county

Kissel's motion was supported 7-2, with opposition coming from Deputy Reeve Jerry Gautreau and Councillor Dan Henn. I supported Councillor Kissel as I believe there needs to be some assurances that what the developer claims can be done, will in fact be done without any additional burden on existing area residents or the County.

CO-OP GAS BAR APPROVED IN DIVISION 6

While Administration had recommended refusal of an application for a CO-OP gas bar along Hwy 2, directly east of Crossfield and the North Central ASP, Council opted to unanimously approve the application.

Administration cited that the lands do not fit within an ASP. Interestingly, the proposed development is within a quarter section that already contains two existing gas stations.

There were claims that the development may infringe on the build out of the North Central ASP. However, it was determined that Hwy 2 was a significant barrier to this objection and that the lands were a logical place to situate an additional gas station.

The local councillor, Reeve Boehlke, stated that this was an area that had development dating back to the 1970's. He believed that the proposed application would not be detrimental to those within the ASP. As well, there were no letters of support or opposition.

The application addressed issues of storm water management via holding ponds not only for the proposed lands but surrounding lands, too. Access for the gas station would be via an existing service road, meaning there would be little impact on highway traffic.

SETTLER'S GREEN GIVEN APPROVAL

The concept scheme for the Settler's Green development in Langdon was given unanimous approval. Local councillor, Al Schule, recused himself from the hearing as he had worked on the application prior to being elected. Administration had recommended approval.

In a presentation by Bart Carswell, the application proposed 360 residential lots (single and multi-family dwellings) over 80 acres - acceptable densities for the hamlet. The application included some commercial/ light industrial space on an additional 40 acres.

There was opposition from a couple of residents who lived in the development to the north. They were concerned about densities, buffering and traffic. However, the developer assured Council that there was a golf course in between the two communities and that the houses that backed onto the golf course would be single-family dwellings, virtually mirroring those of the existing community.

The multi-family dwellings would be buffered not only by the single-family dwellings but also by a large storm water pond. Carswell also stated that the light industrial/ commercial space would be buffered the same way and would be easily accessible to Hwy 22x to avoid having any resulting traffic travel through the hamlet.