

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT



TO: Planning & Development Committee

FROM: B. Newell, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: August 19, 2021

RE: Zoning Review – Faulder Water System Service Area (Electoral Area “F”)

Administrative Recommendation:

THAT the Electoral Area “F” Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 2790.03, 2021, and Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 2461.19, 2021, be initiated for the purposes of protecting of the residents on the Faulder Water System and those who have wells on the Meadow Valley Aquifer.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to seek direction from the Regional District Board regarding proposed amendments to the Electoral Area “F” Official Community Plan (OCP) Bylaw and Zoning Bylaw in order to strengthen the policies and regulations governing subdivision and use of properties in the Faulder Water System Service Area and Meadow Valley Aquifer.

References:

- *Faulder Water Supply Capacity Review – Technical Memorandum*, Associated Engineering, April 2008.
- *Groundwater Provenance and Water Level Assessment, Faulder, British Columbia*, Golder Associates, August 2008.
- *Groundwater Development in the Meadow Valley Aquifer, District of Summerland, British Columbia*, Golder Associates, November 2013.
- *Faulder Well Aquifer Assessment and Water Supply Options Evaluation*, Golder Associates, December 2013.
- *Water Conservation Plan – Faulder Water System*, Ecora, February 2016.
- *Faulder Water System Well Protection Planning Report*, Ecora, February 2016.

Background:

The Faulder Community relies on groundwater from the Meadow Valley Aquifer for their drinking water supply and, in 2015, a new community well was drilled into the Meadow Valley Aquifer to replace the existing well that supplied domestic water to an estimated 215 residents.

This well is seen to be near capacity and is not capable of accommodating unlimited growth, while the greater Meadow Valley Aquifer is subject to irregular recharge rates which can impact the provision of water to properties.

A 1996 review of the Faulder water system completed by Stantec (then known as Stanley Associates) concluded that “the water system was designed to supply a maximum of 80 lots ... [and that] prior to exceeding the original 80 lots, we would recommend a review of the actual demands be completed.”

In 2008, the Faulder water system lost its supply of water due to drought conditions and water was trucked into the community. In 2015, a new deeper well was drilled into the aquifer in order to avoid the water shortages that occurred in 2008. Despite this improvement, the water system remains at capacity.

When the Electoral Area “F” OCP Bylaw was reviewed between 2016-18, this situation was captured in a number of statements and policies that speak to water supply and quality concerns in the Faulder community. However, no steps were taken to review the zoning bylaw after the completion of the new community well in 2015 to ensure that the zoning regulations applied to the Faulder community reflected these concerns.

Since 2020, the Regional District has received a number of development proposals involving properties within or immediately adjacent the Faulder Community Water Service Area, including:

- 3-lot subdivision of 8025 Princeton-Summerland Road (in Water Service Area);
- 2-lot subdivision and rezoning of 8151 Princeton-Summerland Road (in Water Service Area);
- 2-lot subdivision of 8064 Princeton-Summerland Road (in Water Service Area);
- 2-lot subdivision* of 8208 Princeton-Summerland Road (adjacent Water Service Area); and
- a Petition to enter Water Service Area for District Lot 2893, ODYD, Portion EX PT S & W PL A67, Except Plan A67 27332, which is 11.2 ha in area (adjacent Water Service Area).

* rezoning required.

Since 2014, the Regional District has also received a number of rezoning proposals to facilitate the subdivision of properties within the broader Meadow Valley Aquifer, including:

- 464 Fish Lake Road (rezoning refused in 2014 to allow a 3-lot subdivision);
- 66 Deans Road (rezoning approved in 2016 to allow a 2-lot subdivision);
- 633 Meadow Valley Road (rezoning refused in 2017 to allow a 2-lot subdivision);
- 15 Deans Road (rezoning approved in 2018 to allow a 2-lot subdivision); and
- 8475 Princeton-Summerland Road (active rezoning proposal to allow a 3-lot subdivision).

For reference purposes, the location of these properties vis-à-vis the Faulder Community Water Service Area is shown at Attachment No. 1.

At its meeting of May 6, 2021, the Regional District Board deferred consideration of 3rd reading of Amendment Bylaw No. 2461.15, 2021, and directed that a second public information meeting (PIM) be scheduled. This was seen to be a result of water concerns raised by residents in Faulder as part of the public hearing process for the rezoning of 8475 Princeton-Summerland Road.

Analysis:

While there are a number of background statements within the Electoral Area “F” OCP Bylaw speaking to concerns regarding the availability of water in the Faulder community, Administration notes that the current policies statements within the Plan *may* not accurately reflect these.

For instance, the strongest statement against further growth and development in the Faulder Community Water Service Area is a somewhat generic statement that the Board “discourages

subdivision of properties in order to maintain the rural character of the [Faulder] area” [emphasis added]. “Rural character” is an imprecise term that could relate to any number of characteristics, with water being only one of many potential considerations.

Administration is further concerned that, despite an understanding that the Faulder Water System is at or near capacity, the zoning that applies to the Faulder community contemplates the potential subdivision of a number of parcels and also allows for uses and density that may be inconsistent with these water concerns (i.e. allowing agriculture and accessory dwellings).

In light of this, as well as the direction provided by the Board at its meeting of May 6, 2021 (to undertake additional community engagement on the rezoning of 8475 Princeton-Summerland Road) and recent volume of applications received to facilitate development within and around the Faulder Community Water System, Administration considers it an opportune time to review existing policies and zoning regulations.

Specifically, it is being proposed that consideration be given to the introduction of stronger OCP policy statements that speak to not supporting further subdivision within or expansion of the Faulder Water System Service Area and to discouraging the rezoning of parcels within the broader Meadow Valley Aquifer to facilitate subdivision.

It is further proposed that consideration be given to the introduction of a new zoning to be applied to all properties within the Faulder Water System Service Area in order to restrict further subdivision, density (i.e. accessory dwellings) and water-intensive uses (i.e. agriculture).

For reference purposes, annotated versions of amendment bylaws that would introduce such policies and zoning regulations are attached to this report.

Should the Board support the direction contained within these bylaws, Administration would propose to undertake consultation with the Faulder community in conjunction with the consultation associated with the current rezonings in the area.

Conversely, the option to maintain the status quo is available to the Board, in which case no amendments to the OCP and Zoning Bylaws would be required.

Alternatives:

1. THAT the Electoral Area “F” Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 2790.03, 2021, and Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 2461.19, 2021, be deferred; or
2. THAT the Electoral Area “F” Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 2790.03, 2021, and Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 2461.19, 2021, not be initiated.

Respectfully submitted:



C. Garrish, Planning Manager

Attachments: No. 1 – Development Proposals in Meadow Valley / Faulder Area (2014-present)

Attachment No. 1 – Development Proposals in Meadow Valley / Faulder Area (2014-present)

