

PUBLIC HEARING REPORT

TO: Regional Board of Directors

FROM: Bill Dickey, Electoral Area D

HEARING DATE: February 18, 2020

RE: Public Hearing on Fraser Valley Regional District Electoral Area E and H Zoning Amendment Bylaw 1547, 2019

A Public Hearing was held for Fraser Valley Regional District Electoral Area E and H Zoning Amendment Bylaw 1547, 2019 on February 18, 2020 at 7:05 p.m., in the Columbia Valley Community Centre at 1202 Kosikar Road, Lindell Beach.

Prior to the public hearing, Director Dixon introduced the bylaw amendment and provided context about the meeting format. Julie Mundy, Planner 1, gave a brief PowerPoint presentation about the purpose and intent of Bylaw No. 1547, 2019. An informal public information meeting followed the presentation.

There were approximately 45 members of the public present.

Members of the Regional Board present were:

Bill Dickey, Director, Area D, Chairperson
Taryn Dixon, Director, Area H
Orion Engar, Director, Area E

Members of the Fraser Valley Regional District staff present were:

Graham Daneluz, Director of Planning & Development
Julie Mundy, Planner 1

Chairperson Bill Dickey called the Public Hearing to order at 7:03 p.m. The hearing was convened pursuant to Part 14 – Division 3 of the Local Government Act in order to consider Fraser Valley Regional District Zoning Amendment Bylaw 1547, 2019. In accordance with subsections 1, 2, and 3 of Section 466, the time and place of the public hearing was advertised in the February 12th and February 14th editions of the Chilliwack Progress newspaper.

Bylaw 1547, 2019

Chairperson Bill Dickey stated that the purpose of Bylaw 1547, 2019 is to amend the text of Zoning Bylaw No. 66, 1976 to 1) provide definitions for Cannabis, Cannabis Dispensary, and Cannabis Production Facility, and 2) to prohibit Cannabis Dispensary and Cannabis Production Facility uses in Electoral Area E and H.

Chairperson Dickey acknowledged there were two written submissions for Bylaw No. 1547, 2019 provided in advance of the meeting. The Chairperson noted the written comments were available at the public

hearing for viewing and would be included in the public hearing record. Also received were two written comments emailed to Director Dixon prior to the start of the public meeting. As these comments were received prior to the Public Hearing, they will form part of the public record. All written comments received prior to the Public Hearing are attached as Appendix "A".

Nine oral comments were provided. Oral comments are summarized below in the order which they were provided:

1) Steve Croner, 1000B Columbia Valley Road, Area H

Mr. Croner stated he is in support of cannabis cultivation and processing in Columbia Valley. He stated people should be able to grow indoors. He added there should be a happy medium, perhaps with property size limits and setbacks to allow for indoor growing.

2) Toby Fleenor, 41627 Henderson Road, Area H

Mr. Fleenor stated he is in support of the bylaw.

3) Cameron Fortin

Mr. Fortin stated he supports cannabis production. He stated he was diagnosed with diabetes 15 years ago and grows high CBD organic cannabis to help with the pain. He adds the medicine is beneficial as it increases insulin absorption. Mr. Fortin stated cannabis producers should be allowed everywhere, and that it is against human rights to prohibit it. He adds that odour should not be a reason for prohibition as Chilliwack has other odours such as manure that are allowed.

4) Klaus Waldhor, 1426 Frost Road, Area H

Mr. Waldhor states he is opposed to odour and light issues associated with cannabis. He states it is an issue when many people are impacted by the actions of a few. Mr. Waldhor stated he is opposed to cannabis activities until smell issues are addressed.

5) Jacqueline Fleenor, 41627 Henderson Ave, Area H

Ms. Fleenor stated she supports cannabis production in the area. She stated there is no industry in the area and that local jobs are needed. She added the criminal element can be controlled if cannabis is regulated.

6) Francis Struys, 814 Iverson Road, Area H

Mr. Struys stated he is in favour of cannabis production. He noted that Health Canada can address odours through regulation. He stated that indoor controlled environments can do a better job at controlling odours than outdoor production; if odour is the concern, then indoor production should be supported. Mr. Struys concluded that people with small lots should have the opportunity to make a living with the crops they choose.

7) Morne Van Der Watt, 1291 Columbia Valley Road, Area H

Mr. Van Der Watt stated that this is a sticky issue. He would like to see a system to process applications and work with applicants rather than a simple yes or no answer. Mr. Van Der Watt believes one solution is to have a cannabis board to review items with an open agenda. He stated odour is not a huge concern when buildings are constructed properly. Mr. Van Der Watt added there have been bad experiences with cannabis. He believes that shutting down the industry will promote criminality, and that we need a middle approach to the issue.

8) Heidi Struys, 814 Iverson Road, Area H

Ms. Struys stated she has lived in the ALR for most of her life. She stated she is in favour of all types of farming and does not believe farming should be limited based on building type. Ms. Struys added that all farms have odour and noise, and stated that we should not specify types of farming that we do not like.

9) Marianne C., 915 Iverson Road, Area H

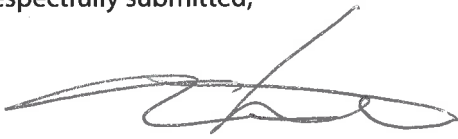
Ms. C. stated ALR land is farm land, and that people should be able to farm whatever they like.

The Chairperson asked three times for comments. Hearing no further comments, the public hearing for Bylaw 1547, 2019 was concluded.

The Chairperson concluded the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

We, the undersigned, certify these Public Hearing minutes as correct.

Respectfully submitted,



Bill Dickey, Chairperson



Digitally signed by
Julie Mundy
Date: 2020.03.04
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Julie Mundy, Recorder

Subject: FW: Cannabis Public Hearing

From: Steve Croner

Date: February 17, 2020 at 7:41:44 PM PST

To: Taryn Dixon

Subject: Re: Cannabis Public Hearing

Hi Taryn,

Looking forward to the meeting tomorrow and discussing bylaw 1547.

Hope to discuss growing inside for recreational and medicinal purposes.

I would also like to discuss different types of affordable building options including containers.

We will definitely be wanting an extensive explanation of why certain electoral areas will be permitted for growing and production and why (especially ours) others will not be allowed. When it is deemed a farm use crop and is legal.

See you tomorrow...thanks for holding the meeting.

On Thu, Feb 6, 2020 at 7:29 PM Taryn Dixon <tdixon@fvrd.ca> wrote:

Hi Steve

How are you doing? I just wanted to let you know there is a public hearing coming up for Area H that pertains to Cannabis Zoning Regulation- Cannabis Production, Processing and Retail Sales in the Electoral Areas. I thought you might be interested. The date and time are below and the link has a lot of information.

Thanks Steve.

Taryn

* February 18, 2020<x-apple-data-detectors://0> – Electoral Area E & H

* 6:30 P.M.<x-apple-data-detectors://1> at Columbia Valley Community Centre, [1202 Kosikar Road, Lindell Beach](#)<x-apple-data-detectors://2>

* <https://www.fvrd.ca/EN/meta/events/events-list/public-meetings-hearings/cannabis-zoning-public-hearing.html>

Taryn Dixon

Subject: FW: Cannabis Zoning

From: Anne Lindberg
Subject: Re: Cannabis Zoning
Date: February 15, 2020 at 11:46:25 AM PST
To: Taryn Dixon

To: Director Dixon

As residents of District H, we are very apposed to any development or expansion of cannabis industry in Columbia Valley.

Columbia Valley is noted for quality clean air, quietness, darkness at night, relative safety, simple living and some traditional farming.

The introduction of the cannabis industry will produce the opposite. The valley will have: smells that reek, bright lights, excessive water use and run off, fortress like production sites, security and safety issues, and traffic and road issues(which are already a problem).

We, as residents of Columbia Valley appeal to Regional District H to protect the country living of this beautiful, peaceful, unique valley.

Thank you,
Terry and Anne Lindberg

On Fri, Feb 14, 2020 at 9:17 AM Taryn Dixon <tdixon@fvr.ca> wrote:

Hi Anne,
It was great to connect with you. Here is the info.

I just wanted to make sure you were aware of this upcoming Public Hearing. While FVRD cannot supersede provincial and federal rules around growing cannabis, we are able to create zoning bylaws with regard to processing and retail sales. If you are unable to attend but would like to provide input, please feel free to send me an email. You are welcome to share this email with others living in the area. tdixon@fvr.ca. Thanks so much.

Taryn

<https://www.fvr.ca/assets/Services/Documents/Planning~and~Development/Planning~Document~Library/Cannabis%20Zoning%20Regulation%20Information%20Package.pdf>

Subject:

FW: Cannabis zoning

From: Tim Rivers

Date: February 18, 2020 at 5:48:05 PM PST

To: Taryn Dixon

Subject: Cannabis zoning

Hi Taryn

Cheryl and I unfortunately will not be making it to tonight's meeting. I have just returned from a humanitarian trip to Mexico and have developed quite a nasty cold, possibly involving an infection from mould mitigation.

I would however, like to voice our strong opposition to allowing any foothold to be gained in our community by any facet of cannabis production, processing, or sales.

Both the horrible smells associated with cannabis production, and the undesirable and often unstable people that would be drawn to our community would hugely impact the quality of life of the majority of the residents of the Columbia Valley.

This is of great concern for the following reason. Over the last number of years as we've had to deal with homeless encampments, squatters, increased break ins, vicious dogs, and an unstable, some would rightly say unhinged, resident who has been a part of the grow-op culture, we have seen a very disturbing trend, which I know you have had to battle on our behalf. That trend, all too consistent, is the unwillingness of various levels of government to enforce existing laws and bylaws to protect the quality of life of the large majority of property owners, choosing rather to do little or nothing, thereby protecting all the rights of an extremely small group of individuals, often with little or no financial stake in the community, leaving the majority of this community with a degradation, often quite serious, to their quality of life.

I have zero faith that any government regulations would either be effective, or be enforced, to protect our sense of safety, peace, and true love of where we live. I do fear that if our voices and our concerns are not listened to, at some point, someone is going to feel frustrated enough and threatened enough to take action outside of the law. While I don't advocate any such response, I think it's almost inevitable if we are continually being told, by inaction, to just live with things that threaten our way of life.

Taryn, this is by no means directed at you. I think you work hard on our behalf in a system that wants problems to just go away on their own. I think there will be a price to pay down the road for that approach, either by all of us, or through a tax revolt, or through unlawful activity, but someone has to start actually dealing with the issues we face. Adding the Pandora's Box of issues that cannabis production would bring, well I think the regional district has demonstrated that they don't have the will or the capacity to tackle those.

Respectfully

Tim & Cheryl Rivers

Subject: FW: Cannabis Zoning

From:

Date: February 18, 2020 at 6:03:13 PM PST

To: Taryn Dixon <tdixon@fvrd.ca>

Subject: Re: Cannabis Zoning

My preference would be for people to apply for rezoning.

Thanks!

On Feb. 18, 2020 5:52 p.m., Taryn Dixon <tdixon@fvrd.ca> wrote:

Thanks Karen I will send your concerns on. Basically I'm looking for info about whether Area H wants anyone to grow, anywhere or if the preference is to out in the restrictions we can and then have people apply for a rezoning if they wish a large scale operation. What is allowed is growing in soil and fvrd has No say over that . I'm trying to get a feel whether or not people want it wide open or some controls.

If you read the bylaw that I sent and like it, it would be most helpful if you send an email to Gdaneluz@fvrd.ca indicating you support the proposed Area H zoning. Alternately, if you don't support it you can email him that too.

Right now there really are no systems to address your concerns but in a few year when the laws and regulations are out in place provincially and federally, there might be a way to manage odours , noise, light etc.

I hope that helps. If you email it becomes part of the official record and I will use it to help make a decision.

Thanks Karen
Taryn

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 18, 2020, at 5:44 PM, Karen Steegstra wrote:

Hi Taryn,

I have sick girl and won't be able to make it tonight.

My concerns:

- * greenhouses that are lit all night

- *odour

*possible noise from fans

*who would be able to grow, ie. can people with criminal records have a legal grow op?

Thanks for hosting this!

-----Original Message-----

From: Taryn Dixon <tdixon@fvrld.ca>

To:

Sent: Fri, Feb 14, 2020 6:02 pm

Subject: Re: Cannabis Zoning

Thanks Karen . If you can't attend but want to provide formal feedback. You are welcome to email me. The proposed zoning basically does not allow for Large scale production, processing and retail sales. If it is approved and someone wants to put in a large scale production facility they would need to apply for rezoning and then the neighbours would have an opportunity for input.

Enjoy the weekend and Happy Family Day.

Taryn

Taryn Dixon

FVRD Director, Area H

604 819 7000

Sent from my iPad