



STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT #8

March 21 & 22, 2023 Meeting

Prepared by



GROUNDSWELL
PLANNING

March 2023

Credit: GBP Creative

BACKGROUND

In March 2020, Government of Yukon (YG) and Kwanlin Dün First Nation (KDFN) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to work jointly towards a local area plan for the Łu Zil Män (Fish Lake) area. A Steering Committee comprised of three representatives of each government was appointed in Fall 2021. The Committee held its eighth meeting at the MacBride Museum over two consecutive evenings (March 21st and 22nd, 2023 from 5:00 -7:45 pm).

ATTENDEES

Jasmine Bill (KDFN member)
Kathy Elliot (YG member)
Jane Koepke (Facilitator)
Jocelyne Leblanc (YG member)
Margaret McKay (KDFN member)

Roy Neilson (KDFN staff)
Joseph Petch (YG staff)
Bengt Pettersson (YG member)
Steven Shorty (KDFN member)

MEETING OBJECTIVES

1. Make final changes and approve the What We Heard report
2. Review and workshop changes to the latest version of the Vision & Values report
3. Seek Committee approval in principle on a schedule and workplan for Phase 2
4. Orient the Committee to the “building blocks” of a local area plan
5. Explore land use designations for the planning area
6. Explore potential policy directions for key planning issues

DISCUSSION

February 20th Meeting Minutes

Minutes were reviewed. Bengt motioned to adopt the minutes without changes and Steven seconded.

Project Update

Roy and Joseph shared that their communications staff had worked on a 2-page project update highlighting engagement results, next steps (including engagement opportunities), and Vision and Values. The update is intended for mail out to KDFN citizens and property owners, as well as posting online and on government social media channels. Margaret suggested that the upcoming KDFN newsletter also feature an update.

What We Heard Report

Jane highlighted the changes that were made based on Committee member review. Bengt motioned to accept this version as final and Steven seconded.

Vision and Values Report

Jane presented the draft version of the Vision & Values report, which is mostly consistent with Committee member work from the December workshop but was slightly modified after government review. Key Committee member input included:

- More emphasis on continued use and occupation of the planning area is needed
- Preference to revert to the original language for resident values (but more concise)
- More clarity on heritage value
- Values and/or principles could be displayed on par with one another, perhaps in a visual way (e.g., spokes from a central hub)
- Reference to “Western knowledge” in Two Ways of Knowing principle is unclear (Roy commented that a good example is the devaluing of local or traditional knowledge about wildlife or habitat where it doesn’t align with wildlife survey data)
- YG’s reluctance to adopt a guiding principle (#12) specifically referencing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is disappointing and seemingly contradicts the “Two Ways of Knowing” principles for some Committee members

Jane will make these changes and the next version will be circulated for Committee review.

Phase 2 Work Plan - Planning

Jane reviewed the draft work plan and schedule for Phase 2 of the process, explaining that it was informed by the Committee member survey input from January. The draft work plan has the project wrapping up in Spring 2024 but it does represent a “best case scenario”; the project could run until Fall 2024.

- Roy commented that the summer engagement could be good timing for an “on the land” event up at Fish Lake
- Steven mentioned that mid-September timing could conflict with hunting season and late August would be better

Local Area Planning Overview

Jane revisited the governments’ Memorandum of Understanding and shared her initial thoughts on how to approach the development of the plan. Highlights included:

- The creation of a land use designation map and accompanying policies and actions will comprise the majority of Committee effort
- Policies typically establish quasi-rules about what can and can’t happen in each land designation (i.e., responding to future proposals), whereas actions are pro-active tasks that the government or other parties intend to complete

- Planning is best approached through multiple rounds of iteration, each one increasing in detail and clarity. The key is start exploring, testing, and discussing ideas with curiosity and open-ness to new or different perspectives.

Land Use Designations

Committee members briefly reviewed a few real-life examples of LAP land use designation maps and worked in small groups to identify potential designations relevant to Fish Lake. Highlights of their work and discussion included:

- Residential, commercial, grazing/agriculture, infrastructure (i.e., highway right-of-way), recreation and tourism are existing uses that require designation
- Uses like tourism and recreation were identified but difficult to pinpoint to different or specific areas. Other LAPs have tended to use an Open Space designation for largely natural areas that are used for activities such as recreation and wilderness tourism, with different classes of Open Space being used where unique values or conditions warrant it.
- A protection or conservation designation could be suitable
- Settlement Lands will be acknowledged and factored in but not usually assigned a separate designation in the interests of creating a coordinated, integrated land use plan
- A residential designation could apply to existing residences and any future ones (to be determined)
- Community Use could apply to the Jackson Lake Healing Camp, Diane's camp, Rosie's camp, Bonneville Lakes trail, and boat ramp
- Open Space, or a similar designation, would apply to a large majority of the planning area. Heritage trails, old/new trails and areas that are integral to ecosystem functioning may warrant different classes or approaches to Open Space.

Hot Topics: Recreation

Committee members broke into smaller discussion groups to explore potential policies around recreational uses that could fulfill draft Vision and Values. Highlights of discussion included:

- Non-motorized use of Fish Lake is particularly dangerous and motorized use of Jackson Lake may not be appropriate
- Respectful behavior is a pre-requisite to continued recreational access
- Need to avoid or manage sensitive habitats, especially wildlife corridors (Sumanik Ridge, Fish Lake/Jackson Lake road intersection, Skyline Trail and Knuckle Ridge, valley below Mount Sima)
- Haeckel Hill may be more suitable for some recreational uses
- Existing roads and trails are a logical starting point for motorized access
- Impacts depend on the nature of use (i.e., hiking vs. mountain biking)

- Wildlife should be treated as residents; caribou have the wisdom to travel on the same trail and not damage the surrounding vegetation they depend on

Hot Topics: Future Development

Committee members broke into smaller discussion groups to explore potential policies around future development that could fulfill draft Vision and Values. Highlights of discussion included:

- Committee members generally agree with the results of the public survey around future development or amenity ideas
- The options presented in the survey occupy 2-3 different categories
- Formalizing and/or rehabilitating overgrown trails is viewed as maintenance versus new development; maintenance, along with possible new trails, is a way to ensure that informal trails are not created in currently undisturbed areas
- Education may not be sufficient for some recreational users or tourists; regulation, monitoring and enforcement may be required
- New residential development should be limited and, if it occurs, sited closer to the Fish Lake Road, existing development or City boundary and not obstructing views or wildlife corridors
- There are existing land selections and many KDFN citizens want camps or cottages in the area and this could be part of reconciliation and reconnection; this seasonal and/or culture-enabling use is different in nature than conventional rural residential properties.
- Demonstration of a historical or other connection could be a requirement to build (note that KDFN already has a historic land submissions policy)
- Land dispositions should be geared towards occupation and use, not rental or income
- The primary issue to consider is the impact of increased density and population in the area on the environment, “character”, traffic, wildlife, etc.
- The cumulative impact of lot subdivisions by existing land owners, in combination with potential KDFN development, needs to be considered

NEXT STEPS

Next Meeting

The next Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for two consecutive meetings around mid-May. The Committee agreed with Jane’s suggestion that 3 hours be allocated to each evening to allow enough time for discussion of many complex issues.

Action Items

Action Items generated during the meeting include:

- Confirm Committee availability for the May and June meetings (Roy/Joseph)
- Circulate the next version of Vision and Values report and meeting minutes to Committee for approval via email (Roy/Joseph)
- Circulate the draft project update 2-pager to Committee with a 1 week comment period (Roy/Joseph)
- Circulate KDFN's 2021 Fish Lake tourism study for Committee review (Roy/Joseph)