



WABAMUN WATERSHED MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Box 1005 Wabamun, Alberta T0E 2K0

February 25, 2015

Parkland County
53109A Hwy 779
Parkland County, AB T7Z 1R1

Attention: Deanna Cambridge

Re: Proposed amendment to Land Use Bylaw – Empire Iron Works

Our Board has received a copy of the Notice of Public Hearing in respect of the above proposed amendment to Land Use Bylaw No. 20-2009. We received the notice last week from one of the property owners in an adjacent residential subdivision. Since that time we have been attempting to gather background information from the County, ESRD and community members.

At our meeting on February 23, 2015 at your office, Mr. Terry Goldstein, a resident in the area, indicated that the current manufacturing operations on this site have had some impact on residents in the area through traffic, 24 hour operations, and some noise associated with the operations. There is also a concern that the site operations have or could have an impact on the watershed through surface runoff and groundwater penetration by various products used on site. Mr. Goldstein indicated that up until now residents have not come forward with their issues and concerns apparently choosing to try to live with the activities on the site. Mr. Goldstein also indicated that he was not aware of any dialogue having taken place between the community and Empire regarding current operations or future plans for the site.

The application by Empire for redistricting of the site to RIC-Rural Industrial has not only elevated community concerns about the current operations but also raised concern about the potential for expanded operations into the future.

While it is not part of the current application process, it appears to our Board that some form of community consultation regarding the current operations would be beneficial. We also believe that given the nature of the operations on the site, a review of any possible environmental impact of the current operations on the watershed be conducted by the appropriate authority if such monitoring is not already taking place.

As you are aware the WWMC has been working with Parkland County, ESRD and the North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance on a Subwatershed Land Use Plan for Lake Wabamun. The County has recognized the need for land use planning and policies that are specific to watersheds and that are designed to protect or enhance the health of water bodies and their watersheds. Individual land uses within watersheds should also be compatible with and compliment the long term projected uses of the lake and the lands within the watershed.,

The current operations on the Empire Ironworks site may have at one time been compatible with the surrounding land uses. We understand that the development on this site dates back to 1979 when the land was in an area designated as Development Control (DC) Resource Extraction. At that time the site was adjacent to the then operational cooling and ash ponds associated with the Wabamun Generating Station. In the ensuing 35 years the Wabamun Generating Station has been decommissioned, the cooling and ash ponds are in the process of reclamation and the surrounding areas have been developed predominantly for residential use.

In 1994 Parkland County redesignated this site and other areas in the vicinity as CR – Country Residential. This redesignation was consistent with and recognized the changes in that area that had occurred since 1979. The Empire Ironworks site is now a legal non-conforming use and in effect is “grandfathered” for its current use. The site is within 400 metres of the lakeshore. It is not only located close to the lakeshore but it is now located in a residential area of the watershed.

Our Board believes that in considering the application for redistricting of this site from Country Residential to Rural Industrial, Parkland County should consider the changes to land uses in the broader area since 1979, the proximity of the site to the lake, the residential character of the surrounding area and the County’s long term land use planning objectives in the Wabamun watershed.

We request that this letter be provided to Members of Council for consideration at its March 3, 2015 Public Hearing. I anticipate that a member of our Board will be in attendance at the hearing but it is not our intention to make a presentation to Council.

Stan Franklin
Board Chair