

Topic: Proposed Entwistle Area Structure Plan Amendments, and Redistricting to AGI – Agricultural Industry Development District.

Introduction:

Proposed Bylaw 2017-03 are text and map amendments to the Entwistle Area Structure Plan Bylaw 23-2012. The proposed amendments are considered minor in nature and are intended to provide for the opportunity for more uses to be introduced into the Area Structure Plan within the Agricultural Land Use designation.

Proposed Bylaw 2017-04 is a Land Use Bylaw amendment to redistrict approximately 40.9 hectares (100.9 acres) of land from the AGR – Agricultural Restricted District to the AGI – Agricultural Industry Development District. The subject lands are identified as:

ALL THAT PORTION OF THE NORTH WEST QUARTER OF SECTION
TWENTY ONE (21)
TOWNSHIP FIFTY THREE (53)
RANGE SEVEN (7)
WEST OF THE FIFTH MERIDIAN
LYING NORTH WEST OF THE LAND SUBDIVIDED UNDER
PLAN 2443AE
CONTAINING 40.9 HECTARES (100.9 ACRES)
MORE OR LESS
EXCEPTING THEREOUT ALL MINES AND MINERALS
LINC No. 0019 976 034

Facts (Background Information):

On January 16, 2017, Select Engineering Consultants on behalf of Pinnacle Renewable Energy Group, formally submitted redistricting and Area Structure Plan amendment applications in preparation for developing a wood recycling and pellet manufacturing facility on the subject lands. The facility will collect wood waste products including bark and wood shavings (biomass) from local forestry industry, and produce small, dense wood pellets that can be used as biofuels for heating and energy production. The wood by-products are heat processed and compressed and prepared for export. Rail access is critical for this project as the finished wood pellets are shipped to Prince Rupert B.C., for overseas exports.

Due to the proximity to transportation corridors, population centre, and various wood mill plants in northwestern Alberta, the proposed site has been deemed an ideal location for this type of development by the applicant.

The majority of the subject parcel is currently used for agriculture. The southwestern portion is treed and has been identified by Alberta Environment as environmentally sensitive, and have required compensation payments from the developer. The north eastern portion of the parcel is developed as a home site and is developed with agricultural support facilities developed as a farmyard and agricultural facilities. A gravel extraction site was in operation on the parcel; this has been decommissioned.

Analysis:

Entwistle Area Structure Plan Amendment

Minor text and map amendments to the Entwistle Area Structure Plan are proposed to introduce more diversity in the range of value added agricultural and agriculture industrial uses that support value added manufacturing and processing of Agricultural or biomass products. The Proposed Amendments to the Entwistle Area Structure Plan encourages, and makes provisions for more diversity in the agricultural land uses by introducing Agricultural Industrial land uses to support the Hamlet in the following ways:

- Identifies the need for a range of new value added, agricultural –based industrial and alternative energy-based developments.
- Identifies the CN Railway as an asset and as a catalyst for development.
- Provides direction and clarification regarding connections to municipal water and sewer systems.
- Accommodates new agricultural, alternative energy, and agricultural industrial based development in rural and fringe areas.
- Provides direction and clarification for the requirements for Outline Plans, Conceptual Plans and Traffic Impact Assessments to support development proposals.
- Requires compliance with County policies around Dark Sky lighting.

Administration is supportive of this development and the proposed policy amendments for the following reasons:

- The proposed project supports alternative/clean energy production.
- The proposed project provides an alternative to coal fired power plants located in Parkland County as the Provincial Government looks to phase out coal energy.
- The proposed project brings employment opportunities to a rural urban centre (potential to employ equivalent of approximately 10% of the Entwistle population once production commences).
- The proposed project diversifies the Agricultural Economy and related land uses.
- The proposed project is considered compatible with adjacent land uses, including the Hamlet as the proposed development will contain any nuisances within the boundaries of the site. Additionally the proponent has been very active in liaising with the community and adjacent residents to ensure issues have been addressed and mitigated. Increased industrial traffic in the area can be mitigated through off-site improvements to existing infrastructure.

Land Use Bylaw Redistricting

The proposed wood pellet production facility would be considered a “General Industrial Manufacturing / Processing” use under the Land Use Bylaw. Currently, AGR – Agricultural Restricted District does not allow General Industrial Manufacturing / Processing use as either Permitted or Discretionary Uses.

The proposed development will, however, be allowed in the new AGI – Agricultural Industry Development as a Permitted Use, since it will satisfy two of the three fundamental qualifiers for General Industrial Manufacturing / Processing use. Specifically, Section 4.4.2(a) of the Land Use Bylaw states that any new uses in AGI district must:

- (i) support value added manufacturing or processing of agricultural or biomass inputs;
- (ii) provide a source for alternative energy generation; or
- (iii) produce supplies or inputs that directly support the value added agriculture and/or alternative energy industries.

The proposed development will a) support value added processing of biomass inputs (being wood waste products from forestry industry) into biofuel products; and b) these biofuel products will also directly support the alternative energy industry by being a direct energy source.

For above reasons, Administration supports the redistricting of the subject lands from AGR – Agricultural Restricted District to AGI – Agricultural Industry Development District.

Policy Framework Review

The policy frameworks relevant to the consideration of this ASP amendment and redistricting applications are as follows:

1. Capital Region Growth Plan

Bylaws 2017-03 and 2017-04 do **not** require a referral to the Capital Region Board, as Land Use Bylaw amendments are not identified as requiring this type of referral under the Regional Evaluation Framework. The ASP amendments does not require CRB referral under the Current Regional Evaluation Framework, additionally section 12.1.5 of the Entwistle ASP states CRB referral is not required.

2. Parkland County Strategic Plan 2016-2020

The following policy statements have been expressed by Council within the current Parkland County Strategic Plan which support the proposed project:

- Core Values: Cooperation- Parkland County will be innovative and creative by capitalizing on opportunities, embracing new technologies, adapting to change and incorporating best practices.
- Strategic Priority Area: Economic Diversification: Parkland County supports and advances economic growth through economic diversification and innovation.

3. Municipal Development Plan (MDP) Bylaw No. 37-2007

The proposed amendments are consistent with Section 2 (“Agricultural Lands”) of the County’s MDP. The subject lands are identified on Map 1 as agricultural land, and the intent of AGI – Agricultural District is to promote industries that complement and support agricultural sector within rural Parkland County. The following policy statements from the MDP further supports the proposed development:

- Guiding Principles 4: Emphasize Economic Development-
The County supports new industrial and commercial development that is compatible with its other goals. Such development is supported by the Municipal Development Plan and should be encouraged and accommodated in appropriate locations to create jobs, attract investment and expand and diversify the tax base.
- Objective: Encourage growth and expansion of value added agricultural or industrial agricultural uses such as food processing facilities.

4. Entwistle Area Structure Plan (ASP)

The applicant is proposing a number of text amendments to the Area Structure Plan that make provisions for diversifying the Agricultural Economy by accommodating new agricultural-based and alternative energy-based development in rural and/or rural fringe areas. This is being achieved by adding opportunities for Agricultural Industrial Uses, and related criteria, within and adjacent to, the Plan Area Boundary. The amendments are detailed in a red-lined version of the ASP in Attachment 2.

5. Land Use Bylaw No. 20-2009

The Applicant is proposing the following amendment to Land Use Bylaw 20-2009:

1. That Map 2 of Bylaw No. 20-2009, and amendments thereto, being the Parkland County Land Use Bylaw No. 20-2009 is amended by:
 - Redistricting the following lands:

ALL THAT PORTION OF THE NORTH WEST QUARTER OF SECTION
TWENTY ONE (21)
TOWNSHIP FIFTY THREE (53)
RANGE SEVEN (7)
WEST OF THE FIFTH MERIDIAN
LYING NORTH WEST OF THE LAND SUBDIVIDED UNDER
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from AGI – Agricultural Restricted District to AGI – Agricultural Industry Development District as shown on Schedule “A”, attached to and forming part of Bylaw 2017-04.

Alternatives:

1. Council may defeat Bylaw No. 2017-03 at first reading.
2. Council may defeat Bylaw No. 2017-04 at first reading.
3. Council may schedule a Public Hearing regarding Bylaw No. 2017-03 and Bylaw No. 2017-04 for a date/time other than March 28, 2017 at 9:45 in Council Chambers.

Conclusion/Summary:

Administration supports the proposed application and recommends that Council give first reading to Bylaws 2017-03 and 2017-04 and set a Public Hearing for March 28, 2017 at 9:45 in Council Chambers to hear public comment on Bylaw 2017-03 and Bylaw 2017-04. Comments from the public and stakeholder referral will be presented in detail at the Public Hearing.

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