

Transcript of Meeting with Developers – November 12, 2014

Martino Verhaeghe – I will be looking at a variety of new processes including going over our current permit and subdivision processes, which we will review with you today. Also we are doing a land use bylaw review and we've been working at getting a consultant for that, which should start shortly.

Benjamin Misener – We'll start off with the subdivision process. Currently with a subdivision, we sit down and have a pre-application meeting or consultation with whoever is proposing the subdivision. We get a phone call, someone is interested in applying and what we'll do is schedule a time where they come in and sit down with Administration and we go over forms that we've established. We've established extensive forms that highlight key areas that we need to focus on at the pre-application meeting. That includes everything from tentative plan requirements to looking at issues that may occur during the subdivision process such as a high water table; slope issues; and whether or not just at face value, if the application is applicable with the land use bylaw and other statutory plans. If during that pre-application meeting the application appears to meet most of our criteria, what will then happen is the applicant will submit a completed subdivision application and fee. We will accept that application if it's been filled out correctly and meets our criteria and then we go into the referral and circulation. And what we do there is we circulate the subdivision application both internally, so that's mainly to public works, community services (which is usually economic development) and the Ag department. It is also circulated to public agencies, mainly Alberta Environment, Alberta Transportation, Health Inspector, school boards, power companies and then of course anyone who has an interest on title. As part of that referral and circulation period, staff conducts a site inspection and evaluation and at that point in time we determine if there is any further criteria that may form the basis for conditions that will be put on that subdivision that will need to be met in order to gain conditionally approval. After we've done that we will submit a report to MPC. Something that should be made clear is that Administration only provides a recommendation. At the end of the day the decision on whether or not to grant a subdivision or development permit and the conditions attached thereto are decided upon by the Municipal Planning Commission. They have the authority to make those decisions and therefore it's actually the Municipal Planning Commission that issues a decision on those topics whether it's a subdivision or development permit. Once the decision has been issued, it either will be deemed conditionally approved or refused. If it is refused, there is the opportunity to appeal to the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board. In some cases in certain scenarios, the Municipal Government Board, but typically the SDAB. Once the SDAB hears it, the appeal will either be refused or approved and in that case if it's approved, no problem, work within the conditions that were put on it by the SDAB. If it's refused then the last option is an appeal to the Court of Queen's Bench. If at the initial decision stage when it was first brought to MPC, it is conditionally approved, what will happen is the applicant will receive a series of conditions placed on their subdivision and they have to meet those criteria. Now what will happen then is that we will notify the applicant and usually they are in attendance at MPC of what is required. In some cases for larger developments, a development agreement will also be required and the developer will have to enter into that agreement before the subdivision can be endorsed. The endorsement stage, and what that really means is that all the conditions have been met. We don't just endorse it, we have to carefully go through and ensure that any and all conditions that were placed on the conditional approval by the MPC have been met and if that is the case, then we endorse the subdivision and it's sent off to land titles and ultimately registered as a new separate and distinct parcel.

Martino – Now the only simplification within this table you see before you is that after the conditional approval and applicant notification, if a condition of subdivision appears to be inconsistent with our bylaws or in the opinion of the applicants not required, they do have the ability to appeal specific conditions for consideration to the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board. However, once you have appealed to the SDAB as single condition, they can review the entire decision of the MPC and either accept the appeal and remove the condition, put in other conditions or refuse the application. So again, it's a second blind approval.

Benjamin – The next thing to go over and the one that probably interests or affects the majority of people in this room is the development permit process. With the development permit process, it follows a similar pattern to the subdivision process, but slightly different. There is an initial consultation that occurs, either by phone or in person at the office and we go over the application covering off as many details as we possibly can. The thing with the application, we can only glean the details that are included in that application and this is before Administration really digs into the full review. So at that point in time if the application has been filled out correctly the appropriate fee submitted, then if required we will send out referrals. Typically this is not done on permitted uses because there is not a requirement for them. They are usually pretty straight forward applications, but at any point in time, we have the authority to refer a development permit application to any parties that we deem necessary. So in some cases, it may be internally to public works for something like an approach, or in other instances it may be to provincial bodies that we feel may be able to provide relevant comments to the development that is being proposed. So if it's a permitted use, it's always decided on by the development officer unless there is a variance being granted. Now if the variance is over 50% or it's a discretionary use, it will be submitted to the MPC. So for permitted uses the development officer, we usually refer to it as can be decided upon 'in house'. So we as Administration can make that decision and issue the permit. If it's discretionary or there is a variance over 50% required, it then goes to the MPC and again just like subdivisions, Administration provides a recommendation to MPC, but ultimately it's MPC that issues a decision on whether or not to approve that development permit or refuse it and if it's approved, the conditions that will be put on it. So as noted, there is basically two outcomes of it for any permit regardless of who the development authority is. The permit is either deemed refused or conditionally approved. If it's deemed refused, again the appeal goes to the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board or they have the opportunity to either uphold or deny the appeal. If the appeal is denied, then again the appeal could then be carried to the Court of Queen's Bench. If it is approved, the permit is effectively issued and the applicant would be required to adhere to the conditions set forth. If it's conditionally approved, for a permitted use there is no circulation or public notification. If there has been a variance granted or MPC decides on a discretionary use then there is a public notification period where it goes out to adjacent landowners. And I guess I should just touch on that point quickly. I forgot to mention it for subdivisions. Subdivisions are always circulated to adjacent landowners, that's anyone within a half mile of that location. For development permits it only applies and we only conduct that circulation if it's going forward to MPC or there is a variance and then either it's sent to adjacent landowners, put in the paper or both. And again with development permit as part of the conditional approval, one of the conditions can be the requirement to enter into a development agreement.

Shirley – at this time we would like to seek some feedback on the development permit process and ask for any problems people are having or your issues you are having or whatever.

Don Reggenwetter – I'm a developer and I think most everybody here knows me. I guess where I'm going with this thing is that I understand the development process and I understand the steps that it has to take. I've been at this for going on 10 years now, but I'm a little bit confused as to why when we first started doing our development, it would take 2-3 months to get a development agreement and a development permit was taking us anywhere from 3-5 days. And I'm not pointing any fingers at anybody or anything, I just want to know why it's gone from 3 months to get a development agreement to close to a year and on a development permit, we're getting guys that are up there in the 19 weeks mark and I get this call all the time from my builders because they have to organize crews, get people to work for them and if we're told that it's going to take 3 weeks to get a development permit, you start lining up your crews based on that. If at the end of 3 weeks you are told that well it's still another 3 weeks cause your still at the bottom of the pile and we're working through 80 other applications, then you start because now you've lined up all your crews and people say well I had that scheduled. So now the next time you ask me to give you a bid on something make sure that your time thing is there because I have other people who are scheduled to go behind you. Now all of a sudden I've got a two week period that isn't going to work for me. So I guess my question is, what's changed and if it's changed I want to know why because more government stuff happening or what the problem is. I'll just wait to see if we've got any answers immediate.

Benjamin – One of the things that has really changed over the last couple of years and it's been gradually implemented and something that I've carried forward with my time as the planning and development manager was that a more thorough review of development permit applications. A lot of older permits and again it was just a product of the times, it's not condemning previous administration, but one of the biggest factors is that a fuller review and a more detailed and comprehensive review of development permit applications. A lot of older permits now are cropping up where there was very minimal review done and they are causing significant issues. At times, Administration didn't even collect ABA data information, which is in regards to pipelines, wells and right of ways, so we've had several instances where older development permits were issued where they ended up being built over a high pressure natural gas line or over a County right of way for our sewer line. So a big part of it is the review process. The second one would be that along with that detailed process is staffing. Now staffing is something that we have addressed recently and I think it will make a huge difference in how we more going forward. Prior to myself starting at the County, there were 3 people total in the Planning and Development department. One of them did subdivisions, one did development permits and the manager had to deal with everything else including reports, rezoning and dealing with both subdivision and development permits. That's an incredible amount of work for 3 people to deal with. So with that Council has approved a total now of 4 new positions for Planning and Development so we will have a staffing compliment of 8 people, two of those being full time development officers and then myself, I will still have signing authority as well as the education officer that will be coming in. So a big part of it will be the staffing compliment that will significantly increase those times for development permits.

Martino – Now, if I could also ask a question Don, because we do have a land use bylaw review going forward. Now the process itself is relatively standard within the province and if fact most provinces, doesn't change too much, but if I can ask you to clarify on some of your questions as well. It's unlikely that a 3-5 day permit turn around will be possible unless we are dealing with very small applications like sheds, garage, stuff like that, but even then we still have a minimum review process. The Act provides the development authority about 60 days and in some cases if we are dealing with the MPC, you require close to 50 days just to deal with minimum referral times under regulation and advertisement requirements. If you were dealing with more of a 6 week kind of turn around and that

was relatively standard give or take a week, how would that affect your business or what accommodations – do you see that being reasonable.

Don Reggenwetter – I guess it's more up to the housing people to answer that question more than me, I'm more in the developing, I don't do house building. I just develop land and I just leave it to my building people, but any time they can't build, that's a concern to me. When we started this thing, the 60 acre parcel we're on, we really didn't understand it as well as we do now, but since we've gone into this thing, once you get into the land development, you can't quit because the profit doesn't come until the last day and I think you probably know that, but we've injected 8 million dollars into the local economy and we really don't have even any of our interest back let alone our principal, so we're pretty concerned when land sales stop because guys can't get development permits and that's probably the biggest reason that I ever brought it up with anybody cause I'm concerned. We've already been through one recession here where I sold one lot in a year and I know for a fact that could happen any day again and we all know that with the price of oil. I really don't need to be caught owing a million and a half dollars to a scalper which who is who I'm dealing with now because banks don't touch you, but I don't really need to be caught with my pants down around my ankles again because the last time it hurt me pretty bad. I had 15 lots developed under that one phase and I wound up paying tax on 10 of them and I sold one lot that year that didn't even cover the taxes. So there's where my concerns are. Thank you

Kara Westerlund – Don you were talking about the time frames and stuff and I know I've been around for about 4 years now and this summer we seemed to kind of gone up the curve with the number of permits that we were getting in. Can you guys talk a little about what we've seen in the last 12 months to where we're at now and with bringing this extra staff on what are you guys hoping for the turn around because I know it was Council's wishes to have that turn around a lot quicker than it has been.

Benjamin – Yes we were unbelievably overwhelmed by permits this year and if fact we were so overwhelmed that we had to bring on a consultant to help us because of the number of applications we received. I guess in that regard, one important thing that I would really stress that would make it a lot easier for Administration and would help with those turnaround times is ensuring that when you know you are going to be building or developing that you come into the County as soon as possible and make application. We receive numerous applications over the summer where development had already started and that makes it incredibly difficult for Administration because now you're trying to deal with all the issues that should have been sorted out beforehand after the fact, once a foundation has already been poured. So through the months of May, June and July and even August we were just hammered with permits and I think some of that could be helped, the turnaround times could be helped if there was earlier application on those builds. That would make a big difference for us. As far as what we can get the timelines down to, that's something we are going to have to review internally and look at process and that's something we will also incorporate into the land use bylaw. Because depending on the changes that come out of that, the discretion afforded to Administration, the way we change the rules and regulations, it may completely alter how those time lines are impacted or what sort of time lines we're going to end up with at the end of the day.

Martino – Not to mention, to speak a little bit closer to the staff compliment and how that will affect timelines, the average training time for a development officer is between 3–6 months and hopefully with some of the hires that we have, they've got better educational backgrounds and experienced backgrounds in some cases, so hopefully that will be brought forward a little bit quicker, but of course with more people it also means that we are less vulnerable to issues with staffing where

someone might sick or injured and be off for several weeks. Previously with only 3-4 staff that meant that you were losing 25-50% of your capacity to actually process a permit and so hopefully those vulnerabilities will be removed as well and when we do have issues, vacations, sickness etc., that won't be as big of a concern anymore.

Shirley – So then if someone just wanted to build a garage and they knew they were doing it next year how many months ahead of time would they have to let you know and what time frame do they have to get it done.

Benjamin – In terms of letting us know, the sooner the better. If you know the size of the garage and where you're going to put it, you can apply now. Those are really the two biggest criteria because when we issue a permit and in order to ensure down the road that we could issue a certificate of compliance on the property if you built the garage the size that you told us and in the location you told us and it meets all our setbacks and bylaws, we're going to issue a compliance and we're going to issue your permit. So the sooner the better, if you know 6 months in advance by all means apply 6 months in advance cause I can guarantee we'll have your permit ready. In terms of timelines for when they will get the permit, again it's really going to depend on this new staffing contingent and the changes that may happen with the land use bylaw. I'm hoping for simple builds like that we hopefully have a quicker turnaround time than have, but I don't want to set any firm numbers out because you just end up setting yourself up for failure if you don't end up meeting those.

Martino – if you are wondering about current backlog time frames, we are sitting currently between 4-5 weeks to give you a position of where we are today. Currently, permits that come in are nearly 4 weeks behind and that also depends whether they are referred or not, so we're looking at our own processes internally with seeing whether the simplified permits can be moved forward more quickly, but that still has to be put into rotation.

Brian Ball – I'm a land surveyor locally in town with Baseline Geomatics. I think right off the bat I'll just state to yourself and Benjamin thanks for allowing us to spend some time discussing the various functions of what goes on in the County and I appreciate the time putting this together and allowing us, because we are all stakeholders here. I don't specifically have the same needs and concerns as maybe Don had that he shared with you or that even you guys are dealing with on a daily basis, but I do appreciate the time to come in and discuss this with you. As a wonderful Segway that you gave me Benjamin, letting people know as soon as you can, one suggestion or maybe something I'd just like to through out there, I don't have any specific answers to it myself, however on a subdivision application, let's say for example, it should be no surprise that there is going to be houses built on those lots and those houses will likely be in that building pocket that have your specific setbacks in side yards and the rest of that stuff, is there steps that can be taken that could speed up that development permit for houses that are going in lots that are currently in subdivision stage. Cause that whole machine is going to be running and it shouldn't be a surprise when the plan is registered that someone comes in and they are applying for a development permit on Lot 8, Lot 9 is probably going to want one and so is Lot 7, so what can we set up that might speed that up so if there are 20 lots, that's 6 weeks of work for 20 lots, that's an awful lot of work where they are all the same type of lot, same type of subdivision, can we streamline it a little bit.

Benjamin – It's definitely something we can definitely consider, the problem with that and the reason we actually have provisions in our land use bylaw preventing development permit application or approval of a development permit while there is a pending subdivision on a property, is if anything goes south between the time the subdivision is conditionally approved and when it's registered at land titles. Once it's registered at land titles it's not an issue. The parcel boundaries are clearly defined, it's been accepted by land titles and now it's considered a separate parcel. So whoever is going to purchase that property now actually holds title to it. If we issue permits on parcels that are not yet registered at land titles, there's no guarantee that the parcel is going to be created. Until such time as it's been endorsed by the County and registered with land titles, there's all kinds of things that could occur in terms of disrupting that process. So I'm not sure how we would address that. I think it's something we could take into consideration, but definitely something we could review going forward.

Shirley – I believe Brian what you had in mind was if all these lots are the same and there's going to be a home on each lot what can we do in advance to have these permits sort of shelf ready because they are all the same.

Benjamin – well that would be up to the developer and builders to submit those applications as soon as possible. You know, I guess we could consider taking them up to the point we're about to approve them and then approving them after the subdivision has been registered, but the problem with that and the reason we struggle with that is because let's say that subdivision falls through now. How many hours of staff time did we just dedicate processing 20 permits, now knowing that those 20 permits may not come into place. That's the problem when you are dealing with things that are conditionally approved or there's kind of a tentative approval, it's really difficult in the planning world to deal with that stuff if it's not concrete yet, just because of the risk of things that can go sideways and I know all the Councillors and the majority of builders and developers in here can speak to times when the process went sideways and I know Administration definitely can. So it's that risk that can occur that could disrupt that process and then we've spent dozens of hours processing these 20 permits all for not.

Brian – If I could speak to risk I would definitely suggest that the developers have a significant amount that the 20 permits that are proceeding and maybe they would be willing to put forth a deposit or something like that just in case it does go sideways, cause absolutely that would be very good to have that and you could caveat these permits or hold them 'in house' till the subdivision is registered, all those things, but even once the subdivision is registered, then you do know that Lots 1-20 are coming through and I was initially just speaking to a fully registered subdivision that it is still likely going to be a 6 week turn around for those 20 lots when the subdivision has been registered, you've seen it through the entire stage of tentative plan, subdivision plan, registration and now it's registered and now you are going to see it coming through again, there should be very little risk that anything has changed at that point in time, so even if it's just set up that way. But you have a great suggestion there of actually even one step ahead and getting things ready concurrently and I'm sure that a lot of developers to aid their builders would look at some level of deposit or whatever is necessary. As an example, something I've seen in the city for some of the subdivision is that they will issue a plan with building pockets and so the builders have to find a house that fits in that building pocket cause really come the next set of permits that they get where they're starting to really review the types of plans and all the different details there. That's a whole different permitting structure, but at least that development permit, that specific building is going to have the side yards, it's going to have the frontage and then you know what you're looking a building when you're buying a lot as well.

John Evasiuk – I was just going to mention that one of the drawbacks to what you're saying here though that happens very frequently is with most of the developers and even some in this room, they have a professional engineer on site and the development is happening as the home building is happening at the same time and then all of a sudden the professional engineer disappears, they are no longer retained by the developer. It leaves us to have to look in on a lot of the things that the professional engineer should be doing. So to just have a blanket approval, that's not going to work.

Anthony – On say a 20 lot multi lot application that has been approved, could not the circulations for all 20 lots be done at one time so that if Fortis or any of the other circulating people we send to have any issues on any of those lots, that could be identified all at the same time. Then when the development permit comes in for that particular lot, then all we really need to really deal with is what John pointed out, that the engineers for the specifics to that lot and whatever size house and garage location, we don't have to go as much back to see if there are any infringements on that lot by virtue of pipelines, objections from a power or utility company, etc. etc.

Martino – we can definitely review that with our land use bylaw process. With regards to blanket approvals, they are not technically legal. Now what you can do is you can set up a process where by certain things are more expedient if we are dealing with a current subdivision and we've already done the majority of the circulations, then we would know which lots might have issues and which lots would not and we'd also be able to, if the surveyor was willing to provide it, establish certain areas to make it easier for builders to know where they can and cannot build and finding homes. So there's a lot of work of everyone's part when it comes to that. With regards to approving everything in advance, no that's not necessarily possible, you would still need to issue individual permits for each individual piece and you might find that certain ones require a variance and certain ones don't, so you would still deal with them all individually, however to be honest there's really simple things you can do. If you're ensuring that a lot of those types of uses are permitted if you're providing discretion to your development officers, if you ensure that the file manager for that subdivision stays the same so they are familiar with all the people and all the issues involved so it's not a learning process with each permit. There's a variety of internal things we can do after some time and training to hopefully speed those processes up.

Anthony – I don't know if you quite understood my point or addressed my point. My point is that I feel the circulations are going to go to those same companies and they are going to have a yes or a no whether or not they have any issues, that could be in my opinion and I don't know the law, that's why you guys are the ones that have more background, but I'm thinking that we should be able to circulate and see if they have any questions on all 20 lots then when you get down to the specifics of what's wrong with a given lot, i.e. does it have more instabilities because it's nearer the creek compared to one that's out on a flatter, sparser place. Those kinds of provisions become more specific and those would be all we'd have to be looking at in terms of meeting the requirements for that site, but the whole 20 should have commonality for what we're circulating and should be able to be checked in one crack so we're more prepared.

Martino – and I guess to clarify my comments a little bit further, the majority of delays are when things have to go to the MPC or things require a variance that requires a MPC approval if things could be dealt with by the development officer and we are caught up in our backlog which is significant at this time. Technically speaking that shouldn't take very long. For us to review a house, typically that would not require a referral unless there are right of ways on the property or they are too close to sour gas utilities. If we have discretion at the development officer level and we have a variety of permitted uses that are being dealt with, those processes should move quickly. If we put a variety of

items into the discretionary use category during our land use bylaw review, that will require further process through the MPC or we start dealing with more variances, those issues require referral and therefore do take longer and there's not much we can do about it.

Marc – Just a question, talking about the 20 lots and talking about that type of scenario, if once the developers develop those lots and got them down and they are legally lots on their own rights, then if we as a permitting body can say what is the potential maximum for what you can put on that lot without it having to go for variances or MPC. So not necessarily the developer, but the builders know ok I can put a 1500 sq ft house with a two car garage on that lot, but I can't on this lot, this can only take a 1200 ft footprint because of this already that they've highlighted, so they know that yes if they put this size of house on this lot, it will most likely be processed through quicker because it's not going to have to go through MPC, etc. Where if there is a lot, if they want to build something beyond those boundaries that the development department, then they have to go to MPC they have to realize that then it's not a 2-4 week process, it could be double that length. And if they know that when they potentially go, when the builders potentially go to buy those lots off the developers, they know what they can build on those lots and it makes them, then the builders will know what they can and the length of time that they are going to say to their customers as well. See where I'm coming from.

Benjamin – Yes I definitely agree. I think that would be great and as Martino pointed out, if at the time of subdivision especially on these larger multi lot subdivisions, if the surveyor has an awareness of what the setbacks are, then by all means they could put a developable area pocket which covers half the battle, because then you don't need variances, cause the building area is clearly laid out. I think the other thing too needs to come from both the County providing information and the builder seeking out that information, because it should be a two-way street where at any point in time they are considering either purchasing land to build it out or being contracted out by a landowner, as soon as they get that job or buy that chunk of land, they should contact the County to inquire about the zoning. I'm more than happy to talk to any builder or developer in here and I'm sure they can attest to that if they call us up and say my property is zoned this what are my setbacks, height restrictions, it's a pretty easy phone call for any of our staff to be able to answer that and I think that's an important thing because then we don't have builds starting or a rush where now they've told the landowner they can build a 3000 sq ft house and they can't. But on the same token, the County needs to work to get that information out there and it should also be something that's reviewed at time of subdivision, cause at the time of subdivision we know the number of lots, we know what the zoning is going to be, that should also be addressed to the developer who can then communicate that on to the builders.

Martino – I would also remind Council that they have approved an 'education officer' position within the planning department so even though that will be again focusing on development permits in the department as well to help clear that backlog. Ultimately speaking, that could be an expanded part of the role of that position, which is actually working with larger developments to make sure they have those types of issues sorted out in advance working on preparing education materials they can give to their purchasers and avoid a lot of these problems in the future.

Michael Jacobs – I'm here representing Mike's Homes today. In 2009 we came to Brazeau County and we built the first show home in Brazeau County and since we've had two others and we are on our third show home right now. We enjoy Brazeau County, we enjoy moving forward with Brazeau County and that is why we are here today, obviously to help you folks and help understand the process that we feel is bottle-necked right up. We've got a very refined process at our show home

where we can have clients come in and we can help them with a drafting service, we can help them with financing, we can help them with construction, we can push a customer through that process in under 4 weeks. So we will meet somebody shake their hand, draw a blue print, design it the way they want it, we'll know it fits on the land, we know it fits within the guidelines with what that lot has, but then we've got to tell that customer let's wait for Brazeau County to approve this. I just want you to think about that for a moment because if you were the family living in a holiday trailer, selling your house, having to do something, but now let's wait 6 weeks for Brazeau County. That makes me sad maybe I chose this County for our show home. We've also built houses in lots of other subdivisions, lots of other County's and we don't see this process there at all. We don't see a 6 week process, we see half that process at best. What we're missing out here guys is the development permit is a small aspect of what we've got to do, and hurdles we have whether its engineering, development permits, building permits and as of February 1, 2014 there is also a government registration. We do insurance and we also do a new home warranty program registration. Every single other process we do happens in days, but not here. In 2009 it did, so it's nice to come here today to see you guys making an effort explaining the process, how long has this process been in place.

Benjamin – The process hasn't changed, again the biggest reason for the delay in the process was both staffing issues and as well a more thorough review process. We're not going to get away from the thorough review process. I believe wholeheartedly that is crucial to being able to approve these developments, but I would hope again the staffing compliment and internal review of our processes we will be able to expedite these permits so that they are not taking 6 weeks.

M. Jacobs – I don't find that an acceptable answer cause I don't go to any amount of my customers and say I can't paint that house today, I don't got enough painters. There's outside sources, resources out there in the world, you could be farming this out to other people, there's other qualified people right here in your community that could help you with some of this. I feel we've been slightly victimized this summer. What would you feel is an acceptable deadline in you guys eye?

Benjamin – Again, as we stated earlier I don't think we can pin that down at this time. Provincially legislated we have a 40 day deadline that we're mandated to meet and so I think that is our starting point of course and improving on that should be our goal, but at this time I don't want to sit here and commit to anything because Martino's just come on board, we've started our land use bylaw review. I don't think it would be fair to counsel administration or the people in this room to sit here and say firmly 'yes' we'll have it done in X amount of days.

M. Jacobs – Fair enough, then I'd ask Council what do they feel is an acceptable time frame?

A. Heinrich – On your business when you are getting a customer and the customer is asking for a house to be built in whatever timelines he hopes as soon as possible, you're not able to build in your capacity all your requests at one time either, you've got to kind of schedule your work in terms of your customers according to you capacity, in terms of your work force. Sometime you are able to increase that workforce and that might help expedite your customers' requests, what Council has done is we have increased our capacity by increasing the staff. We are trying our very best to work to get more staff in place, sometimes there is also the element that we have to be facing and perhaps yourselves are not quite as conscious of that, of individuals/ratepayers who feel we are overstaffing and we have to make sure that we are able to get that balance between what people expect from us and what our developers and people who are doing work in our County need services

from us. So I would suggest to you if you could give us some help in terms of ideas you have to streamline the process that might work for us and that would be better because it's highly unlikely that there are going to be an unlimited amount of resources placed before our staffing component to get everything done.

S. Mahan – So Mike your frustration is you get the people there and then you get everything going and that's it, then you've got to wait.

M. Jacobs – Correct

S. Mahan – And so when you build in other counties, what usually is their turnaround?

M. Jacobs – We can turnaround everything in 4 weeks in every other County or less. So that's not a development permit, that's a development permit and a building permit. So in this County you've outsourced your building permits, so that's still a week so don't forget that there's another week or possibly two. So we go 6 weeks here then we finish up the rest of the permitting, that's 8 weeks, so you're double the amount of time Parkland County produces, double the amount of time Leduc County produces, triple amount of time the County of Wetaskiwin produces.

R. Moir – So Mike, is it this year particularly that the bottleneck has gotten so bad. You said in 2009 you could do it, when did it start to get to the point where it is now.

M. Jacobs – Probably in the last 18 months.

R. Moir – Ok, so I think we've kind of got taken by surprise with everything. Benjamin's new, he came into this and a lot of us are new on Council and it bottlenecked on us this year. We're trying to do everything we can now to change that, so that's why we're here tonight is we've heard from people and we hear the frustration in our staff too. So we are trying to put things and people in place so that next year when everybody decides to phone the County in the spring and want a building permit, that we're going to be able to handle things a lot better than what we did this year. So that's what we're trying to do as Council, we're asking for your ideas, we're asking so we can work with the staff on how to streamline it, but that's why we're here tonight is so that next year we won't have this again.

M. Jacobs – Right, I guess what we were talking about earlier, me and a few of the developers, like we were saying that it's almost to the point where we want to run a risk taking that development permit on a piece of land even though we might not be pulling it with the right blueprint, simply to be able to have a development permit on a piece of land in Brazeau County, now turns that into a more saleable piece of land. And it give us the builders maybe an opportunity to be able to go to an area, but that was our idea about trying to get this development permit, you know what Brian had presented earlier with getting a development permit attached to a piece of land. The development permit is good for 12 months, is that right, am I correct, specifically one blueprint.

Benjamin – yes because when we go to issue a certificate of compliance, if the permits that have been issued on the property do not match what is being shown on the real property report, we would issue non-compliance on that property.

M. Jacobs – What significance does the blueprint have with the development permit?

Benjamin – if the building size, height dimensions do not match what is being shown on a real property report, that would not be the same structure as what a development permit was issued for.

M. Jacobs – What if it was all within the same compliance and what we mentioned earlier made sense, like you could probably build a 2000 sq ft home on a lot of the big acreage ones. You could probably have a 1600 sq ft home on a bunch of the smaller lots, you could probably have a height restriction on them and if we were going to comply with that, we'd have something that's more sellable in Brazeau County. We'd have more people attracted to Brazeau County, you'd have more ratepayers, you'd have more people coming here. But instead we are finding people that are coming through our show home and are frustrated with the process and aren't prepared to wait that timeframe so they say we'll go buy something used or we'll build in Town and we even had one customer just decide to look at some land in Wetaskiwin County and we'll be building on that in the spring for him.

Martino – Part of what Brian brought up and you kind of touched on, and keep in mind we do have to have an actual submission, knowing where the location is before we can issue a permit, but what you're referring to I have seen in other communities and it's not a technical term, but it's basically called a 'fast lane' standards approval and what you'd be looking at is for a very large development, so if you're dealing with a 30 lot subdivision, you do development your envelopes to know where you can build within there. With that same map showing the envelopes also have the established standards, so no accessory buildings over 2500 sq ft. Buildings must be between at least this big shorter than this height, etc. And effectively what you do is you provide an information sheet that outlines everything that you need to meet in order to just deal with a permitted use that will comply with all bylaws. If you provide a design like that and you've already got all that work submitted and reviewed to ensure that it is correct with the County, then there is the ability for us to move that forward more quickly because we've also identified which lots for example have utility right of ways, which cross the property and have bringing with themselves different problems. Keep in mind that will improve timeframes, but only for certain developments and I'm not saying we can't do something like that but more significant gains will be seen with qualified trained staff removing the backlog. We're also looking at processes not only to remove the backlog, but also to move permits which should be simple through more quickly, so we are already working on several ideas to try to remove this in the future especially during your next building season.

M. Jacobs – one of my other suggestions was possibly would there be a way to tier the process. What I mean about tiering, like I'm not sure how you'd group the development permits. Are they all grouped in one box and they're pulled off the bottom of the file as the file gets bigger. Had you thought of maybe a revenue generating process where you could generate more revenue by, probably there's me and several other people around who would pay more to have our development permit processed faster. The other one would be is that maybe building a home that affects so many people's income feeds families does lots of other things I'd hate to think that we're getting jammed up behind somebody attaching a deck for a summer project on their house. Like are we factually backed up behind those people.

Martino – As I said we are looking at changes to our system, but as I understand it right now, the current file management system is based on the fairness of first received, first processed. However, like I said I wouldn't necessarily recommend taking additional money to be processed more quickly, however I do recommend that we do look at our current process and perhaps be able to make quicker, easier applications approved in a quicker timeframe.

M. Jacobs – So I guess I asked a question a little earlier to Council. What do you guys find would be an acceptable duration of time for the development permits?

S. Mahan – Personally, 3-4 weeks to me would be enough. Personally if I was out there building and I wanted to build I would like it in 3-4 weeks. However, right now that isn't happening and that's what we're trying to change. Definitely trying to change and we hear this all the time and it's not fair to anybody to have to wait that long. So the extra staff we have will hopefully through this winter will get through all that stuff so that by February or March we should be ready to roll with the permits much quicker.

A. Heinrich – Mike would it work for you and I guess a question to yourself then to have more of a pre-determined form of house that you would be prepared to offer to your client. In other words so we knew the building envelop on a given lot, we knew your house would fit within that building permit envelope and in other words when I go to Leduc and I see a lot of the houses that are in Leduc along the highway there, there's many of them that are pretty similar. There's not many variety choices there, I mean they are staged a bit different, like one is this shape and one is that shape, but they are pretty similar in terms of general the whole lot. Would that kind of a thing work for you or are you looking for where you want to give a lot of autonomy to your customers so that her/she had quite a bit diversity for choice.

M. Jacobs – Well to answer that Anthony I guess to be fair I've built a thousand houses in Alberta and I've never had one refused because of the shape, size or height.

A. Heinrich – No but what I'm getting at is, and I'm thinking, and again I'm not the planning side of things, but if there's a building envelop as Martino referred to earlier I think, that has already been determined on several larger subdivision lots like the 30 subdivision package, then they have already have been needing or the building envelope has determined the setback requirements, at least that's what I would have interpreted from Martino's comments. Therefore if it has already met some of the requirements, it removes some of your obstacles that you have to go through the Planning Commission, in other words to become ones that I would believe would be more easier for the staff to approve, therefore it would help expedite your timelines to get things done. If you are coming with a home that is let's say larger, perhaps falls outside that approved building envelop, now all of sudden you are looking at setbacks, wider garages, wider driveways all kinds of things. Those are things that need discretion and have discretion attached to them. And in all likelihood either at MPC or even at Council and that's the kinds of things that are going to cause your delays. So sometimes when we're looking at why it's costing and taking so long we have to make sure we take into consideration all the elements that are causing it and what types of factors we can put in place to compartmentalize the situation so approvals can happen quicker. So I guess that's what I'm trying to explain. Martino do you want to correct any of that in case there is anything I misquoted.

Martino – I wouldn't necessarily correct anything, I would state that just on all the issues we've talked about, a lot of this stuff will be discussed pros and cons will be weighed in the discussion for our land use bylaw review. Again the process itself won't change from a legal stance of what you see up there, however how we manage those internal files will probably bring us those larger gains and again, of course we can look at the larger subdivisions and definitely make sure that those are easier processes for developers who are definitely within a certain area, we can make sure that those larger referral issues are dealt with at that time.

M. Jacobs – Do you have a test and measure process in place to check and see what percentage of your homes actually require variances or what percentage of the homes need variances even attached to them because of size, height or anything at all.

Benjamin – We don't currently track variances or the sizes of variance that we're granting. Minor variances are dealt with in house and major variances are handled by the MPC. But we don't track it. On standard residential builds there's not a lot, but you know there's the occasional one, the majority of variances are granted on properties where permits were never applied for and then we have to retroactively look at applying a variance.

M. Jacobs – Thank you for your time and we look forward to working with you guys and appreciate you guys all here tonight listen to a few of our problems and trying to iron some of them out.

M. Gressler – I don't know whether this would work for you Mike and for other developers and builders, but obviously from our point of view the sooner we get the development permit earlier on in the season, the easier we can potentially process it so it's ready for you when it's the building period. So you have your permits at the beginning and maybe we need to look at something like advertising out there into the public because you don't know whether these people are coming from but if we can advertise out there something of the order of 'visit your builders today for effective building in 2015, this applies till June 1, 2015 after that date expect that you won't have your house built until 2016 because of the process building and building timelines etc'. So something like that so that the public are aware that if we want to have a house in 2015, this new nice house that we want to build, then we have to start thinking about it now, we still have to get our builders on board, so that it helps you too in trying to get your customer base there ready so you can plan your building season as well more effectively and it helps us have the permits ready for you to be able to do that.

M. Schoeninger – Thank you very much. To Mike, just a question Mike, to avoid ill impacting attracting customers, ultimately what do you feel is reasonable time. And the reason I'm asking you is I'd like to have others answer the same because we're trying to find a balance between what everybody thinks is reasonable and what we can actually provide because we are actually in discussion with Parkland to see how they are doing it as well. Once of the things that has come back to be quite frank, there is also a double complement of staff that are undertaking it, so really it helps us come back to Council to say, if the public that is building desires it to be one week, two week, we have to then weigh that against what legislation states you must go through, whether it by the referral process, the timeline for getting back on pipeline right of ways, return on utilities and so forth, what do you ultimately see as reasonable in your eyes, short of saying tomorrow.

M. Jacobs – 3 week window is a reasonable window

M. Schoeninger – and max timeframe

M. Jacobs – 3 weeks

M. Schoeninger – So 3 weeks period

M. Jacobs – Yup and again to direct it at Marc's comment about starting earlier, like you guys are saying just bring your permits in earlier, that's a cop out cause that's a way to say our process is acceptable and we're here realizing that process isn't acceptable. I don't believe we're going to attract customers in February so they are all lined up to go into June. That's not realistic in the home

building world. I've been in it for 20 years and that isn't the way it works at all. We have people come to us in January who want a house started in February. I guess it's no different than if you owned a vehicle dealership and you said you know we'll sell you vehicles for 6 months of the year but come a pre-plan. The 6 months we're not selling vehicles we'll have everything ready for you. That doesn't work.

M. Schoeninger – Thank you Mike.

R. McIntosh – So I'm not in the building side as much as I'm in the land development subdivision rezoning side. Again thanks to Council and administration for creating an opportunity to get some input. I've got a couple of suggestions and recommendations. I don't want to dwell on the complaints or grievances side, just sort of focus on the constructive suggestions on a go forward basis. With regards to, I'm pleased Council has agreed invest in resources and staffing up. I think that's critical. I don't think anyone could have necessarily expected the onslaught of new activity that started to occur about 1½-2 years ago. It was huge, it's not just been in the development and building side, it's been on all other areas of activity, not withstanding, I would have been happier had Brazeau County responded faster to the obvious backlog and put the resources in place. Having said that, I want to acknowledge that tension that you're under to not spend any money, save money steward resources and then half the people are saying don't spend anything, we're spending too much money and the other half of the people are saying go faster do more. So there is a tension that's out there and it's tough to get that balance right. I think on this particular case, the thing that can help you respond faster is to adopt some dash board metrics and people measure people manage organizations by being able to measure the important stuff and report it and so the most important suggestion I've got for you tonight is to establish some clear dash board metrics and by metrics I mean, this is what all good corporations do as non-profits and municipalities get better at the game they also operate metrics but if an important metric for a guy like Mike or anybody else in his business is the time from placing an application for a development permit or a building permit to getting it back out the door, that's not a difficult thing to track because it's already in the data base, it's already on the file. So multiply those up, average them up and what is the, what's the response time. And post that response time, report it to Council and report it to the public and report it to the builders. And that does two things, if on the Planning and Development website you've got the current wait time, I go in and check the wait time on all different parts of my business or I inquire about it and if I know the wait time is running 5 weeks versus 2 weeks, I will behave differently. I'll do two things if it's 5 weeks consistently I'm going to be on the phone hollering for more resources and I can do it quickly. Maybe Council is looking at that metric and saying holy cow we'd better respond more quickly too and the public that beats you up for spending money can be told well look at the dash board metric, we have no choice if we're open for business we have to respond. So it's just open and transparent. There are a host of other dash board metrics that you can identify that Benjamin and Martino and other can decide are the important numbers, don't measure everything, measure the important stuff, report it and then what you also do is you demonstrate improvement over time. Are you performing on those metrics. Now the folks in this room here from Brian to myself to Mike to others can help you identify the important metrics and I think that should be part of a more extended conversation. What do you get the most value out of measuring and reporting and then this is objective and transparent and just smart business. Measure the stuff that matters, measure what counts, you will manage what you measure. So I'd get on the program with that as quick as you can. I like these nice little charts, to me there's a couple parts missing. First of all, I'm really interested in the rezoning and redistricting process, which is missing out of these two, so don't forget please that this is a critically important part of your business and it is actually, I'm not a really stupid guy, but I struggled for a long time to figure out the actual interaction between subdivision

and rezoning and the roles that MPC versus Council versus Administration were playing in those two. It took me a long time to figure it out so I'd love to be part of a review team that gave you a simple way to explain that and I'd volunteer to do that and I think other folks in this room could give you that feedback. But these two or three charts should have, they should be in a table format and it's critically important if you want to educate and support your developers and builders and help them work with you and make your own life easy to have these in a table form as well so you've got a pre-application consultation step. You've got a subdivision application step, etc. you've got all these boxes here, give me a second column that says very clearly what are the developers obligations. I want to know what I have to do in that step, really clearly bullet form. What are my developers obligations and expectations of me and I want a third column and that third column says what are the County obligations and services. I want to know what I can expect the County staff to do for me at that particular step and I want a fourth column that says recommendations for moving fast. Tips, the stuff some folks here are talking about, what are the tips for expediting this and moving it through quickly. You may not have to do it but if you do these things you will move through the process faster because you made administrations life easier in processing simpler. Ok and so those are simple things to do actually the City of Edmonton, I worked on some of the ones that the City of Edmonton uses in parts of their process. I've seen other jurisdictions and Martino you may have seen similar things. This is just good communication education and draft them and put them out there, focus group test them with people in this room and others, get feedback refine them. They are a work in progress, but it's how you do business efficiently. And the other really important part of that is the second big point I want to make here. You also then establish a level playing field. So one of my big concerns as a land developer who is a step ahead of perhaps the building development stage is I want to ensure that the rules are fairly applied to everybody and the more obvious and clear the rules and expectations and steps are, the more transparent everybody can be that everybody is following the same rules and steps, including the expectations and including the developers obligations and including the things that allow you to move faster versus not ok. So one of my major concerns about equity and fairness in the County and I have had a chat with a couple of the larger land developers who could not make it tonight. I had a chat with Floyd Lauer and he wasn't sure he could get here tonight, but he obviously has had some issues and concerns and he and I had a good chat about this and we share this perspective that if you're being put through the wringer to ensure a whole series of requirements have to be in place with regards to provincial interaction on storm ponds and wetland assessments and bio-physicals and bang bang bang bang break down list and you are in competition with a person who wants to go head to head to you in developing industrial or commercial land and putting that land out there on the market and they don't have to do any of the same things. They actually don't have to worry about keeping onsite water out of the streams and salt out of the streams and demonstrating wetlands aren't being impacted etc. without going into detail, that stinks. It's a crappy way to do business and you really discourage anybody from doing the job right and you handcuff the bigger developers who are actually bring large amounts of good developable land according to the rules in compact places making it efficient for you to offer your services and you are putting them at a huge disadvantage against the little guy and when that is combined with the person who also wants to do an end run around the process by running to any particular Councillor and asking them to help them expedite and move it through quickly, which also is more possible to do if you don't have clear rules and consistent systems and applications and we have a practice of Councillors and I'm not accusing anyone individually, I'm just explaining how the process can be off side, but if you combine having an inappropriate role for individual Councillors where they are supposed to grab a project and help speed it up and get it through the system, cause we've confused the role of Councillors with the role of administration and staff then you really have a potential problem. Right, so you want to do two things right you want to make sure we're operating on a level playing field, that we have clear

consistent procedures and to my next point here I would also like to see a clear definition from the Planning and Development process, what is the role of individual Councillors in this process and what is the role of staff. That needs to be clearly defined. That comes out into other broader governance matters, I understand, but it's most important in planning and development. So my humble view as I understand municipal governance would be that the primary role for Councillors is to set policy, is to make rules and to make policy and to be sure that Administration has the resources it needs to get the job done. And to be sure that Administration is properly empowered to hire highly qualified people and get good people into the system and then get the hell out of the way and let them do their job. I don't believe it's the appropriate role for Council to be running interference in every individual application that comes forward from one of their constituents. However, it is the role of Council, I think to advise a constituent in their division or somebody they talk to that these are the people on administration who should be able to help them out and help them get to the right document or the right resource people and have them do that. Now I'm not sure I've got this right, I don't know, I'm making it up on the fly here but it's how I've seen it work in other jurisdictions, but clarifying that and educating that clearly to everybody is a critical part of getting this right. And it will actually improve the efficiency and the responsiveness of your staff and it will help streamline the system and it will also clear up some other confusions, I think. So I'd make that part of the response here and you will get some discussion on those points, I understand, I'm just putting a couple of opinions out, but getting it clear and getting agreement on it and getting it as part of your policy, I think will be helpful. Ok, another thing I'd like to see you do is to clarify where discretion exists. It's not remotely clear to me right now where discretion exists, but it's obvious that there are grey zones, there are areas of judgment, there are areas of discretion in here and then there are other areas where there are absolutely is no discretion. The law is the law is the law and that's what you've got to do. Where discretion exists I'd like to see it clarified for all of us and then I'd like to see a little bit of guidelines on what are the factors that will consistently influence the application of discretion. What are the factors or the things that will guide a staff person using their discretion in making a judgment call on whether something is in line, out of line or potentially needs a couple of extra conditions attached if it's going to be managed. Cause if all of this is fly by the seat of our pants do it one off case by case basis, (a) it's going to take a lot of time (b) you're always going to have people upset at you. So you can't cover off everything, you can't cover all the eventualities, but we can do a much better job of defining the areas of discretion and then being clear what factors or considerations will influence discretion acting in favour of a 'yes' or a 'no' or whatever. And that also provides for more consistency. I would also like to see a little bit more clarity, and maybe this is a role for the education officer but when a decision comes out, when a 'no' comes out when something comes out or when somebody's request is turned down, a small amount of effort explaining the 'why' is really useful. What was the reason we got a 'no', why was the reason there was a flat turndown. That does a couple of things, it helps educate the developer, the applicant for the next time around to try and do better to do different to get it right, but it also forces an administrative requirement or an administrative decision to issue a straight 'no' to be sure there is a good reason behind it and we all understand the reason and the reason is applied consistently. Now you don't want to have to write essays and books behind certain decisions, so there is clearly a resource trade-off here. But in most cases, if somebody gets a 'no' or you've got to go back and worry about it. You've got to do 4 more weeks of homework on this thing, you know a brief reason why is a courtesy, it's an education process, it defuses the conflict and the tension and it justifies the approach, so within reason attaching a little bit of 'why' the reason behind something is not a bad idea. You don't want to overload your staff with having to write essays. Ok so there is a trade-off on that one. Personally, although I like a lot of the points I heard earlier, I would disagree with the idea of just buy your way up the queue. I'm not a big fan of having a situation where if you just through money at something, you can get fast tracked. You know that rural family that wants to add a deck and has to go get a

development permit and they've got a narrow window of time to build that deck and they've got the family out to do it two weeks from now and they're going to try to make it happen. I'm not sure the fact that they can afford a big fat top up fee to get to the top of the queue makes them any less important than the builder who wants to build a big home. It's just not clear to me that's right and so I would urge we just stay away from just buying your way up to the top of the queue. I think there's better smarter things we can do to move things through the system faster. Just a personal opinion on that one. And I think the last point I want to raise is a pretty important one. It's one of the ones I learned quite a bit about in my couple of development processes recently is, there is an attitude towards risk that I would ask Council and Administration to look at very carefully here. Ok and if the approach of the County will be to avoid risk at all costs, if there's a possible risk that we don't get everything perfect on the review process or on the conditions of a development permit or whatever it is we're doing and if the goal is for the County to move their risk to zero, there is zero risk that another landowner out there might complain. There is zero risk that if this happened and that happened and that happened, then we might face a lawsuit. If the County's goal to move that risk to zero is the goal, who pays the price. The developer, the business person always the price. They pay it in two ways, they pay it with a bigger time delay which costs money, and they pay it in terms of extra conditions, extra attachments that cost money and so I don't think the Council should be sloppy about protecting its butt. I don't think Brazeau County should be irresponsible in taking wild risks, but I can tell you with certainty that if the goal is to always protect Brazeau County, the point of exposing itself to zero risk, you're not doing business cause everybody else in business is accepting risk by virtue of what they do. So balancing the County's risk and the developers risk and the developers cost is appropriate and I think you have to look at that risk. And I think already I'm seeing I guess in the 18 months – 2 years that I've been working on a couple of these projects, I'm seeing an improvement in the perspective on risk and I think that's healthy and I hope that will continue, but I want to name it as an issue and I want to ask you to try and manage it deliberately with thoughtfulness. I understand why there's a lot of things that can cause you to not want to accept any risk, some of it is what we do running at you for change all the time. That's why I want the Council and Administration role sorted out. But some of it is just excessive caution. Some of it is giving lawyers too big a role in this thing. You know legal counsel is only one player in the group and they shouldn't rule without having others on the team also weighing in. The proponent, the advocate for good business process also weighing in. So those are some constructive suggestions I'd like to bring forward, which I think can really assist planning and development. I'm quite encouraged by the number of steps you've undertaken. I think we're moving in the right direction and I think you will find a number of the folks who are in similar vein as myself will be more than happy to provide feedback on future iterations on what you've proposed here. So continue to consult on your draft plans, please continue to keep us in the loop of what you propose to do to fix or amend or improve some of these things. And given that the land use bylaw is such a big part of this I would put in a big plug now for some front end consultation on how you're going to do the consultation on your land use bylaw. I've designed good consultation for a multitude of different federal, provincial and municipal government processes. The people who are your key clients and customers in a consultation process, giving them a talking about how you're planning to consult and what the steps are going to be and when they are going to be able to be involved. It's just one little front end meeting on the front end of that so we know what you're going to do, we understand the timeline, we understand the process and we have an opportunity to give you some advice to the process you're planning to use, the timeline you're planning to use help you construct a good consultation process and then we can live with it ourselves. We've got no basis for whining and complaining later if you bring us in at the front end. So given how big a piece of this puzzle falls into the land use bylaw, I would really, really encourage you to think about a good process and consult on the

consultation process. That practice is tried and true every time. It's bullet proof, there's never a down side, it's always an upside. It's open and transparent and it's inclusive, so I'd encourage that.

M. Gressler – Thank you Rob lots of your suggestions are quite enlightening and I'm sure can help us move forward more effectively in the future. Just one little thing, and it's a very small thing from what you've said. In the way of when there is a 'no' the why and only speaking from experience of being on the SDAB, when I'm on the SDAB we have to say 'why'. It's part of the legal requirement that we have to write down why it is. So I know that happens in that process. I'm sure it happens in MPC as well. I'm sure Kara or one of the others that are on that board can speak to that. But when it's a no from the development officers then I don't and only they can speak to that. But I would hope and always hope that there would always be a 'why' so it's a learning process for both sides.

S. Mahan – does anybody else wish to speak

Bart Guyon – Might be a good opportunity for me to jump in after Rob – he says some of the things that I wanted to say but in a different manner. We seem to always want to protect everybody from themselves. We want to protect everybody from everything and that drives the cost up. I'm going to talk more from, I didn't come here with a planned presentation or anything it was kind of last minute thing that I heard about this meeting, but the things that I talk about are the same things that I talk about when I go to do a small development. I usually do two or three subdivisions on a quarter section of land and that process has gotten quite onerous and quite costly. It's not the cost to the developer. At the end of the day it's the cost to the purchasers. So I give you guys an example, you take a quarter section of land and if I sell those lots at \$50,000 a piece, I sell them at that plus the cost. The costs for subdivision alone went from \$50 when I left this office in 2004 to over \$2000 now. So that's a cost right off the bat that you folks have a chance to have some control over and to reduce those costs. We've got a planning department that doesn't have to be cost recovery and I don't know where that sort of mentality came into play because we don't do cost recovery in a lot of other departments of this county, whether it's building a road from somebody or many of the other things. So planning doesn't have to be cost recovery. We've got the staff and we've got those costs in place anyway. So if you take out a lot at \$50,000 you add \$2000 for an application fee, then you add your approach, then you add your water well, then you add your sewer, then you add your power, all those things start to drive the cost up to well over \$140,000. That's no longer affordable if we're going to have affordable housing and if we're going to have actual economic development. Just those words alone mean a lot to me. It has to be economic to develop in this County otherwise we don't have the development, so I'm also going to touch on Rob talked about these permits and everybody keeps bringing up these decks. I think the first thing we have to do is really take a look at do we really need to have all these permits first of all. That's really going to cut your backlog down a long ways and I mean do we need permits for signs under the size of a sheet of plywood, do we need permits for a deck, do we need permits for a barn. If you go to other municipalities and in fact in the old days in Slave Lake, the only thing you needed a permit for was the house. So we can go to city style of permitting where everything has to be permitted or we can take a look and we compare ourselves to Parkland County. Well their 30,000 people, we're 7,000, there is still quite a difference. We're still a small rural municipality where we don't have to have all those onerous permits that you have in these other concentrated areas. The other thing that I'd like to see is not everything has to happen in these big blocks. Like we need to encourage the three acre parcels, we need that diversity inside our municipality so we have to find ways to make it easier to develop those 3 parcels for the mom and pops. These are all things just coming off the top of my head. I had one other point there that I thought was brilliant, but now I forgot about it. But the bottom line is reduce the permits and don't do this protectionist thing and Benjamin you saw that

when I was doing the development you want to ask for all these studies. In the 12 years and Anthony might be able to attest to this, in the 12 years of politics that I was involved there, I never heard the word geotechnical on small parcels of land. It became something that you guys were afraid of, so we force these people to do a geotechnical study which can be anywhere from \$10,000 to \$30,000. We force these people to do water studies. Why not take that money and actually do something to correct the problem rather than do the study and then you have to correct the problem if there is a problem. But I would bet dollars to donuts you find very little problems with a geotechnical study that you're asking for. So those things should be the rarity and not the norm when somebody comes in to develop a piece of land. You do it to protect yourself, but Rob mentioned that you don't have to protect everybody from everything. So there is a certain amount of risk but then ask yourself 'what's the risk'. I mean if they are building in a swamp, I mean they are going to know they are building in a swamp, right. And you know what, if you take a look historically there's tons of acreages that were built in the swamp and they are beautiful little acreages. What did the people do, they took the money they would have spent on a water study and actually built up their piece of land and now they have little moats and fish ponds all around their homes. So first of all, permits I'm chewing my cabbage twice here, take a look at reducing the cost, try not to protect everybody from everything. This is a great opportunity to actually nail this down, but I gave you folks a whole list shortly after the election. We talked about it at the election, we talked about it after the election, I came to your planning meetings and a lot of this stuff that's being said right now was said and even in that presentation I made, those same points were being made back then and that was a year ago. And so I know you've had some staffing problems or whatever it is, but this is a long time. There's been a lot of time to actually implement some of these things we talked about. So as Rob touched on a point too about the roles. You know Benjamin was really ticked off that you guys went against his recommendation and he wanted to make a note in the minutes that he was going to apply for that, he was going to ask for that during the permit process. That's not his role I don't think. Once you guys have made a decision, you know, he shouldn't be ticked that you guys went against his decision. It was a good decision and it's one that kind of goes inside what I'm talking about here right now, but that's not that role. So Benjamin puts the pros and cons and then walks away. He shouldn't want to try to get that point back in on the application process. So all of this is about time and money, is all it is and it's the time for us the little guys. But I kind of represent the little moms and pops, the people who just want to do 2 or 3 parcels on their quarters of land and that process has to be simple and it can't have all those huge onerous rules that go into a big development. Otherwise none of those will happen because the costs just goes through the roof. I've only done 2 in the last 10 years because of the costs that you guys have put in place. I just don't see the economics there.

M. Gressler – with the planning and development cost recovery, we can look at reconsidering the costs of what each or all of the permits cost and we could theoretically wipe them out, it would cost the County \$200, 000 I think or something like that when I looked at it. But, so we don't do anywhere near our cost recovery as it is at this moment in time. We're nowhere near it. If we were the permits would be astronomical and beyond. So I understand where you're coming from and we may have to look at reviewing and perhaps eliminate the costs even more, but we have to bear in mind that we have increased our staff as well, which costs the County more money, so where does it come back on to, the taxpayers at the end of the day. When you talk about how in the past things were done and they did work then and its fine that they worked then, but things have changed, regulations and it's not just regulations within the County, it's what the province is putting down on us and what they have dictated. Just look at the floodplain issue after High River and what happened there. The knock on affect this had with just our planning department is astronomical because anything that's built near a floodplain now provincial regulations have dictated that we have

to look into it far more closely because they are not prepared because the insurance, you can't get insurance on property, so people don't have their house insured even if they can build on a floodplain. So it's not only what this Council is doing, it's what the province is doing because of scenarios that have happened. And that's why we were doubly caught off guard. (a) by the volume of the permits, but also by some of the scenario's that have happened that have changed planning and development in the last 10-12 years that have made it more onerous for us to do it and I understand what Rob was saying in the way of risk management and how much risk we should take and I believe we are being too strict on that on some instances, but we still have to bear in mind that if we allow to build a house on a floodplain and they can't get insurance and their house is washed away and somebody dies in that and we've given them the permit to do it, then the whole County is on the hook potentially for that. So we've got to look at things a bit more realistically and try to make sure so we have to listen to the recommendations cause they're up to scratch with what the province is telling us we have to do. We have no choice. So we can't look back 15-20 years ago, doesn't work anymore. We've got to look at what it is today and what we have to deal with today.

B. Guyon – floodplain is an interesting one, that's been around for a long time, I don't know what new criteria they added to floodplains, but we dealt with that with Yellowhead Regional Planning Commission when the County was first formed and then we still deal with that so the floodplain issue is still the same unless they've added some new heights to the floodplain, but the floodplain issue is still the same. Some of that old stuff is still pertinent right now. The issue of the permits again and the costs of doing business here, what you want to do is you want to get these people grounded, you want to get these developers to land these people because you're going to benefit from that investment that the developers are doing, which is going to far exceed the 200,000 you're talking about. So you know Walmart has a sale and they have a loss leader to get people in the door. We need to have loss leader to get people landed and grounded and when the recessions and those types of things that do kind of come and go here, when people have their feet on the ground here they find another way to make a living and we keep those people and we keep those investors here. So trying to nail people up front with fees and costs and stuff, I've never seen that work. What you want to do is you want to encourage people to actually get in here when the times are tough you see municipalities having tax free incentives for 5 years trying to get people in to get them landed, so once again it's back to those upfront costs. Don't scare them away upfront, get them grounded here first. And so let's look at getting rid of as many permits as we can, let's drive the cost down as low as we can and maybe when we do that you won't have this staff issue that you're talking about because now you're not dealing with these backyard decks and we're now dealing with these barns and we're not dealing maybe little signs and all these other things and so that all goes hand in hand as well, so if you run those things efficiently and start getting rid of the things that we don't need to be dealing with all of a sudden your staff has a little more freedom. The one thing that Rob said too was empowering the staff. County of Parkland does things with and I don't want to say County of Parkland does everything good, because I'm so glad we are away from that municipality, but I've dealt with them with my land there. When I do a subdivision there as long as I meet the criteria, like Rob was talking about, it's approved. It doesn't come to the MPC to get the final stamp, that's a waste of your staff's time. Give them the authority if they meet the criteria with all the rules, if they've gone their 80 kms and they've passed all the laws that you've actually got there, give them the empowerment to stamp it. Why are they taking all this effort and rehashing it back with you guys so that you can say nay or yay. When Ed Hees give someone a ticket do you guys review every single ticket, no you've given those staff members the ability to actually deal with their stuff. The same thing with planning. Once you set your rules, once you've set you bylaws as soon as someone comes in a meets all that criteria, that's the same as you have already pre-approved it and passed it. Give them the ability, like County of Parkland, it's stamped. I come in, I meet the criteria, I get my

development. I don't have to go sit in front of MPC and waste a day of my time and beg and plead and hope that politics doesn't come into play and all of a sudden I'm turned down or they add some kind of new criteria that's out there. So I'm starting to get a little more passionate here and if you get me wound up here I might even come up with a few of those other ideas I was talking about. But no, please, this is an opportune time, my thoughts are about this municipality and making it easier to develop, cheaper to develop and get people grounded here. We need people, we need staff, we need houses, we need homes, we need all this stuff.

A. Heinrich – sounds like you're saying Bart that we should be giving more discretion to staff and at the same time, perhaps in light of them, in order for them to have the authority to approve a subdivisions they would have to be appointed as the subdivision planning authority, cause right now MPC is that. So there would have to be some changes in our structure and I'm not sure that some of the other municipalities quite have done that either, but it has to be an understanding of what needs to happen before all of those that you're talking about could happen.

B. Guyon – yes absolutely Anthony, but those are for the applications that meet all the rules that you've already set in place. So if you've already set the rules and they meet them all then it should be approved. If there is any discretion or if there's anything that needs some sort of discretionary measures or doesn't quite meet the rules that you've laid out then that has to come back to MPC. So if you've set the rules and said this is what we want you to do and you meet those rules, then you should give them the ability to pass that. But if it doesn't meet that well then obviously that's when the brain power of the planning commission has to come in a make a decision.

Rob McIntosh – On that point that Bart made I agree and I think the question of the subdivisions is a little bit more complicated but on the question of the building permits and those building permits in some of the development permits, those can be done exactly the way AER does for well approvals now. They are basically standard approvals. They are Code of Practice approvals. If it meets the criteria it doesn't need to come before Council for decision that's where your planning and development staff should be empowered to be able to simply they are done, they fit criteria, there are no issues, there are no variances, it's simple straight forward bang done, streamline it do it. So that's the type of thing where it's easy to go. When you get into the question of actually approving subdivisions, you are right Anthony, you do have to elevate it to grant some additional authority or something. It's a little more complicated, might be do-able not sure but it's dead simple on the level of a number of the permits. Or do we need the permit at all. If we do need it as a permit, it's a code of practice stamp done finished sort of thing. So that's where you see huge common ground from the guys down RR92.

S. Mahan – and we have kept all the information that we have gotten from our last time that we were here. Unfortunately, again we went from one different staff person to another and here we are again, right. But hopefully we'll go through all that, streamline it a little bit and get to the bottom of why it's taking so long cause I think that's the major issue and why there's so many conditions attached to those permits.

George Patterson – I'm the bottom end of all this. I just came to see because I'm on the receiving end of the whole works here. I've been in the County for 25 years now and I decided to sell my acreage, build a house in a subdivision. I got a timeline due to different considerations on the subdivision. It was delayed, delayed, delayed. So I'm waiting for the final registration approval to get all my papers in line, but what I have heard is the one that my builder, I understand that some of the things that come into play with the developer on the subdivision to me were a little ridiculous,

could have been pushed forward a bit, but that's irrelevant, but my builder, when we talked about it and said there's going to be these delays, he said well I'm going to go to the board and I've got a set of prints, I've got the legal survey, I've got the plot plan, everything fits in the plot, everything is ready to go just waiting for registration of the land and my title and he said well this was 18 weeks ago, he say well we can put in apply and have basically everything ready to go for the development permit once all the rest of the conditions are made and just having it sitting there and he was refused to even allowed to do that. And they were just saying one of the best ways for this permit backlog was to get the developers and the builders to get their stuff in earlier so they can look at it and that what they tried to do and they were refused. They didn't even want to look at it. I understand that it couldn't be passed till the final conditions were met on the subdivision and until the land was in my name, but it's a basic standard package. It's a standard house on a standard lot everything fits the surveys done, the prints are done. It could be in there waiting as soon as the conditions are lifted and I have the title in my possession, then they can start building and the way it's going now is once all this is done and the subdivision is registered and ready to go and the title is in my name I still have to apply for the development permit, which is going to be another how long, I'm spending all winter in a trailer. And that was my decision, I'm not blaming anyone for that, but from what I've heard they said they should streamline this and they refused to do what they just said would be a good idea to do. So that's just what I have to say. Thanks

M. Gressler – George I know that's been an issue with the legality of you can't put in a planning application unless you own the land. That's not only I think or I think that's an issue with this County and I know it is with other Counties around us too. You have to kind of own the land before you can put a plan in of any type on it or for a development permit or something. I don't know whether other counties do it differently and if they do, perhaps we need to look at that to see if we can do something. It may be something legally we can't do anything about. But it something perhaps we should be looking at at least and review and see whether we can do anything. I don't know whether you've seen any differences in other counties doing that.

Martino – To clarify we do require a legal description or a completed title in order to issue a permit, but we currently have a policy within our land use bylaw that prevents staff from accepting a permit application until all subdivisions, rezoning applications have been resolved. The reason why staff may have refused to accept the permit is because we currently have a policy that directs us not to accept permits at this time.

Benjamin – and just for clarification on the process too, we are asking the builders to submit their information earlier, but after the subdivision is registered, not before when there is a subdivision currently pending on the property.

Rachel Taylor – I work at Baseline Geomatics and I've been there for 5 years now and I mainly work with subdivision clients, so learning of the new staff increase, I'm interested to know if how much of that staff is going to be working with subdivision processing or is that all development permits.

Martino – We are still working through exactly the types of responsibilities every staff person will have. But at this time, we are focusing on the development backlog, that should help us also free up more time for the staff that do focus on subdivisions. I do have a diverse background in subdivision approval and current planning as well, so if need be if we start to fall behind in that aspect, I will also consider doing my own files as well not just staying strictly in the Director role, but at this time, I think my focus is going to be on development permits because of their quick turnaround and the backlog we have. If we do find that subdivisions become the larger issue, hopefully that won't

happen before we have trained staff in the development end then we can actually look at expanding the role so that our development officers are actually dealing with all types of current planning approvals, so they are fully versed in land use, subdivision and development permits. So should someone leave it no longer becomes a staffing issue that delays people in any given aspect of planning.

Rachel Taylor – If I could just further comment, so the two kind of go hand in hand. If I don't get the subdivisions registered, these clients can't get their development permits and they can't submit them because they don't have a legal land description, so it's kind of a catch 22. So I really try to help facilitate with my clients and help them to understand the subdivision process and if there's a lot of outstanding conditions, hey I need you to get over to the County you got to meet this, this and this. I have a lot of clients that this is their first time, they don't know the process that sort of thing, so I just try to help facilitate it along because then they always come to me at the 11th hour well I need this registered. Well have you been working on this, did you meet this condition, have you paid your fees, have you signed your documents at the County, no they haven't called me yet. So I'm just wondering because I've been here for 5 years, there's been some definite change in turnaround time for subdivision authority approval. So I'm just wondering what you would consider as a reasonable time if it's a one lot subdivision versus a multi-lot obviously. If there's just a couple of fees to pay an endorsement fee, maybe one document to sign, how is that subdivision process on your end. Does it all just get put in the pile as per my email when I send out the final plan or is it based on let's get the smaller ones done first then we'll work on the larger ones. I kind of just want to understand the process cause there doesn't seem to be any consistency I guess.

Benjamin – As per legislation just like development permits we do have a 60 day time frame to issue a decision once an application has been received, so we try and stick within that 60 days and of course if that doesn't line up with Municipal Planning Commission dates then we would look to ask for a time extension. In regards to approvals and time frames once we receive a package from the surveyor, it should be noted that as far as the conditional approval goes, that's up to the applicant to follow through on those conditions. It's not administration's responsibility to be chasing after people to make sure that they have met their conditions. They are clearly laid out and established at the time of subdivision and put on a subdivision by the MPC. Once we've received the package though it's a matter of first come first served, just like development permits. In some cases, there are pressures to expedite things, but typically we try and deal with those only if there is specific direction given to us to expedite that matter, but typically it's first come first served and of course subdivisions never work out in quite the same as development permits do because people satisfy their conditions at different rates than they do with development permits. So with development permits we pick it up on the pile depending on the date it was submitted, issue the permit and there's the conditions. Whereas with subdivisions we can't register them until all the conditions have been met.

Martino – Further to that as well, it is conceivable that half to a majority of our permits may not need to be referred to external agencies with subdivisions. It would be a very finite amount of circumstances that would lead to a subdivision not having to be referred either to school boards to deal with reserve requirements, transportation, environment. It is highly unlikely a subdivision would not have a referral process, which means you are looking at a week to set up a file, you're looking at more than 30 days plus mailing to provide a minimum response period of time. If you have a provincial agency which is inundated with referrals such as environment or transportation, it can take longer to get it back and you actually do have to chase those down because you have a legal requirement not to approve until you have a waiver issued by them under the subdivision regulations. In many cases, so with the subdivision process itself even to get to a conditional approval the 60 day

period is almost impossible to actually meet as well under standard practices. So and that's not just here, most of the places I've worked, for example like Rockyview, if you want to apply for a subdivision you sign an extension to 120 days with the application or it's automatically refused and you can go to the SDAB, so when it comes to subdivision it is a different beast than development permits and as Ben mentioned, they commonly will take longer than a permit. That said, definitely we will look at the processes and see what we can do to improve them in consultation with Baseline or our other surveyors.

Rachel Taylor – That's just something I'd like to see improve over the next little while. When I do send my final plan and my documents, I work with all the other counties, we do work in Parkland County, County of Wetaskiwin, Leduc County, Yellowhead, Strathcona, so I deal with a lot of different counties and so I'd like to see from this one in the next little while is when I do submit a final plan, that I get some sort of feedback. I usually with the other counties I just once I email that off I say could you please tell me what outstanding conditions there are and then at that time I can just give my client a call and say ok if you want to get this registered then I need you to follow up with this, this, and this. So it's my job to help facilitate that process just to get things registered more quickly for the client cause I do understand that a lot of them do wait on development permits. So a lot of the other counties if I could make a suggestion, for me when I send that quick email with the final plan they just basically put number 3, 5, and 6 is outstanding and that's it, it's simple and I call the client up and I say these are the 3 things that are outstanding so as soon as you get those done, they will endorse the plan and I'll get the final documents in the mail for registration. So when I don't get a response for quite a while on an email even, it's just concerning because I can't get back to my clients. I don't know what's outstanding and it might only be fees that are outstanding, there might not be any documents to sign so something like that if it's a fairly simple subdivision that maybe just has outstanding fees where they can just come to the counter and pay them or there's only one or two documents to sign, there basically template documents, so I don't understand why the process is taking so long compared to the rest of the counties that I've been dealing with, so that's my concern.

Rob McIntosh is talking in the background and the sound is not clear enough to transcribe.

Rachel Taylor – So basically it's already been conditionally approved, tentative plan has been submitted, so I'm just not sure what process this county has when the other ones seem to be fairly quickly able to endorse the final plan cause you've already conditionally seen the subdivision plan basically. It's conditionally approved so you already know it's coming, so I'm just not sure is there extra scrutiny on the plan now or is there another process, is there another check list to check off. We prepare that plan and you know as the Alberta Land Surveyor he assumes risk for that plan to be true and correct, he swears under oath so it's just something we're providing. You guys have already conditionally approved it so it just seems like there's something missing in the link there.

Benjamin – just a comment in general on comparisons to other counties, I think we have to be very careful when those are brought up. We don't fully understand the circumstances of other counties, the demand on staff, the amount of staff they have dedicated to certain items, so I just want to put out a note of caution that when that's thrown around, it's really circumstantial and contextually based so I don't think it's a fair comparison without have full numbers in front of us of what's going on in other municipalities. But in regards to that, we do take the time to do a full review of the final plan because when we're asking for road widening or plan of survey for example is not a formal pin survey so we've got to make sure that the final pinned plan of survey matches what was approved in the tentative plan, that the road widening has been addressed and then once we've received the final

plan often there's still outstanding conditions and yes I guess we could work on communicating those, but to be clear, a lot is being asked of administration, but on the flip side administration would ask of people that are applying for subdivisions or development permits that if you have questions when you are conditionally approved to please review your approval. There's also an obligation for developers here to be meeting the criteria that's laid out in the development agreements to be meeting the conditions that are set out in the subdivisions and to be meeting the requirements and conditions that are set out in development permits as well. And often staff spend half to 2/3 of their time chasing down people to meet these conditions and repeated requests to meet these conditions, so once we do that it's very difficult for us when it becomes a last minute panic to try and do a review of these files because we've repeatedly asked the conditions were clearly laid out at the time of MPC and we don't get a phone call from some people until 3 or 4 months down the road in a complete and utter panic about a condition that was placed on their subdivision development agreement or development. We go through the conditions clearly with every single person, whether it's a subdivision, development agreement or develop permit. So I don't know what can be changed in that process, but we also need to remember that this is a two way street and the people that are submitting these applications also need to be making efforts to make sure that they understand and comply with their conditions.

S. Mahan – Thanks Rachel, this meeting was supposed to be kind of wrapped up by 7:00 pm but Avalie you have something to say as well.

M. Schoeninger – Shirley with all due respect I'd like to address a little bit what came about here. It's a fairly common theme here. One of the things that we came back when we did the internal review ourselves and then we hired out another individual to get a objective view rather than a biased perhaps from myself. One of the things that came about though is that we needed to improve our follow-up, so though there is a responsibility by the individual asking for a permit or the developer for the conditions and myself I've been actually out Don you and I walked your subdivision from culvert to culvert to riprap to riprap to asphalt crack to asphalt paved to asphalt approach and there were some issues that were outstanding but I think because you and I were able to get together, we were able to work through it. And there is a necessity in the process to be able to do follow up. Now some of the follow up I would agree is actually the responsibility of someone outside of administration, however we also recognize and it's been said by three or four individuals, there is a tax base that to draw and retain people here to have them live here customer service we have to go above what's above the bare minimum. And I think we want to benchmark that at a high level and that means follow up. So one of the things with the education officer and this is something that Martino talked about and again Martino is just brand new here, so it's just something he's getting used to with his new staff and some of his staff who have been here for a while, there is also new staff that just started over this last few days, so they are new. So it's a process for all of us, that's not an excuse it's just reality. But in that one of the things that I've mandated for them is that not just streamlining, but streamlining can be by us following up so as you talked about Rachel and email in response, we say here are some of the things now recognize you may be just one of four or five people on the file that we have to deal with, so we can't be drawn back into that file because we'll be there all day for one file all the time, but we can put steps into place that I know myself how I manage my portfolio is follow up – ok have you taken care of this, this and this. This is the last email I sent you this is what I shared, have you changed anything from that. As least as a starting point and this is part of that cooperation and communication to improve it and by that we start eliminating duplication redundancy and improving the process. Now, in that we have to establish it through relationships so that we are communicating with each other rather than bash each other. I think Rob you and I have talked recently and we had a pretty frank discussion. At the end of the day I think

we also at the Council meeting, we found mechanisms. I provided Council with an option from Benjamin's help as well of how can we expedite this process and one of the key things was reducing the liability. We actually recommended to take on a burden or a liability, Brazeau County to expedite the process so we don't inhibit a developer who wants to provide affordable housing. Now let's be honest, as generous as you are Rob and I like you, don't get me wrong, you're also in it to make money yourself too. You're not going to give away, but there is a happy balance that we can find and I think the number one thing when I talk about customer service to me that means follow up that means talking to you and having sometimes conversations that are difficult and having the conversations that are helpful. Mike I think you raised a good point earlier about no Marco 3 weeks I said 3 weeks that's what it is, it's clear. One of those things the Town just we face with the follow up I actually went out and had a look at those issues a problem comes in that from wanting to put into place a process that initial consultation is done way in advance is all fine and dandy but Benjamin and I'm not sure if there's a connection or a disconnect there but the life of the land use bylaw prevents us from actually undertaking that when it comes to land that isn't yet owned or titled so to speak. You may have a deposit, but it may not be titled. That prevents us from taking, so through the process today this is actually one of the steps of many in the consultation process to help us change the LUB so that we can empower the staff, as Bart said to be able to make those decisions that lets not have a component or a hurdle that says Benjamin you can't listen to George because he doesn't own the land yet. Where if it's changed and take that component out saying Council's prepared to take on the risk that you may not want to follow through because they feel that the likeliness of you not following through is much less than the number of people that are going to follow always all the way through that we could sit down and talk to you, have it ready on the shelf to push it through. Now the cookie cutter ideas can be very dangerous, to be quite frank because you know yourself many people will change their minds. I don't know about the males or females here but I know with my wife the moment I want to have a design or have a thought, also turn into a log home all of a sudden. That's not what I envisions, so those are types of things that can change that process very rapidly and they are difficult to deal with, but I think one of the common themes in addition to follow up is also the ability to reduce risk. I'll be the first guy to say that in the 36 months that I've been CAO, in the last 18 I'm one of the guilty guys to direct administration my staff to say you will follow through from page one of the file all the way through. Here's why, we've had, with all due respect, and I'm not blaming anybody, but my backside's been on the line several times so I'm going to be very clear with this, cause I think it's important to move on from here. Because things have come to the table, we've had approvals in place where we've actually had an individual's garage over a trunk line. We've had an individual's garage on a road, we've also has issues where people's basements were flooded because they were on a water course they shouldn't have been. So now that's all fine a dandy for you to say hey you've got to change it and the likeliness of that happening is very minimal but when we're dealing with it and we're dealing with those individuals like the one person who wanted to sell his home couldn't the other person sitting in water and the lady is crying at me what do you do in that situation. So there have been processes put into place in the past and Bart's right the floodplain issues haven't really changed much. I've been in the business for many years in the engineering field and they haven't changed much, however the rigidness and some of the lawsuits have expedited that have exposed our backs so we want to be careful of it. I don't think though there are some that in fairness even myself have probably gone overboard in the recommendation to Council for protecting ourselves, but that's only because some of the risk to staff, but with that there is a balance and with the feedback you are giving us today, that helps. Is it going to solve it overnight, of course not. But are we hearing you, definitely. Do we feel frustrated sometimes, absolutely. And I think like Bart, like Rob I'm one of those passionate guys who gets blood under the collar very quickly too that as you can hear in my tone it means a lot to me. But what I don't want to do is send the wrong message Rachel. I don't want to say that just cause we

are going to follow up, that means automatically that burden of responsibility for you as a facilitator with your customer is going to go away, it isn't. I think what it means is we have to improve our relationship. I think that's the number one thing. I think George what Rob said was one of the best things is we should probably be talking to you and saying here's why we can't do it. Here's the prevention of the document that can't allow us to help you in your process or here is why you can't, but here's how you maybe can approach Council in amending it so we can expedite that rule and pull it out of the book. So that's a customer failure that I have to take responsibility for cause it doesn't matter what staff does it cause at the end of the day, they are my staff so that's the responsibility I have and that's where I need to do that. I know Rob when you talked to me you shared some of those tools that we can draw from. I think Rachel you shared a good step about a follow up improving that. I think Bart, although Bart and I may not necessarily be best or friends or agree on everything, I think we agree on that one, would that be fair Bart, however one thing we do agree on is we do have to have that ability to manage our risk and sometimes Administration including myself here is we cover our bacon cause we're worried. I think that with the healthy relationship that Council and administration is developing we're more likely willing then with the feedback from the residents are saying, folks you represent us, reduce that worry of risk. Take off some of that liability so that you promote people to stay and move here and make that transition to development easier. And we're hearing that and I think that's part of that consultation, we're going to have several of those for the Land Use Bylaw and this is one of those items that will be part of that is that as much as you've heard the word be patient, recognize too through the meetings that we've had of the 9 land use bylaw documents and Bart shared this very clearly, you've had a year why hasn't it changed. Well with all due respect folks, as many people who wanted it changed, there were equal the amount, if you remember not too long ago who said keep what you have. That becomes a challenge and it really becomes difficult. So there is no overnight quick fix. I do agree that the turnaround time is unacceptable. Unfortunately though to be quite frank, the sheer number of submittals by the time April came around exceed all of last year. That becomes a development review process nightmare. So we have to take some of those steps to change, so the only commitment I can give to Council is that they gave me the money and the ability to hire more staff with a higher level of skills and that's what we are undertaking right now. So I appreciate you allowing me on my soap box.

Ave Peck – I'm involved in the sand and gravel business and I have some pit licenses that I will be renewing soon and I find there's been some changes to the process from the last time that I had to renew licenses and one of the changes that I guess I would like some clarification as to why is that in order to have natural resource processing, which is from what I understand not extraction but to have a crusher on your site and actually crushing requires a change in zoning and I'm wondering what the reason for that change is because I'm not aware of any gravel pits in the county where extraction occurs and processing is done at a different location.

Benjamin – to be completely honest I'm not sure, that was passed in the last bylaw and I wasn't here when that one was formally adopted, so I'm unsure as to why in the Ag district they have extraction only with no processing. I'm really not sure.

Ave Peck – is that something you will be looking at in the upcoming review of the land use bylaw?

Benjamin – yes Council actually spent a significant amount of time going over natural resource extraction and processing when we held our multiple land use bylaw meetings, so it will definitely be looked at as part of the new land use bylaw as part of the new land use bylaw without a doubt.

Ave Peck – would any of the Councillors know why or what the reasoning for the.....

Anthony Heinrich – when it was changed it was a few years back when we had a new staff person come in and felt that from the previous place that they had been employed, that it was a good idea from their practices there that we rezone the lands and have them rezoned as natural resource extraction and processing. That's where that requirement comes from and the Council of the day agreed that it was something that they wanted to do. Since then in our review that we've had here of the bylaw in the last 6 months or since this new Council has been on, we've proposed or at least we have eliminated or requested that the requirement for natural resource extraction redistricting will be eliminated and therefore it will be allowed similar to what I think you are referring to and what it used to be and what you're wondering why we aren't there again. So we're going back to it. But it was an idea that was brought to us by a staff person, the majority of Council at that time thought it was a worthwhile and a right way of approaching it and I guess that's the only explanation I can give you.

Ave Peck – Ok, when do you think the return to the previous requirements will be in place and in other words if I submitted an application now because my zoning is still agricultural will it be not looked at, held up or whatever until the change is made, because it wouldn't fit the current requirements.

Benjamin – A couple things to touch on there in terms of when it will be changed back, there is no guarantee that it will be changed back. We will go through the land use bylaw review and as part of the public consultation, of course some of the changes that Council put forward will be looked at, but ultimately it will be through deciding on the document that works best for everyone, so we can't guarantee that any of the changes that have been put forward will actually be adopted. If they were Ave, then of course you would fall under those new guidelines, if you applied before that and you were planning on doing both extraction and processing we could not approve the permit if the processing was on there because we are obligated to adhere to the current land use bylaw, which would only allow for extraction on that parcel, or you could rezone because we still do have natural resource extraction and processing as a district.

Ave Peck – And how long does the rezoning process take?

Benjamin – usually about 2-3 months.

Ave Peck – and when the pit is depleted and reclaimed, do you apply for rezoning again to either recreational or agricultural or what

Benjamin – If you want to you can call me or fire me off an email and I can go through that with you.

Ave Peck – so basically when do you think that you might be reviewing this land use bylaw and have a decision because if it's going to take me 2-3 months to change my zoning, maybe I'm better off to wait until you've looked at the land use bylaw.

Benjamin – Yes, we're kicking off the review here right away and then we are hoping to have the new bylaw adopted in May or June or next year.

Ave Peck – So what happens if I go through the process of changing the zoning, the new bylaw is adopted saying I don't need that, then what happens.

Benjamin – Well if you got the zoning then applied for a development permit you would basically be grandfathered in under the previous land use bylaw, but if that operation changed significantly enough or you were proposing something different, we would review that proposal under the terms of the new land use bylaw.

Ave Peck – Ok and no one has really a good sound reason for why this change was put through in the first place.

Martino – the only logical conclusion I would have for why you would separate extraction from processing is processing can have negative impacts on adjacent users. A lot of people in agricultural zones if I look at our land use bylaw, you can have up to four parcels including up to three residentially styled or residential purposed parcels in an agricultural zone. If you allow for processing, crushing and other types of things like that related to natural extraction which could also be upgrading of oil and gas etc., you would have a negative impact on people around you. If you just allow for extraction, that is acknowledging the fact that a resource is based at its location. You can't find a different place to get gravel, you get the gravel where the gravel is, you get the oil where the oil is, you extract the gas where the gas is. So to remove extraction would be unreasonable and against provincial styled interests and land use policies. To prevent processing and upgrading of those resources would be deemed reasonable and likely would limit impacts to adjacent users. So that's the logical reasoning as to why, however I can't speak to the motivations of the previous staff.

Ave Peck – Does anyone know if there's currently a gravel pit operating in the County that is extraction only and the processing is happening somewhere else?

Martino – I can tell you I've been here less than 6 days and I know of about two gravel pits that already have people who complain about them with their upgrading and processing going on. But I can't comment on whether there's any that don't do any processing.

Ave Peck – Ok, well that's something I'd like you to consider because certainly there's the additional administrative requirements of changing the zoning and from an operators point of view it really doesn't make sense to extract the gravel, truck it somewhere, crush it and then at some point, possibly haul it back to the same area depending on the needs of the local communities. And I would also like to point out that in our case, the location of the pits are not changing and we already have established stock pile sites and that sort of thing so it kind of seems somewhat unjustified that a process that's happened for 20 years at a certain location now you have to either look at changing the location of your processing or going through all the requirements of changing the zoning and at some point likely having to change the zoning back again when the pit is depleted. I'd just like you to consider that.

Garry Mastre – I guess what I've learned again tonight is we've been going through this for such a long time, this land use bylaw stuff it keeps creeping up here like I don't know how these guys can move forward ahead without us straightening out the bylaws to begin with because there's so many that need to be simplified, keep it simple stupid has been said a long time ago and I think we're out in left field. We have to clear up all those land use bylaws before these people can actually move forward with you know a direction just like this hear. It's totally wrong, like we have to clean up the land use bylaws, we've come here tonight and everybody's, we've been working on it for what 2-3 years now, since 2012. I know you haven't but we still have to we keep sending it out to other counties and trying to see what they are doing. I think it's time we come to the table and do what we need to do here and not worry about what they're doing over there. We have to clarify it right

here and now and get it straight so these people can move forward. I feel sorry for staff in one way, we're jumping on them, but we haven't given them no direction and that goes back to Council and I don't know I can't say much more than that. We've just been fooling around too long I don't care if you get a whole bunch more people in here let's spend some of that money that we're trying to spend elsewhere, let's spend it here and get this all straightened out and so we can move forward like right now we're out in left field unless we give direction and we sure haven't be doing that.

S. Mahan thanked everyone for coming and thank you Marco thank you for summation of what everybody said and I'm sure that we're taking everything again back. We do know that there are certain things that the time frame and all that everything has been said before so definitely we are working on that. I guess that's it.

R. McIntosh is talking without a microphone so cannot be heard.

M. Schoeninger – what my recommendation is, what my intent is simply this that everything that has happened has been recorded so that it helps, although Jayme is pretty good and I can hear her type away like a mad woman, is that our goal is to make sure we've captured the key questions and the requests and at that point summate them and see if we can internally provide a response. Some of them may be opposing each other. A couple of them did actually earlier on and so that's where it's going to be a difficult challenge as to Council here's what was requested of you. The specific questions we'll answer them, that's simple we'll do a summate and back to Council. We'll make sure that's available on the website and for anybody who signed in and left us contact information, my view that is part of an addition to the website. We do a follow up and disseminate to you folks. Then at that point in time we also forward it off through planning and development to the land use bylaw consultant, which is Planning Alliance cause they are going to come in once everything is signed in preparation for the LUB because they need to be aware of the information that came today as well as the previous sessions, so that is all part and parcel of those future consultation sessions, cause our goal is to have anywhere between 4 and 6, so that we make sure we capture enough of the information and give enough people an opportunity. The other part of it is then we provide that back for Council adoption in a future Council meeting. My goal is probably December 16th to be honest with you. If it's not in the first one in January. The goal really is I want to make sure it's no longer than the first meeting of Council in January because at that point in early January, the consultants will start doing his or her work as a result they should have this document already there. We want to make sure that if we've captured something from the recording, we try to respond that you like or dislike you still have an opportunity then to further respond back to us so that it's a live document until May when the actual LUB is finalized.

R. McIntosh is again talking without the microphone.

S. Mahan – thank you again for all the suggestions again, we will take them back and hopefully come up with a good summary that works for everybody, hopefully we can streamline out time and get back to everybody quicker as what everybody wants anyway. Ben do you have anything further to say, Martino.....no ok.