

MINUTES
WETLANDS REVIEW BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
March 19, 2015, 5:15 p.m. City Hall Room 224

Meeting Summary

Roll Call

Board Members Present: Amy Sumner, Brenda Wright, Nina Horne, Jerry Medina , Andrew Campbell, Lisa Hoferkamp, Ben Haight; Hal Geiger

Board Members Absent: Dan Miller

A quorum was present.

Staff Members Present: Chrissy McNally, CBJ Planner

Public Present: Greg Chaney, CBJ Lands Manager; Neil Stichert, USFWS; Richard Hoffman, ADF&G; Matt Kern, ADF&G; Michael Short, SECON

Meeting called to order at 5:18 p.m.

II. February 19, 2015 Regular Meeting minutes approved with two corrections. First, Mr. Geiger was present at the meeting. Second, Ms. Sumner noted under section V. Board Comments that she did not know if the LiDAR had been posted on the SEAKGIS site because she could not find them.

III. Agenda approved with one amendment. Item 1 was amended by Neil Stichert of USFWS to read “Lemon Creek Gravel Extraction Status Discussion with ADF&G, USFWS, and SECON

IV. Public Participation on Non-Agenda Items

None

V. Board Comments.

None

VI. Agenda Items

1) Lemon Creek gravel extraction status discussion with ADF&G, USFWS, and SECON

Neil Stichert of USFWS gave a historical overview of permitting in Lemon Creek using the Executive Summary and graphics from the 2004 Lemon Creek Watershed Geomorphic Assessment and Sediment Management Alternatives Report. Mr. Stichert explained how human activity has changed Lemon Creek over time. Michael Short of SECON noted that SECON has been working in Lemon Creek for 5 years. Mr. Stichert stated that as far as in channel gravel goes, SECON has a good approach. They use temporary bridges to jump banks to access exposed gravel bars. By doing this they are not disturbing the water.

Richard Hoffman of ADF&G stated that he had visited the site for the past two years to monitor chum salmon spawning. He said SECON was good to work with and correct problems when they are brought to their attention. Mr. Stichert noted that there are hundreds of chum salmon in some reaches of Lemon Creek and Coho are present later in the season. Brenda Wright asked if anyone had counted Coho and Mr. Hoffman stated that not in the last 20 years.

Mr. Stichert stated that if there is room for improvement it is up to SECON. USFWS is under the permitting authority of the Corps of Engineers and therefore have applied the necessary conditions that are being followed. SECON can try not to strip gravel islands of alder and other vegetation and should leave the more complex reaches alone, although he noted both of these things are generally adhered to.

ADF&G stated that water levels were high due to heavy rainfall this year and SECON built good berms so water never got into the mining pits. ADF&G was monitoring the creek for turbidity and found the turbidity was extremely high and not caused by the gravel extraction, but the heavy rainfall. Mr. Short stated that the mid and lower extraction areas fill up rapidly. The amount of gravel extracted in 2015 was not high, much less than prior years. He noted he was not sure if this is cyclical or based on rain and snow. Mr. Campbell asked if this was based on less significant rainfall overall. Mr. Short answered that a channel disturbance and erosion had brought a lot of gravel down creek over the last few years, but that may be slowing down. Also, Mr. Short noted that SECON is confined to extract from gravel bars so without high gravel bars they cannot mine.

Mr. Campbell asked if there was a quota SECON tried to get or if demand was being met. Mr. Short stated that demand was not being met and that they could sell 20,000 tons a year. He also stated that no other entity is going to do this type of mining because it is not economically feasible. He also stated that there is no interest in strip mining the creek as was done in the 1980's. It's only a little more expensive to mine the way they do which helps protect the creek than to strip mine. Mr. Stichert stated that the original proposal was to lower Lemon Creek 10 vertical feet and that hasn't happened with the way SECON is conducting the mining. Sand bars have repopulated to the same dimensions and location.

Mr. Geiger asked if there was any idea about how many salmon were being diminished due to the mining. ADF&G stated that likely it is very low because SECON is placing the bridges over areas where salmon are not spawning.

Ms. Hoferkamp asked if the same approach could be used upstream. Mr. Short stated that there are three proposed extraction sites that have been submitted to the Corps for approval. Ms. Sumner asked if mining in Happy Valley would affect repopulation of gravel bars in the lower area. Mr. Short stated it is possible but there is enough demand for gravel it is worth trying. Brenda Wright asked how much SECON owns. Mr. Short stated SECON owns 9-10 acres in the lower area and 133 acres in Hidden Valley.

2) Juneau Wetlands Management Plan Update and Stream Mapping Update

Ms. McNally stated there was no update on the Juneau Wetland Management Plan as Ms. Camery was out of town. Ms. McNally stated that she was able to share the LiDAR and imagery with ADF&G and that they were currently in the process of comparing the Anadromous Waters Catalogue streams with the hydrography from the CBJ data. Once that work is complete ADF&G and CDD will confer on how to proceed. CDD will likely not nominate streams as was the original plan. CDD's stream maps will be an updated version of the approved ADF&G streams.

VII. Pending Permits and Updates

Pederson Hill Subdivision Update. Greg Chaney provided an update on the CBJ subdivision on Pederson Hill. Mr. Chaney gave a brief overview of the rezoning that occurred to create a D-10 lot and a D-10SF in order to create a subdivision of 5,000 square foot lots for single family homes. He mentioned that this proposal protected the Auke Lake watershed and they will also be preserving wetlands around the subdivision. He stated that the Lands and Resources Division is currently working on access to the site by way of the Lutheran Church property. He stated the Alaska Department of Transportation wanted a four-way intersection. Mr. Stichert mentioned that one of the proposed access points goes right over Pederson Creek. Ms. Horne asked why the two access points were necessary. Mr. Chaney answered that according to Fire Code any development greater than 100 units requires two access points. The current access being worked out requires a land swap with the church and would access the subdivision across from Sherwood Lane.

Mr. Chaney presented a graphic that showed the mapped AWC streams against the more recent CBJ stream layer that was modeled using the 2013 LiDAR and imagery. When compared it is clear that the stream courses are outside of the proposed access point. Mr. Chaney noted that this site will require a lot of wetland mitigation and yet it is one of the easier CBJ lots to develop. He mentioned that the Miller construction site pond appears to be working but he is open to suggestions for mitigation. Ms. Hoferkamp asked what category of wetlands are in the area. Mr. Chaney stated that they were likely category A wetlands. Mr. Geiger asked what type of salmon are found in the creeks. Ms. Wright answered that they were Coho salmon. Ms. Wright mentioned that she had done extensive research on Coho in beaver ponds and found that 90

percent survived over winter. Mr. Stichert stated that he was skeptical about the success of fish performance in artificial ponds such as the Miller Construction pond versus a natural beaver pond. Mr. Stichert further noted that due to significant uplift it is unlikely fish will be found at the church access, but they are likely to be found at the proposed second access point.

VIII. Planning Commission Liaison Update.

Mr. Haight mentioned the subdivision ordinance is getting closer to adoption and that overall it makes the subdivision process much smoother and there are some relaxation to the current requirements by way of giving more permitting authority to the Director of CDD.

Ms. Hoferkamp inquired about whether the sewage processing facility was at capacity. Ben Haight answered that it was not at capacity and that Auke Bay will eventually be a pumping station.

IX. Next meeting: Thursday April 16, 5:15 p.m., City Hall room 224.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:35 p.m.