

Paula Kusack

From: J.K. 22 (1)
Sent: June 21, 2021 10:01 AM
To: Regular Council Meetings
Cc: Shara Knoblauch 22 (1)
Subject: Opposition to Bylaw 3200 - Final Draft Appendix A - Nicomekl Plan
Attachments: Floodplain - trail ideas.pdf

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To whom it may concern,

Thank you for allowing me to send my official opposition to a section of the proposed Appendix A – Nicomekl River District Neighbourhood Plan. If possible I would like to read this letter out loud at the public hearing. At a minimum I would like this letter put on file as opposition to the plan and would like its content reviewed for consideration.

Growth is good but I fear the rapid growth that The City of Langley is allowing is very alarming. We already have far too busy roads, grocery stores, schools and parks and I don't see an end to it. We have been happy with our house location as we are located within the City limits however far enough removed from the mass population and future planned growth. After reading the OCP for the City of Langley one of my fears is coming to light and in particular the ideas related to Appendix A – Nicomekl River District Neighbourhood Plan.

We purchased our house 11 years ago. One of the main draws was the fact we backed onto the floodplain and we were drawn by the privacy and tranquility of this. I'm concerned with the notion of creating new paths and adding connections to other paths within the Nicomekl flood plain network that are proposed to be now located directly behind our property.

General comments on the proposed Appendix A (Garden Wild Zone):

- The majority of the wet season (Fall & Spring) the area where the proposed connection trails are being proposed are under 10ft-15ft of water.
- The flooding currently causes the trails to washout. They become difficult to bike on, become very narrow for walking and leave many dangerous holes and divots on the edges of the trails. There would need to be regular maintenance of the trails as they should be re-graveled and re-groomed after each flood as the trails wash away (this maintenance is currently **NOT** done)
- On each side of the trail you can find various amounts of garbage, scrap metal, shopping carts, abandoned homeless camps, tools of crime, and other items brought there during the floods
- Appendix A mentions the path would be built respecting privacy. How can it say respect privacy when the plan is to add a NEW public path in an area that previously was not accessible behind our house?
 - o Is part of the plan to add landscaping or privacy screens to the affected properties to block the views to and from the path or would this burden be put on the property owner?
- We have wildlife (deer, hawks, eagles, etc.) that all call the area behind our house home. The proposed paths goes right through this area and will displace the wildlife.

Specific concerns by adding these connecting trails the results to our property and neighbourhood are as follows:

- These trails will bring even more foot and vehicle traffic into our area. There is currently no additional room for street parking. Our street is already very busy with those using the existing established paths.
- These trails will make it even more easy for crime and vandalism. We currently have weekly encounters of this on our street. The easy access into and out of our neighbourhood via the existing floodplain trails promotes this type of behaviour in our area. Adding even more access point trails to this area will enhance this behaviour and problem. These new trails will further promote car break-ins, vandalism and property theft.
- These trails will make our properties vulnerable to trespassing. Over the year we've had several people venture off the path to explore the floodplains and get "stuck" behind our house as they tried to make their own trail trying to access inaccessible areas. This new path will further promote people to explore and make their own paths as the inaccessible areas are now becoming more accessible.
- There was a previous trail located behind some of houses on 51 avenue yet that trail was closed off before we moved into the area. My understanding from some long term residents is that it closed off then for most of the reasons I listed above? If it was closed off then for those reasons why wouldn't the same problems come back now?

I want to be clear that although I oppose the plan as shown I am not opposed to upgrading and improving the existing trail network. Please consider the following points when reviewing this proposed trail system. I strongly feel that the funds or ideas should be more focused of further developing and improving the **EXISTING** trail networks. There are a lot of underutilized areas on the existing gravelled Hydro Right-of-Way (ROW) closer to Brydon Lagoon (see attached sketches)

- The existing gravelled ROW is at an elevation that does not get affected by the high flood season
 - o This prevents the need for regular / costly maintenance of the trail
- The existing ROW has gravelled access "branches" that lead into the floodplain. These could easily become viewing platforms and / or be connected by the proposed "floating" boardwalk.
- The trail could connect and form a loop and all remain on the North side of the river
 - o This would prevent the need to build and maintain bridges over the river
- The proposed trailhead location on 200th street is not an ideal location for pedestrian traffic
 - o That section of 200th is intimidating to walk / ride on as its elevated above the road, is narrow and vehicles tend to drive faster on this stretch
 - o The closest lights to cross 200th are too far away (56th or 50th) so the proposed location of the trailhead promotes "J-walking" to connect the new and existing trailhead on the other side of 200th

I suggest the planners look at the Blackburn Lagoons Park in Port Coquitlam for ideas on a combination of improved gravelled paths and viewing platforms on and around existing ponds and wildlife. I would be more than happy to spend a couple hours with any of the planners or individuals that put this report together. It is one thing to look at a satellite photo, walk the path and make plans based on a map, but it is another thing to actually spend time in the floodplain, explore the floodplain and understand what happens within the floodplain (by nature or by human) Adding new paths within the floodplain will unnecessarily disturb and misplace more wildlife and will take away ours and other houses backing onto the floodplains privacy.

I want to make sure that there will be a time and place for my neighbours and I to have an actual say and provide an official opposition to the proposed expansion and addition of new trails behind our

currently quiet, private and peaceful backyard. I am concerned because if these trails do move forward as planned we will be looking to leave The City of Langley to once again find a peaceful quiet neighbourhood to call home.

I appreciate you taking the time today to listen to my concerns. My hope is that this as well as other opposition from our neighbours will prevent this from moving forward as currently planned.

Thank you

Jeff Knoblauch + Shara Knoblauch
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