Speakers against ‘mega’ proposal

by Steve Dills
Sylvan Lake News

The natives aren’t happy and they voiced their displeasure to Lacombe County councilors for almost three hours during a public hearing on the Sky Country proposal north of Sunbreaker Cove.

Frank Wilson and Lance Dzaman outlined their proposal for a 423 lot condominium resort with 84 daily rental lots, a nine-hole golf course and a number of other amenities on 148 acres at the corner of Sunbreaker Cove Road and Rainy Creek Road (see separate story).

More than 20 speakers, many residents of Sunbreaker Cove, provided a litany of reasons the county shouldn’t allow rezoning of the land. The meeting, last Wednesday night, at Bentley’s Blindman Valley Agricultural Centre was attended by over 150 people. More than 110 written submissions had also been received by the county, said Allan Williams, manager of planning services.

Among the concerns were the density of the development, traffic generated by it, congestion and plans for expansion of the current boat launch in Sunbreaker Cove, trucking of wastewater to an as yet unidentified facility, the effect the development would have on the lake, and lack of information about the need for increased services like police, fire, ambulance and garbage collection.

Sunbreaker Cove mayor Gil Clark was the first speaker to oppose the development.

Storms come on quickly and it’s important to get off the lake quickly, he said. If there are more boats on the lake, trying to get off at an expanded boat launch “will be a disaster”, he predicted.

Trucking seven to ten heavy truckloads of sewage on a busy day is another concern. And there have been no plans announced to deal with solid waste nor has emergency protection been mentioned.

Clark called the development “premature” as the county is planning an Area Structure Plan (ASP) for the east side of the lake in 2010-11. “This is a massive intervention into the planning process. What this would amount to is a prejudgment before the ASP is completed.”

The ASP describes the sequence of development, land usage and density of population, he indicated, calling for the ASP to be completed before a decision is made. “If this project were to proceed, it would be impossible to create an ASP that could establish a reasonable and rational plan for future growth.”

The density of the project was another concern.

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Winter carnival — Students from Our Lady of the Rosary School were joined by Kindergarten and Grade 1 French Immersion students from St. Marguerite Bourgeoys School in Red Deer for a French culture carnival, Mar. 3. The carnival included events inside the school — using computers, learning songs and playing spoons — as well as outside — playing hockey, swooshing, and tobogganing. Although the day was warm, the wet, damp snow made it difficult for swooshers.

Would provide affordable summer property

by Steve Dills
Sylvan Lake News

Everyone wants to have fun, said Kim Purdy, in her summary of the Sky Country proposal which was subject of a public hearing by Lacombe County councilors, last Wednesday night.

“That’s why families would like to have access to affordable summer property. Sky Country is poised to bring those opportunities to families,” she added, extolling the benefits of the project.

She described it as a “development with an eye on a sustainable future for Sylvan Lake”. And she told the audience the developer “has shown complete willingness to address concerns” and has made concessions.

“Your concerns will continue to be dealt with, the current transparency will continue.”

Lance Dzaman opened the developer’s presentation talking about the proposal and addressing some of the concerns that have been raised.

The proposal is for a 423 lot condominium resort with 84 daily rental lots, a nine-hole golf course and a number of other amenities on 148 acres at the corner of Sunbreaker Cove Road and Rainy Creek Road. The majority of the lots would be in a gated RV community run by a condo association. “We’re going to make a safe area where people can live and not feel that vandalism, crime will get out of control.”

A full time on-site manager will be in charge of the public facility portion as well as the private lots.

Amenities such as a nine hole golf course, swimming pool, sports fields and water park will all be open for public use.

The non-permanent residences in the condo area will be a combination of fifth wheel trailers and park models. “It’s not just a trailer park.” Dzaman said they’ll have regulations stipulating how old units can be as well as minimum and maximum size restrictions and architectural controls.

“Are people going to use the lake, but they are,” he said. “Are people going to use boats, they’re not going to be used on a daily basis by the 423 unit holders.”

He presented a survey of other areas where boat use varied greatly. If there’s a marina and access 40-50 per cent will use a boat, he suggested.

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Weekly events

Every Thursday, 7:30 pm: St. Mary’s & St. Timothy’s Anglican Church, Sylvan Lake. Women’s Bible Study. Meet one woman of the church to learn about a different aspect of the Bible every week.

Every Friday, 5-7 pm: Sylvan Lake Royal Canadian Legion. Legion Ladies Auxiliary. Bi-weekly bingo or special events at 5 pm. Sunday night Coffee, Tea or Juice $7 per person. Sandwiches, veggie wraps, homemade buns and dessert.

Monthly events

Second Tuesday of month: Sylvan Lake Royal Canadian Legion. Ladies Auxiliary monthly meeting. If interested in being a member please attend any meeting. Annual membership is $25. For more information call Mary-Mae 403-887-4237, Karen Byrson 403-887-3437. For information on Legion members only call 403-887-4425.

Third Thursday of every month: Sylvan Lake Royal Canadian Legion. Meet at 7 pm at the community centre. New members or visitors welcome. Call Sylvan Lake 403-347-4088 for more information. 03/30/2009

Second Tuesday every month: Sylvan Lake Mobile Home/Lakeview Renters Society meets at Lee Gardens Restaurant at 7 pm. Phone 403-887-2271. Leave message or e-mail to lap0909@yahoo.ca. 05/02/2009

Volunteers Wanted

Third Tuesday every month: Royal Canadian Legion, Sylvan Lake Branch 122, general membership meeting at 7 pm. Enter through Steffie Woima School, Pre-School. If interested to come to monthly meetings at the Legion on the first and third Tuesday of each month. Call the Legion for more information.

If you are interested in volunteering your time, please contact us. We would love to have you help out at the Legion.

Sylvan Lake Community Calendar

Keeping you up to date

The Community Calendar is an open bulletin board for non-profit community groups. Submissions must be received by Tuesday at 12:00 pm and should be kept as concise as possible. We will edit for content and length. We ask that all submissions receive, however, due to the number of items or space availability, we are not able to guarantee publication. If you need to be sure your message runs, we suggest you place your message in the Classified section of this paper.

Label submissions “For Sylvan Lake Community Calendar and allow one week for posting. Mail to our office, 805-50A St., Sylvan Lake, or fax it to 403-887-2081. (Toll-Free 1-888-999-9550.) Be certain to include important details, times and contact information.

Special Events

Saturday, May 16 – 1 St. Patrick’s Day Tea and bake sale from 3-4 pm at St. Mary’s & St. Timothy’s Anglican Church, Sylvan Lake. $5 at the door or $20 available from Marjorie 403-887-5549, Maragarete Hartman 403-887-2482 or Ken Morris 403-887-2199. If you are interested in selling baked goods, you may contact male 403-887-2721. Leaves 6:45 am. Phone Male at 403-887-2482.

Monday, May 19 – 2 St. Mary’s & St. Timothy’s Anglican Church: Spring Brunch. A family gathering starts off slowly and then the music begins. Never too late to join in the fun. Call Steffie 403-347-4086 or 403-887-2271 to volunteer or reserve your place.

Monday, May 26 – 3 Red Deer County Museum: 100th anniversary. It’s the 100th anniversary of the Red Deer County Museum. Meet at 7 pm. For more information, call 403-496-2626. 06/22/2009


Friday, May 30 – 5 Sylvan Lake Royal Canadian Legion. Legion Ladies Auxiliary monthly meeting. If interested in being a member please attend any meeting. Annual membership is $25. For more information call Mary-Mae 403-887-4237, Karen Byrson 403-887-3437. For information on Legion members only call 403-887-4425.

Weekend events

Friday, 7:45 pm: St. Mary’s & St. Timothy’s Anglican Church, Sylvan Lake. Family Fun Playgroup. Parent Link and Family Education Support at 403-887-9989. 03/30/09

Saturday, May 30 – Art & Chocolate Festival. A celebration of local artists and Decadent Chocolate Desserts from 6:30-10 pm at Sylvan Lake Alliance Church. Music by Fred Freschette and Legends of Country Music performed by Country Blend at Sylvan Lake Alliance Church (north door). For more information call male 403-887-4237, Karen Byrson 403-887-3437. For information on Legion members only call 403-887-4425.

Sunday, June 7 – Sylvan Lake Royal Canadian Legion. Ladies Auxiliary meeting at 5 pm. Information meeting at 7 pm at St. Mary’s & St. Timothy’s Anglican Church. For more information contact Karen Cooper 403-348-1189. E-mail gal@shaw.ca. Information meeting at 7 pm at St. Mary’s & St. Timothy’s Anglican Church, Sylvan Lake. Women’s Bible Study. Meet one woman of the church to learn about a different aspect of the Bible every week.

If you need to be sure your message runs, we suggest you place your message in the Classified section of this paper.

Phone 403-887-3222 for an appointment.

Unit #102, 5020-A St.
Sylvan Lake, AB

987-5490.

403-887-2424

1 (800) 874-1977

Corner of Hwy 20 & Hwy. 53
25 minutes from Sylvan Lake

Would provide affordable . . .

Councillor Rod McDermand asked the purpose of the shuttle. Dzaman replied they’ll shuttle people and their boat to the water and bring the trailer back so it’s not left near the launch during the day. A parking area will be created in the northeast part of the site.

On the question of water conserva- tion, Frank Wilson said they’ve had some discussion about using wastewater for irrigating the golf course but it’s very preliminary. He added they’re not planning to install water meters.

McDermand also questioned whether on-site wastewater treatment has been considered similar to some other develop- ments in the province. “I don’t believe that is the case,” he added.

“If Alberta Environment can come to a conclusion of what are allowable toler- ances, what can be put on the golf course, on playing fields, we’re certainly open to dealing with the county in look- ing at that,” said Dzaman.
Speakers against...

“This takes a flavour of an urban lifestyle which should not be permitted in an agricultural area. The density is out of character with the adjacent uses. It’s nothing more than an urban sprawl type of development.”

Kim Schmitt, a Sunbreaker Cove resident, said the proposal provides “an unacceptable level of risk to the many values Sylvan Lake provides in water quality and biodiversity of the west end of Sylvan Lake.

Renowned scientist Dr. David Schindler, who has studied this type of lake, indicated “we could not proceed with more development without affecting water quality and driving towards a cesspool like pond,” Schmitt said. He also said there isn’t a way to fix a lake once it becomes a green cesspool.

“You’ve already approved 240 lots which are not yet developed, now you’re going to approve another mega project, it’s very confusing, very scary,” he said.

The importance of keeping water flowing in the watershed was another of his topics. He said pumping water, then hauling it, is not the watershed is “against the principles of watershed management that we know today.”

Rebecca Bystrom commended Lacombe County for its level of communication, but said she was “astonished at the size of the proposal”.

“How do you think the lake can handle any more boats?” she asked.

“Sky County is proposing a minimalist plan. It seems to me they’re trying to maximize the number of paying customers. I don’t think this density makes any sense to the lake,” she concluded.

Steven Johnson, speaking Continued on Page 12
The Benalto Playschool is very proud and grateful for all the wonderful community support it has received this year!

The Parent Board along with all the Children of Benalto Playschool wish to Thank the following Corporate Sponsors for their generous donations!

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- Benalto Elks
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- Nor-AG
- Benalto Booster Club
- NAL Resources

Benalto Playschool would also like to extend thanks to all those who donated bottles and who have supported the Playschool throughout the year!

THANK YOU!

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Speakers against . . .

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...on behalf of the Sylvan Lake Watershed Stewardship Society, said his group is not in favour. The proposal brings a high level of risk to water quality, water quantity and sewage treatment which may exceed the lake’s threshold.

“The lake has a finite capacity,” he said, asking what monitoring is in place. “Where is the collective will to protect this lake.” He also raised the question about sewage. “There's no facility in the watershed designated to accept this sewage, estimated at 10 trucks a day.” Johnson said.

Dennis Duncan, representing farmers along Rainy Creek Road, said their big issue is traffic and its interaction with farm equipment. He also voiced concern about quads causing damage. “All I hear is we can't stop development. You can stop development if you vote it down.”

Kent Williamson, a Lacombe County resident at Blissful Beach, said, “the proponent does not identify impacts to the lake” in the 318 pages of technical analysis. He requested the county deny the proposal until those impacts are identified.

Smart growth are key words in the Landuse Framework, said Ken Penney, an environmental practitioner. He said the proposal for using holding ponds on the golf course as part of the stormwater management plan and to also irrigate the course, is not smart. In a heavy storm, he predicted the system would blow out sending residue from the nutrient rich golf course into the lake.

Pat Jorgenson, a Sunbreaker Cove councilor, asked about fire protection. “If the county is going to allow a town of that size there’s going to be a need for more fire protection, the same for ambulance. We will all be at increased risk, it stands to reason the more people the more risk,” she said. She also asked whether street lights would be in the development impacting the darkness at that end of the lake where people go to stargaze.

Other speakers raised concerns about the loss of their “safe haven, sanctuary” and disturbance of their “refuge or place of repose”.

Former councillor August Liiviam was the last speaker asking, “How many of you go to Sylvan Lake and protest when they add quarter section after quarter section? I hate the attitude I'm here first, I don't want anyone else,” he said.

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choosing the right electricity provider for you

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To learn more about your electricity choices and Alberta’s new Provincial Energy Strategy, visit www.energy.alberta.ca or call toll-free 310-0000, then dial 780-427-0265.

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