Official Community Planning in the Shuswap

Public Participation in the Preparation of
Official Community Plans within the
Columbia Shuswap Regional District, British Columbia

by

Marcin Pachcinski

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of

The University of Manitoba

in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

MASTER OF CITY PLANNING

Department of City Planning

University of Manitoba

Winnipeg

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank my thesis committee
for their patience and feedback throughout this process:

Supervisor: Dr. Ian Skelton
Internal Reader: Dr. Richard Milgrom
External Reader: Dr. John Guenther

I would also like to thank
Yvonne Halden, Graduate Student Advisor,
for always nudging me forward.

To all the residents of the Columbia Shuswap Regional District who participated, thank you.

And finally to meu homem, Mariano Odilon De Souza Junior, te amo.

Table of Contents

List of Tables and Figures

Tables

Figures

Abstract

This thesis looks at public participation in the formulation of three official community plans within the Columbia Shuswap Regional District. As background, a historical review of the literature makes the case that historical events led to the democratization of planning and supports communicative action theory as a pragmatic framework for modern planners. An examination of local government legislation and practice exposes the great deal of discretion afforded to each local government. Local resident advisory group members' experiences, gained through face-to-face semi-structured interviews, are analyzed using qualitative data coding. The analysis reveals four major themes across the three processes: sense of agency and level of input, process, power and group identity and cohesion. The interview analysis is then fed back through the literature, lending varied support to the communicative turn in planning and providing a more broad interpretation of the data that informs future planning practice.

Chapter 1

Planning Theory in Evolution: A Historical Overview of the Public's Role in Planning Processes

Introduction

One of the main topics this research deals with is the evolution of public participation in planning processes and how planning theory has responded to this evolution. I make a link between societal changes in the latter 20th Century and the inclusion of more actors from the public realm in planning processes, which I argue added complexity to the work of practitioners. In tandem, planning theory sought to incorporate these new realities and provide guidance to practitioners. Based on this premise, I start the thesis by providing a historical overview of the public's role in planning processes and supply some theories that are salient to the case study example I use later on. In tracing the history, I add some professional context from my experience as a planner involved in three official community plans at the Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD), the case study. Next, the thesis looks at the structure of local governments, including the legislation under which official community plan processes operate, and planning practices at the CSRD. This helps explain how Provincial legislation and local government practices shape public participation in official community plans. Having laid the theoretical underpinnings and supplied a description of local government structure and practice, the thesis then concentrates on the experience of local resident advisory

groups by analyzing data from fifteen face-to-face, semi-structured interviews. Through qualitative data coding, the data reveals several themes that shed light on these actors' participation in their official community plan processes and highlights similarities and differences between the three processes investigated. In conclusion, the thesis takes the themes and weaves them back through the historical overview of planning theory. These conclusions present a broad analysis of how the CSRD's experience fits into planning theory's understanding of public planning process and supplies some lessons learned based on my experience.

Theoretical Framework

As noted earlier, one of the stated goals of this research is to locate the Columbia Shuswap Regional District's (CSRD) use of local resident advisory groups in the historical context of public participation in planning. As a first step to accomplish this, the evolution of public participation in planning is traced through the literature. Specifically, I look at the theoretical discourse in the literature around the public's role in planning and show how the field has gone through a process of democratization over the last half-century. The discussion pays close attention to communicative planning and the arguments for and against the planning profession's entry into a new paradigm, leaving behind the rational planning model. While a number of theories are discussed, the communicative turn in planning (communicative action theory) is central to understanding the roles of local resident advisory groups in planning processes today. Second, data are collected to document selected group processes, and analyzed to see how much of a

communicative turn is evidenced by the CSRD's experience and to what extent the normative principles behind communicative action theory were achieved.

Literature Review

As previously noted, the aim of the literature review is to set the stage historically for the planning process techniques and legal requirements that can be seen today in North America. In part, it explains why local resident advisory groups and public meetings are employed today by the CSRD in the development of official community plans. It focuses on how planning processes have opened up (democratized) to incorporate multiple voices, such as community residents, special interest groups and elected representatives. The literature review relies mainly on a number of planning journal articles from North America and Europe.

Introduction

This literature review traces the democratization of planning and provides some analysis of what I consider the current prevailing guiding framework for planners – communicative action theory. The first part offers a brief overview of the evolution of planning theory in the latter half of the 20th Century. Specifically, comprehensive land use planning, disjointed incrementalism, mixed-scanning and social learning are described, accompanied by some critiques of the models' limitations based on personal professional practice. The second part presents issues related to participation in planning and how these issues spawned and continue

to shape communicative action theory. Communicative action theory, as well as critiques of the theory and some responses, are described.

Rational Planning Model

In the 1960s, social upheavals raised questions about the effectiveness of the widely-supported comprehensive land use planning model of creating and implementing master plans, which focused on land-use designations and road and utility construction (Catanese, 1974; Galloway & Mahayni, 1977). In the US, the Civil Rights movement was among the most significant social upheavals that revealed the weaknesses of the comprehensive land use planning model in addressing social ills. The movement's focus on urban (often inner-city) African-Americans' struggle against institutionalized racism saw planners heading into the perceived neutrality and safety of the rational planning model (Berke, 2002). The rational planning model interpreted and refocused planning as a decision-making process. Viewing plan- and decision-making as orderly, technical exercises of goals, objectives, information and a cost-benefit analysis of alternatives was alluring in a period of social and political instability. However, these apolitical exercises proved unpopular and unsuccessful at a time when many groups had just found their political voice and demanded to be heard (Berke, 2002, p.23). It was also criticized as being too resource-heavy to be realistically employed by planning practitioners (Etzioni, 1967). In short, planning theory and practice seemed unable to accommodate the new cacophony of popular demands.

At the same time, this instability, which continued into the 1970s and saw further environmental and energy concerns come to the foreground, “opened a Pandora’s box of possible interpretations and conceptualizations” in planning theory (Galloway & Mahayni, 1977, p.68). Some potentially salient conceptualizations in terms of analyzing local government planning processes, such as the production of official community plans, are disjointed incrementalism, mixed scanning and social learning.

Disjointed Incrementalism and Mixed Scanning

In his critique of the comprehensive model of decision-making, Lindblom (1959) put forward a model of disjointed incrementalism. This model sought to provide a more realistic description of how organizational decisions were made and concurrently prescribe guidelines on how they should be made. By narrowing the possible policy choices to a few, incrementally different ones, it enables the decision-maker to analyze and re-analyze the potential policy outcomes many times over. It effectively concentrates decision-making resources (staff time, money, other projects, deadlines) since all the outcomes are 'on the radar screen.' The validity or ‘goodness’ of the decision arising from this method rests in the agreement of its goodness by others. “Agreement on policy thus becomes the only practicable test of the policy’s correctness” (p.84).

Some limitations attributed to this theory stem from the organizations examined by Lindbolm in its creation. Lindbolm, an economist, observed government and corporate bureaucracies,

which are highly structured and have well-established practices and norms (Alexander, 1992). So, making policy *adjustments* that do not propose to restructure or significantly alter their institutions, plans, and regulations are more likely to pass (in one form or another) and more often, since a major policy change proposal would presumably require more input, time and resources and potentially meet more resistance than a minor one.

Lindbolm (1959), in making his case for the relevance of the incremental model, refers to Western democracies and policies of national political parties in the US (p.84). The reliance on observations at such a large, national scale does not necessarily translate well into smaller, local decision-making arenas. Some local areas (particularly rural areas) do not have a well-structured and established set of practices or regulations. Planners in such situations are often faced with the introduction of *new* plans, policies and regulations where none or few previously existed. Since Lindbolm's description of disjointed incrementalism is based on large institutions with already existing policies and practices, my experience has been that the theory is less instructive to planners in rural areas. And while it could be argued that, in these situations, incrementalism would have a planner look at other local examples and adjust those to suit the area in question, it does not reflect the reality of political and public involvement in such planning exercises. For example, official community plans, which necessarily produce policies on a variety of topics including land uses, densities, housing, transportation, the environment and regulatory tools, are almost always created in a very public realm, with local public input. In areas where there are no current housing policies, the introduction of a requirement for a 5% contribution from developers becomes a 'major' policy change, especially considering that in

rural areas the 'developers' may be long-time residents who own a sizable piece of property and wish to subdivide for their family members or as part of their retirement plan. And since a key part of the formulation of these plans is collecting and addressing public opinions, the assessment of how good a policy is, in my experience, depends on public and political opinion to much greater degree than the examples contemplated by Lindbolm. At these local scales, I findincrementalism is less useful and lends weight to the argument that, as a model, it is based on decision-making 'bubbles' of large-scale, entrenched organizations.

Additionally, I propose that incrementalism runs the risk of missing the 'big-picture' when evaluating policy changes. Because of the model's requirements of narrowing down policy alternatives, "incremental decision-making is described as remedial, geared more to the alleviation of present, concrete social imperfections than to the promotion of future social goals" (Etzioni, 1967, p. 387). The social turmoil of the 1960s, which saw major legislative and policy changes to overturn government-sanctioned racism, is one example of incrementalism's inability to deal with a broader issue. A more recent one is addressing climate change. Incrementalism's purposely limited outlook could, for example, focus on a steady increase in automobile fuel economy instead of another potentially more effective policy of investing in non-carbon forms of energy. While the merits of either policy are debatable, Lindbolm's model would most likely limit the arguments to "*How much more automobile fuel economy is appropriate?*," rather than asking, "*What about solar power?*"

Interestingly, incrementalism's reliance on agreement as the test of policy correctness seems, at first, outdated for contemporary planning processes. It brings to mind corporate boards or Congressional committees voting in agreement on a decision or resolution of some sort, especially given the organizations Lindbolm relied on to construct this model. In contrast, planning processes I have been involved in and ones which are found in contemporary literature are most often multi-faceted, sometimes messy, affairs. As Hillier (2003) puts it, "democratic planning decision-making is inevitably messy, time-consuming, turbulent, frustrating and exasperating" (p.39).

In trying to address shortcomings of both the rational comprehensive and disjointed incrementalism models, Amitai Etzioni (1967) framed a new approach to decision-making: mixed scanning. First, mixed scanning broadly surveys a wide-array of options at a high-level, thus avoiding the pitfalls of rational comprehensive approach with its demand for detailed reviews of all options, to choose a strategic goal or direction. Then, incrementalism is employed in the tactical decisions made to achieve the higher-level goals (Etzioni, 1967; Alexander, 1992).

Mixed scanning does address the shortsightedness of incrementalism by allowing for the contemplation of a greater variety of potential policy solutions. From the local perspective, however, it does not fully account for how decisions are made based on my experience. Most local governments in Canada are creatures of the Province which along with the Federal government, makes higher-level legislation that local governments must follow. For example,

in 2005, the BC Ministry of Environment enacted Provincial regulations aimed at protecting fish habitat in riparian areas called the *Riparian Areas Regulation.* The regulation "calls on local governments to protect riparian areas during residential, commercial, and industrial development by ensuring that proposed activities are subject to a science based assessment conducted by a Qualified Environmental Professional" (BC Ministry of Environment, 2008). The key provision as it relates to local governments is the onus put on them to achieve a Provincial and Federal mandate. Applying the mixed scanning model, the higher level strategic decision was made by one organization (the Province of BC), while the incremental/tactical decisions of how to achieve the goal are left up to another (local governments). This highlights a limiting assumption of mixed scanning that the higher level and tactical decisions are controlled by the same organization. Etzioni does not specify how the mixed scanning methods would apply in inter- or multi-jurisdictional situations. Finally, mixed scanning, like incrementalism, does not sufficiently address the role of public and political pressures on planning decisions.

Social Learning

The social learning policy research model seeks to more effectively apply and integrate research into practice. In their formulation of the model, Friedmann and Abonyi (1976) describe the regrettable disconnect that often exists between the researcher – or 'seller' – and policymaker – or 'client'/'buyer'. The social learning model departs from this traditional, market model of policy research, which "cannot be understood, translated, and fitted into the ongoing stream of decisions and actions that permeate the life of public agencies" (p.932), by setting up open experiments, enabling the creation of new knowledge and variations of the four components of

social practice (theory of reality, social values, political strategy and social action). This model incorporates Friedmann's (1973) 'transactive planning', which emphasizes the creation of new realities and new knowledge in local settings through participant interaction.

At a minimum, the model is characterized as being:

(a) small enough to facilitate face-to-face encounters between researchers, innovators and affected population;
(b) inclusive enough to make the affected population an active participant in the experiment;
(c) simple enough to permit each participant to acquire a sense of personal efficacy;
(d) autonomous enough to carry out appropriate actions;
(e) bounded enough to bring these actions into focus and to permit a clear evaluation of results. (p.937)

While acknowledging the existence of major issues arising in the application of this model, including institutional change vs. stability, politics and the need for a cost-benefit analysis of applying such a model to an institution, Friedmann & Abonyi (1976) shy away from these "operational" and "implementation" questions and instead focus on "better rationalizations" of their model (p.928). They do, however, speak of "policy-research groups" and "small Experiment and Innovation Groups" (p.937) which based on my experience assumes generous institutional resources are available for such endeavours, especially since much of the focus of the model seems to be the public sector.

The Democratization of Planning

The social learning policy research model and Friedman's (1973) *transactive planning*, upon which the model was based, are early examples of the increasing focus on integrating civic

input into plans that took place in subsequent decades and which were led in large part by a new political reality that consecrated such public involvement in government planning processes. Margerum (2002) noted some even earlier roots of the public's rising front-and-centre role in planning process, tracing them back to Godschalk & Mills (1966) and Arnstein (1969).)

Proponents of this greater participation in planning belonged to a group of 'systematic thinkers' of the 1960s and 1970s whose "purpose was to make persuasive arguments for how planning is or ought to be" (Innes, 1995, p.183). This is also what Sandercock (2005) refers to as the democratization of planning.

The democratization of planning and its shift in focus onto public participation in planning processes were accompanied by a broadening of the range of actors studied in planning. Historically, scholars of planning studied how government structures acted and reacted to outside public demands. Allowing these public voices into the governmental power structures and using them to legitimize decision-making processes and justify decisions increased the number of actors that played a role in planning and expanded the scope of what planning practitioners and academics were involved with and studied. For example, glancing at more recent planning literature we can see a study on the interaction between small community-based organizations providing HIV health services when faced with funding shortages (Takahashi & Smutny, 2001) and the personal harrowing tales from a planner who worked for a local partnership on a community regeneration scheme in Britain (Wilson, 2005). In particular,

Wilson's (2005) accounts and the sheer number of partnership board members (30), which included "the local authority, the health authority, police, faith-based organization and the voluntary sector" (p.521) express just how much democratization has taken place in planning. As Wilson found, inviting more voices in does not directly equate to better planning.

The question of how much public involvement is ideal, warranted or genuine is of ongoing debate. Lowry, Adler & Milner (1997) developed four categories to describe the public's involvement in planning meetings: (1) *ad hoc*, a one-time consultation usually meant to meet minimum participatory requirements or neutralize a controversy; (2) *appendage*, in which the public's input is sought at a late stage in the planning process with no prerequisite understanding on how it will impact the plan; (3) *integrated*, which has a predetermined public consultation component incorporated into the process; and (4) *partnership*, where members of the public are given a measure of authority to develop a policy or plan. Based on this framework, the authors advocate for partnerships as the paragon towards which to strive. The advocacy of these partnerships is similar to the numerous planners who advocate Habermas's communicative action theory, described later on. Both rely on an egalitarian dialogue and focus on the issue at hand while trying to nullify underlying power relations between the actors. In this interpretation, partnerships are akin to ideal discourse. While the *partnership* scenario is in tune with democratic requirements for public involvement, it is by no means a simple endeavour, as Wilson's (2005) experience shows.

In his analysis of stakeholder participation and the quality of ecosystems plans in Florida, Brody (2003) found that having broad stakeholder representation did not have "statistically significant

influence on plan quality" (p.412). He concluded that more stakeholders do not guarantee higher quality plans. Instead, he found that competing interests and multiple groups wanting to be heard may have a negative impact and broad and diverse participation may lead to adoption of an acceptable 'lowest common denominator' plan, thereby compromising quality. Brand & Gaffikin (2007) supply further empirical evidence to Brody's conclusions in their analysis of a regional development strategy in Northern Ireland, noting "the search for consensus and 'buy-in' often involved platitudinous affirmations, sometimes referred to as 'empty signifiers', very low common denominators to which most stakeholders could acquiesce without the cost of resource commitment and delivery." (p.303)

The involvement of more actors opened up a new set of issues and questions with which planners had to wrestle. One of these issues was control. Planners lost the firm hold on plan content they once had; though given the potential for public and political backlash related to their plans, this was partly seen as a way of spreading out or reducing professional risk by making it *our* or *the community's* plan. But mostly, the planning practitioners and theoreticians were committed to involving the public and relinquishing some of its control because it was seen as strengthening planning (Forester, 1999; Sandercock, 2005).

Communicative Action Theory

The sharing of planning responsibilities with non-planners entailed the need to develop a new skills-set dealing with the process of planning. Whereas in the past planners could focus on the

plan content, now they were faced with the task of deciding who would be included in the process, facilitating input, ensuring fairness, resolving conflicts among committee members and translating what was being said into policy. The focus on process and the need to understand the inner workings of the interactions between actors doing planning and to provide some theoretical underpinning to this new reality played a central role in rise of integrated participatory planning theories, of which communicative action theory (also referred to as collaborative planning or communicative planning theory) is most prominent (Healy 1999, 2003; Hoch, 2007; Innes, 1995; Innes & Booher, 1999; Margerum, 2002; Sager, 2006).

Collaborative planning is rooted in Jurgen Habermas's theory of communicative action. Communicative action theory sets out the necessary (if idealized) conditions for authentic dialogue, including openness, inclusiveness, equality and complete objectivity (i.e. no inherent or external influences) (Sager, 2007). These elements are meant to produce a dialogue so pure that the best argument guides participants to rational consensus, itself "grounded in the communicative structure of rational discourse" (Hillier, 2003, p.40). As a theory, it is attractive because it creates a universal paragon by which all discourse can be judged. However, because it represents an idealized version of discourse, its conceptuality, Alexander (2001, p.313) argues, makes it challenging to apply to real planning scenarios.

Communicative action theory has garnered support by a number of planning academics as the best guide for planning practice. This is largely because in democratic societies and specifically in government plan- and policy-making, public buy-in is integral. Healy (1999) linked

Habermas's communicative action theory back to the larger context of public participation in democracy, reinforcing the theory's compatibility with democratic principles and saw Habermas's principles as championing the public realm and showing that there is something more in decision-making than policy shifts and power plays. The theory has also been used as a basis for consensus building framework by Innes & Booher (1999), seen as parallel to the practices and ideals of consensus building.

Innes (1995) described the communicative turn in planning as the onset of a new paradigm, though this declaration has been said to be "less a theoretical conclusion expressing an underlying consensus than a rhetorical challenge in an ongoing debate with proponents of the rational model" (Hoch, 2007, p.273). Planning theoreticians in this emerging paradigm have new and distinct reference points for their ideas, including ones from outside the planning field, mainly from social sciences literature, such as anthropology, sociology and consensus building. They also employ normative principles such as legitimacy (Howe & Langdon, 2002), as well as self-reflection, discourse and praxis that lead to an 'emancipatory knowing' and are well-suited to explain and guide planning practice (Innes, 1995).

Critiques of the Communicative Turn and Their Respondents

While communicative action theory has broad representation in planning literature, it has not been accepted as the new theoretical hegemon. Critics of the communicative turn in planning, namely critical realists who focus on political-economy arguments, point to communicative

action theory's overemphasis on process and planners themselves and its overblown sense of independent agency among its major shortcomings.

In their exhaustive critique of communicative action theory, Huxley & Yiftachel (2000) lay out the flaws of communicative action theory and take particular aim at Innes's assertion of its portending a new paradigm, finding such claims as "problematic" (p.335) and obviously not seeing her comment in the same rhetorical light as Hoch (2007) above. To end their argument, Huxley & Yiftachel (2000) make six main propositions. *"Proposition 1: Claims to dominance and/or consensus among planning theorists appear to be overstated"* (p.336). Based on a review of various planning-related literatures, there is a healthy heterogeneity of theories. Also, the argument is made that communicative action theory falls within theoretical frameworks (i.e. Enlightenment and modernism) and that planning practice is subservient to greater politico-economic forces. "*Proposition 2: Communicative planning theory does not dislodge planning's claims to universal legitimacy"* (p.336). The communicative turn in planning is one dominated by Anglo-American theorists, particularly from the US, yet seems to speak with universal authority, continuing a sad tradition of Western dominance that is arrogant and may do more harm than good when applied to non-Western settings. "*Proposition 3: Leading communicative planning scholars conflate theorization with normative prescription"* (p.337). Communicative action theorists focus on the normative side of praxis, (i.e. better approaches to planning) but neglect the critical and analytical dimensions necessary to understand how planning exists/works. *"Proposition 4: Studies of planning procedures and microprocesses confuse theory with method and means with ends*" (p.337). Too much attention is directed at the individual planning practitioner or unique planning process at the expense of understanding

larger (state, capital, etc) power structures and relationships. "*Proposition 5: The theorization of planning requires stepping outside the planning discourse"* (p.337). The notion of 'planning theory' is challenged, since it relies on outside theories. Instead, planning is seen as a manifestation of larger theories at work in the world. "*Proposition 6: The theorization of planning cannot ignore the state and the public production of space"* (p.338). Planning cannot be separated from the power of the state. Instead, they urge a view of planning theory firmly rooted in political economic and Foucauldian power-in-policy making frameworks.

In essence, Huxley & Yiftachel (2000) and others (see Abram, 2000; Huxley, 2000; Umemoto, 2001; and Hillier, 2003) argue that planning structures and processes, whether they are those of a local government planning department or the interactions between planners with local residents advisory groups, are subject to the greater distribution of power in society and communicative action theory does not tackle this issue.

However, communicative action theorists do not frame their work or arguments in the same light. (One exception to this may be seen in collaborative planning's role in network power (Booher and Innes 2002).) As Fischler (2000) puts it, "communicative theorists ascribe a pragmatic role to planning theory" (p.358), which is not necessarily contrary to Foucault's requirement that historical context be taken into consideration. In fact, Foucault's belief in individuals solving problems through practice and piecemeal achievements, as opposed to the creation of new universal theories promising emancipation from power, appears to be in line with the practice-focused communicative theorists. Foucault's contribution to planning,

Fischler (2000) puts forth, lies in a new methodology of looking at planning practice. This methodology involves questioning long held beliefs and habits (*problemization*) and looking at "how the practice of "specific intellectuals," reformers, and officials makes sense of a messy problem, shapes people's attention, delimits the realm of possible solutions, and sees their local innovations adopted on a broad scale" (p.363). This angle on Foucault's theories enriches the analysis of power *shifts* inherent in planning practice, which complements existing views by communicative planning theorists. Forester (1999), for example, described power as not only "structuring and limiting… [but] enabling as well, a politically shifting relationship rather than a fixed position or possession" (pg. 66). Communicative action theorists accept that planning is part of a capitalist political economy and try to address the issue of power-sharing within that context by providing a better practice model.

Similarly, the communicative action theory's normative nature partly explains the various examples in literature of how planners should behave. While critical realists would point to these examples as evidence of the overemphasis on the planner and planning process, communicative action theory pragmatists see this analysis and direction as forming the planner's deliberative conduct, a key step on the road to better planning (Forester, 1999; Hoch, 2007). To these planners, ideas and advice on how to act, such as creative planning (Albrechts, 2005) or wit and style (Carp, 2004) are valid exercises falling within the scope of communicative action theory.

Literature Review Summary & Research Questions

A review of the planning literature shows how historical events led planning to open up and incorporate more and more actors into its decision making. A case is made that planners went from armchair technicians to facilitators of messy meetings. Communicative action theory arose in response to this new role for planners, with its promise of a pragmatic guide to better planning processes. While critics of communicative action theory make valid theoretical arguments, the 'real life' applicability of this normative theory has proven too relevant to argue away with.

Using the literature review as historical context, the thesis shed lights on the experiences of three official community planning process in the Columbia Shuswap Regional District. The three public consultation processes in three distinct communities – Scotch Creek (SC), Ranchero/Deep Creek (RDC) and Electoral Area 'E' (Area E) – supply the case study material, as all three processes involved similarly structured local resident Advisory Groups (AGs) in the public consultation processes. The data taken from face-to-face semi-structured interviews of AG members is one of three key sources of data, along with the literature review and government documents, utilized to answer the main research questions below. Each research question connects to a source of data sought through the interview questions being asked.

1. How do Provincial legislation and local government practices shape public participation in official community plans?
2. What do the experiences of local advisory groups, individual members and Electoral Area Directors tell us about public participation in planning in this case and generally?

(a) Do their experiences enable a characterization of the process in terms developed in the lit review?

(b) What do their responses say about equality and distribution of power among the actors participating in the OCP process?

(c) How do they see the relationship between their participation/ comments and the final OCP?

3. What, if any, effect do socio-demographic characteristics (age, gender, occupation, education, residency, etc.) have and can generalizations be made from these differences?

Scope of Research

As explained in the statement of purpose, the main purpose of this research is to gain insight into public participation as part of the formulation of official community plans at the CSRD, with a focus on the role and experience of local resident advisory group members. When interviewing the individual members, questions include each member's understanding of the roles played by the actors in the process, namely themselves as individuals, the advisory group as a whole, their Electoral Area Director (who was also interviewed), staff, consultants, and the general public. The study looks for both common and divergent experiences among the participants in these three processes and analyzes them in relation to public participation goals of local government and through the lens of planning literature. Given my involvement in all the three processes, I provide context in the analysis that imparts my understanding of the unique dynamics of each advisory group. This is meant to supplement the more technical description of advisory groups provided above. This research aims to shed light on the public participation *process* associated with the formulation of these three official community plans,

not on what the end result is. Therefore, it is not interested in examining or judging the merits of the content of the plans.

The research investigates the Scotch Creek (SC), Ranchero-Deep Creek (RDC) and Electoral Area 'E' (Area E) official community plan processes. The main reasons for focusing on these three processes are (1) the public consultation processes prior to first reading of the bylaw are complete, meaning participants were looking back over their experience as a whole, and (2) the local resident advisory groups (AGs) of these three processes were involved with the process within one year of the empirical component of this project. It is hoped the fact that the participants' involvement in the process is less than one-year old increased the 'freshness' of their memories, thereby increasing the quality of data collected.

Assumptions

The primary assumption that underlies this research is that there are enough similarities among the three processes to spot and support comparisons and generalizations. As discussed earlier, the methodologies used for obtaining public input into official community plans are similar. Data gathered from each separate process is assumed to be comparable and able to reveal some common themes or unique insights.

Another assumption is that asking questions and tapping into the interviewees' views, feelings and understanding of their participation in the official community plan process yields answers to the research questions originally proposed.

Limitations

Two principle limitations have been identified as part of this research: *scope* and *author proximity/bias* as a result of being closely involved in the formulation of the OCPs.

The scope of the proposed research is limited to the public participation process, as opposed to the outcome of the process itself. It looks at three official community plans in one local government, and therefore is not an exhaustive study. This reduces the ability to extrapolate the data across planning as a whole. Nevertheless, it may help in understanding trends and experiences in similarly structured processes.

As I am a CSRD planner who was involved in the three official community plans proposed for study, a particular bias may be present in the analysis. While I was involved in the three official community plans proposed for investigation, I was not the principal author or lead-planner in any of them, providing some distance between myself as researcher of the process and participants. Additionally, as CSRD managers were involved in all these processes, concerns (or successes) tended to be directed at them, as opposed to lower-level planning staff.

The perception of my bias or lack of trust due to my proximity to the processes may influence the research and some of the answers given by the respondents. In this thesis, I include context statements within the analysis describing my understanding of each advisory group's dynamics. The context statements include the number of members in each advisory group, how they were chosen and a description of the groups' cohesiveness or any salient divisions within the group. As well, statements regarding my perception of each group's dynamic with staff and consultants are provided. This is meant to make explicit my perceptions and any biases. To expose and counter this potential during the face-to-face interviews, I used interview techniques and understandings espoused by Zeisel (1997) as discussed in the methods section.

While my proximity to the projects can pose a challenge to the interview, it can also be an opportunity for building trust and self reflection (Rubin &Rubin, 2005). Because I am from the local government, my experience has been that people are less wary of me as opposed to a consultant from a larger city, for example. This, along with my continued involvement in community projects, builds a rapport with community members that an outsider would not have. In their arguments for a responsive interviewing model, Rubin and Rubin point to the strength of personal involvement, "…because empathy encourages people to talk, and yet active involvement in the interview can also create problems, as your own emotions and biases can influence what you ask and how your interviewee responds" (p.31). While acknowledging the dangers of active involvement, my past involvement can also be viewed as resulting in greater empathy and trust during the interview.

Chapter 2

Regional Districts and Official Community Plan Legislation in British Columbia

Regional Districts

In British Columbia, there are two forms of local government: municipalities and regional districts. Regional Districts were first created in the mid-1960s in response to rural population growth and economic expansion (largely fuelled by resource extraction), as well as a way to fix capital borrowing issues and hospital financing imbalances.

Regional districts serve three primary purposes. First, they are the local government for areas outside of municipal boundaries (Electoral Areas), and provide the forum for political representation for area residents. Each Electoral Area is represented by one Director whose voting weight depends on that Electoral Area's population. Regional districts are governed by a Board of Directors, with each Electoral Area and member municipality having at least one representative. As the local government, regional districts are empowered (but not required) to provide planning services such as zoning, official community plans, regional growth strategies, building inspection, etc. Secondly, they are service providers for a number of services that include one or more Electoral Area and municipality. For example, economic development, solid waste management and water and sewer provision are generally coordinated by the regional district. Thirdly, regional districts act as the administrative and

political framework for 'benefiting areas'. As the name suggests, a benefiting area is an area that benefits from a particular service, such as fire protection or the use of a recreation centre. This framework allows for cost recovery from only those residents who benefit from the service and enables creation of areas that do not align with municipal or electoral area boundaries (Ministry of Community and Rural Development, 2010).

Some notable differences between regional districts Electoral Areas and municipalities are (1) regional districts operate on a pay-for-service basis (as opposed to being able to hold tax funds for other purposes, such as a 'rainy day fund'), (2) regional districts do not own or maintain the road network, (3) regional districts do not have subdivision approval authority. Both (2) and (3) are vested with the Provincial Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. As Meligrana (2000) points out, the creation of Electoral Areas "…gave the unincorporated areas rural representation at the regional district council, but not the powers and responsibilities of municipal government" (p.94). Interestingly, there is still debate about the success of the Regional District governance model. While Meligrana (2003) argues that its existence is the fruit of historical experimentation with types of local governments without a coherent planning vision to the detriment of fringe growth planning, Bish (2006, p.34) praises it as a "useful institutional innovation" that cuts service costs and promotes cooperation among municipal and rural interests.

Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD)

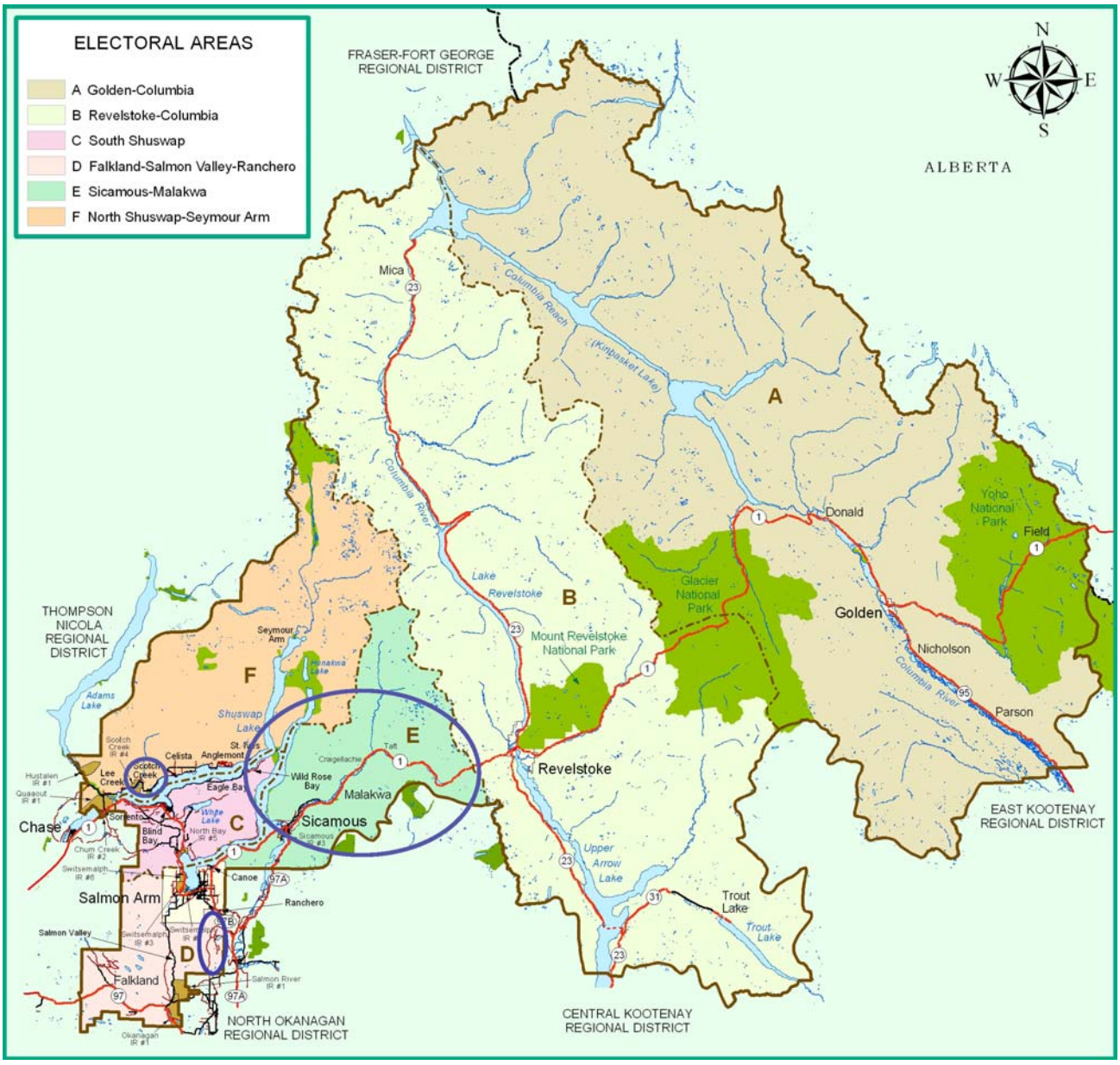
The Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD) was incorporated in November 30, 1965. It is located in the Southern Interior of British Columbia (see *Figure 1*), straddling the Trans Canada Highway from Salmon Arm in the west to the Alberta border in the east. It is comprised of six electoral areas: A, B, C, D, E and F and four member municipalities: Salmon Arm, Sicamous, Revelstoke and Golden (see *Figure 2*). Numerous unincorporated communities and several First Nations Reserves are also with the district boundaries.

Within each Electoral Area, there are similarities among settlement patterns and community types (e.g. farming, seasonal/recreational). For example, the majority of residents in most Electoral Areas live either along major waterways, such as Shuswap Lake or the Columbia River, or major transportation corridors, such as the Trans Canada Highway. In fact, all four member municipalities and the largest unincorporated settled cluster (Sorrento-Blind Bay in Electoral Area 'C') are located on both the Trans Canada Highway and a major waterway.

Figure 1

(Wikipedia, 2010)

Figure 2



Blue circles represent the three official community plan areas: Scotch Creek, Ranchero Deep Creek and Electoral Area E.

(Columbia Shuswap Regional District, 2010)

Most Electoral Area communities fall into one or a combination of several categories based on residency and dominant economic or lifestyle activity, as illustrated in *Table 2*.

Table 1

Residency	Dominant Lifestyle or Economic Activity
• Part-time (*e.g. long weekends*) • Permanent • Seasonal (*e.g. summer months*)	• Agricultural • Recreational Residential (*e.g. RV park)* • Resource-Industrial (*e.g. forestry, mining, construction*) • Retired • Tourism
(BC Stats, 2010)	

While the settlement patterns and community types lend themselves to categorisation, the boundaries of the CSRD and its Electoral Areas do not; they do not follow any clear natural or human made boundaries (e.g. river, mountains or highways). For example, the shoreline of Shuswap Lake is divided among three Electoral Areas (C, E and F) and Mara Lake is divided between the CSRD and another regional district – the Regional District of North Okanagan.

Factors such as residency, dominant lifestyle/economic activity and even the straddling of natural features across political boundaries increase the complexity of local government planning processes. Seasonal residents may feel disenfranchised when planning process such as rezoning amendments occur in winter months, when they are away. Similarly, local government public notification regulations for bylaw amendments call for advertisements in local newspapers, which part-time or seasonal residents may not regularly see. Additionally, local residents who are retired, whether part-time, permanent or seasonal, have different and often conflicting lifestyle expectations than, for example, seasonal residents who are

recreational boaters or snowmobilers. These differences manifest themselves regularly when discussing potential changes to local regulations. Finally, issues or activities such as the sale of fireworks or effluent discharge into a water body, which are generally regulated within individual political units (Electoral Areas or municipalities) but have impacts across boundaries, may introduce both the issue and residents from other areas into local planning processes.

Official Community Plans

In British Columbia, regional district powers stem primarily from the *Local Government Act*. (The *Community Charter* is the other key piece of local government legislation in British Columbia, but is less relevant to planning issues in regional districts.) Among the powers conferred to both municipalities and regional districts in the *Local Government Act* is the ability to adopt, by bylaw, an official community plan. Generally speaking, these plans contain policies which guide future growth within a geographic area defined by the plan. In the *Local Government Act,* an official community plan is defined as "a statement of objectives and policies to guide decisions on planning and land use management, within the area covered by the plan, respecting the purposes of local government" (Local Government Act, 2010, Section 875). The *Local Government Act* prescribes certain required content and describes other policy statements that may be included in the plan. It also contains legislative requirements respecting consultation during the development of an Official community plan:

> " *(1) During the development of an official community plan, or the repeal or amendment of an official community plan, the proposing local government must*

provide one or more opportunities it considers appropriate for consultation with persons, organizations and authorities it considers will be affected.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), the local government must

(a) consider whether the opportunities for consultation with one or more of the persons, organizations and authorities should be early and ongoing, and […]"

(Local Government Act, 2010)

In accordance with these requirements, it is common practice for local governments to create a local resident advisory group to provide input into the plan at various stages of its development. The structure, decision-making procedures, number and frequency of meetings and other particulars of these advisory groups vary considerably among the plan development processes. In addition to advisory groups, it is common to have a number of opportunities for general public input, such as open houses and visioning exercises.

Recent Official Community Plan Processes in the CSRD

In 2006, the CSRD had in place four zoning bylaws and one Official community plan, which covered a portion of Electoral Area 'C' (South Shuswap). The CSRD also had five "land use bylaws", which contain both policies, like official community plans, and regulations, like zoning bylaws, in separate parts of the same bylaw. Land use bylaws are no longer found in the legislation, and therefore cannot be adopted. The policy parts of these bylaws are repealed when a new Official community plan is adopted.

Notably, the zoning, land use bylaws and official community plan taken together cover well under 25% of the total geographic area of the CSRD. While the areas that are covered contain

the majority of residents, as can be expected, there are a number of communities which are not covered by land use regulations that are of comparable population to some that are. For example, driving along the major roadway connecting the lakeshore communities of the North Shuswap in Electoral Area 'F', one can drive through a community under land use regulations, then enter an area without, then back into a regulated area – all in under 30 minutes. All of these lakeshore communities, zoned or not, are unique in the entire CSRD in that they are covered by building regulation bylaw (i.e. residents require building permits from the CSRD prior to construction). This seeming incongruence of the application of basic local government regulations is indicative of two points. First, Electoral Area boundaries of regional districts are so large and artificial, they bear no resemblance to the (mental) boundaries and attachments local residents hold to the much smaller unincorporated communities within the Electoral Area boundaries. Secondly, the CSRD has historically had few planning and land use controls and stands out in that regard among other local governments in BC's Southern Interior. While the roots and details of these points are beyond the scope of this research, they help explain the patchwork of varied regulations that existed in 2006 and today.

From 2001 to 2006, three of the CSRD's six Electoral Areas experienced population growth above 10% (B, C and F; see Table 2). This growth correlates with the CSRD embarking on official community plan processes in these same Electoral Areas beginning in 2006. At the same time, work was on-going for an official community plan for the Ranchero/Deep Creek portion of Electoral Area 'D'. Work on this plan originally started in the late 1990s, then stalled and was restarted in2004. In 2008, the CSRD began to prepare an official community plan for

Electoral Area 'E' (Sicamous-Malakwa). The Electoral Area 'F' official community plan was adopted in June 2009 and called for the preparation of a neighbourhood official community plan for Scotch Creek, which was identified as the primary settlement area of the North Shuswap, which would take in the majority of future growth and therefore necessitated more localised planning. The Scotch Creek process had its first meeting in late August 2009. Of note, Scotch Creek had four (and later five) large property owners who expressed a public interest in subdividing their properties into small residential lots. This created a greater urgency to adopt a plan that would allow developers to see the potential for growth, and conversely generated grave concerns of imminent and radical increases in density and loss of rural character on the part of some long-time residents. This discordant scenario is key in understanding the Scotch Creek public consultation process later on. By March 2011, the public consultation that takes place prior to official community plan bylaws coming to the CSRD Board of Directors for first reading was complete for five of the six official community plan processes that were underway.

As part of each official community plan process, a local resident advisory group was formed at the beginning of the process. The advisory group members were chosen by the Electoral Area Director for the Area B, C and F plans. For the Electoral Area E and Scotch Creek official community plans, staff solicited statements of interest from the public, reviewed the applications, asked for Director input and presented a recommended list of names to the CSRD Board of Directors for approval by resolution. For the Ranchero/Deep Creek official community plan process, the advisory group consisted mostly of members who were involved with the

process from its inception in the late 1990s. The size of each advisory group was approximately 10 persons.

Table 2

Electoral Area	**Population Change (2001-2006)**	**Official Community Plan (OCP) processes** OCP coverage area Start – End (status)	
A (Golden-Columbia)	-1.2%	None in place or in progress	
B (Revelstoke-Columbia)	13.0%	Electoral Area-wide OCP Spring 2006 – October 2008 (adopted)	
C (South Shuswap)	13.8%	Existing OCP covering portion of Electoral Area in place (adopted 1995)	Electoral Area-wide OCP Summer 2006 – present (public consultation ongoing)
D (Falkland-Salmon Valley-Ranchero)	-0.1%	Ranchero/Deep Creek area 2004 (restarted) - present (being adopted)	
E (Sicamous-Malakwa)	2.5%	Electoral Area-wide OCP Spring 2008 – present (being adopted)	
F (North Shuswap-Seymour Arm)	28.5%	Electoral Area-wide OCP Summer 2006 – June 2009 (adopted)	Scotch Creek OCP August 2009 – present (being adopted)

(BC Stats, 2010)

Except in the case of the Ranchero/Deep Creek official community plan process, the meetings of the advisory group most often occurred once or twice between public open houses. The advisory group's role can be described as a more intimate forum for discussion of specific policies and issues, in contrast to the open houses, which generally do not reach the same level of detail on specific issues. In the case of Ranchero/Deep Creek, the local resident advisory group meetings were more frequent and on-going (approximately once every two months); plus three public meetings were held on neighbourhood-wide issues, in addition to area-wide open houses.

Area Descriptions

Given my close involvement in the three official community plan processes, below I am supplying a description of the three communities as I understand them. This makes explicit my personal understanding of the key social and physical features of the area, as well as my account of what the key issues facing the communities were at the time of the official community plan processes.

Scotch Creek (SC)

Scotch Creek is a small community on the North Shuswap (Electoral Area F) of 762 permanent residents according to the 2006 Census (BC Stats, 2010), but which swells exponentially with seasonal residents and visitors during the summer months. In the winter months, many full time residents travel south, significantly reducing the population during that period. The community was traditionally a rural, agricultural area but has become an increasingly popular second home destination for part-time and seasonal residents. There is a large Provincial park in the community, which along with the Scotch Creek First Nations Reserve to the west, Shuswap Lake to the south and steep terrain to the north, defines the boundaries of the community. There are a few large parcels of land within the Agricultural Land Reserve which remain agricultural, juxtaposed with RV parks, residential subdivisions and some seasonal tourist-oriented cafes and entertainment centres (mini-golf and arcade). The recently completed North Shuswap official community plan designated Scotch Creek as the 'primary settlement area' which directs future growth to this community. The changing nature of the community from rural to seasonal-resort, along with its designation as the primary future

settlement area were, in my view, the key background factors which shaped the official community plan discussion.

Ranchero Deep Creek (RDC)

The Ranchero Deep Creek is located just south of the City of Salmon Arm along Highway 97B and is home to approximately 1,500 residents. Most of the inhabited area is comprised of large agricultural parcels. However, there is one residential community (Ranchero), which lies along the City boundary and which supports an elementary school and some small commercial and home industry uses. Unsurprisingly, most of the residents can be described as enjoying a rural lifestyle, but wanting the convenience of city amenities a short drive away. Residents in the area, in my opinion, do not want the same level of government regulation found in the city and there is a greater emphasis of self-reliance. In fact, residents in the plan area did not support any mention of building regulation or any types of development permits. Anti-regulation sentiment, protection of rural values and local resident control of deciding the official community plan policies were key factors in this process.

Electoral Area E (Area E)

Electoral Area E is one of six electoral areas in the CSRD. It stretches east along the Trans Canada Highway from Salmon Arm and beyond Sicamous. By far, most of the 1,542 sq. km of area is Crown Land. The 1,528 residents (BC Stats, 2010) generally reside along the Trans Canada Highway or along the shorelines of Shuswap and Mara Lakes. Unlike the other two areas, this official community plan area is comprised of several distinct communities. The decision to do one official community plan was based solely on the political boundaries; not on

community sentiment or attachment to these boundaries. The residential communities of Cambie-Solsqua and Malakwa, which lie along the Trans Canada Highway, were historically agricultural settlements, heavily influenced by the highway and the railway (Craigallechie, where the last spike was driven into the transcontinental railway, is located in this electoral area). Along with agriculture, forestry and trucking are key industries. Based on local anecdotal evidence, the recent economic hardships faced by the forestry sector have impacted the mills and the communities. Also, the only school in the area (in Malakwa) is no longer financially supported by the BC Ministry of Education, putting a potential magnet for working families in jeopardy. In contrast to these communities, which are generally populated year round, Swansea Point, which is located on Mara Lake, is a retirement community with a significant portion of its residents spending only the summer months in the area. While the year round communities and their residents' attitudes are similar to those of Ranchero Deep Creek, Swansea Point residents are more focused on waterfront living issues (water quality, noise and fireworks from boaters) and on ensuring that a creek in the community does not repeat a debris-flow incident, which had severe consequences when it occurred approximately twenty years ago. The key factors in this area which I believe influenced the planning process were the large size of this area and its distinct communities which did not share the same socio-demographic make-up or common local issues of concern.

Chapter 3

Research Methods and Analysis

For this project, use of the CSRD processes as a case study, face-to-face interviews and data coding together form the research methodology. Three CSRD official community plan processes together comprise the case study, with relevant local circumstances. Face-to-face, semi-structured interviews from participants in the CSRD's official community plan processes offer up the principal research data for analysis. The data was analyzed using a three-pass coding method: open, axial and selective coding (Neuman, 2000).

Qualitative Research

This project relies on qualitative research methods. While some quantitative data is presented (e.g. population statistics), it serves as background and context, not as an analytical or comparative tool. The primary rationale for qualitative research method use lies in the research questions posed and the emphasis on the official community plan process, rather than on the final plan. This study concerns itself with *how* the policies of the official community plan came to be and the public's role in their creation; it is not interested in the individual policies

themselves. The reliance on qualitative methods is buoyed by Denzin & Lincoln's (2000) contrast between qualitative and quantitative research:

> Qualitative researchers […] seek answers to questions that stress *how* social experience is created and given meaning. In contrast, quantitative studies emphasize the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, not processes. (p.8, underline added)

In summary, quantitative approaches are inapt for studying official community process because of the complexity and turbidity of interactions and discussions among actors involved (e.g. advisory group members, community issues, the written plan, staff, consultants, elected representatives).

The Case Study

The case study is central to answering the research questions posed. For this thesis, the case consists of the examination of three official community plan processes. The case study was chosen in large part because of its strength in explaining the *how* and *why* of decisions and outcomes. Case studies are, according to Yin (2008), a preferred research method when examining contemporary events in an uncontrolled environment ("…when relevant behaviours cannot be manipulated") (p.11).

Yin defines case studies in two parts. The first deals with scope and is defined as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and with its real-life context,

especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (2008, p. 18). Based on this definition of scope, a case study approach serves this thesis because it examines on-going planning processes (contemporary phenomenon) that are occurring within the community (real-life context). As for boundaries, while the geographical boundaries are solid, the official community plan participants and processes are affected by the on-going issues facing the community, such as controversial developments, growth, changes in community make-up (e.g. influx of retirees or fewer school-aged children (Rolke, 2011)), making the boundary between the phenomenon and context hard to define.

The second part defines what the case study does, including coping with numerous variables, relying on multiple sources of evidence that requires data triangulation, and using theory to aid in developing data collection and analysis strategies. In the case of this research, the variables include multiple and diverse 'community issues' that are brought into the official community plan processes by residents, such as NIMBY-ism and anti-government sentiment. Multiple sources of evidence include an understanding of the community issues, as well as past experiences in planning processes as experienced by residents and the CSRD. This evidence has come to light primarily through interviews with participants, but also through observations made during time spent in the community and examination of CSRD documents and policies.

Additionally, case studies take advantage of direct observation and interviews with participants as sources of evidence to help answer the research questions. In this case, both direct observation (I participated in the OCP processes) and interviews with participants (face-to-face,

semi-structured interviews with members of the OCP Advisory Group) form part of the case study research methods.

The three official community plan processes, because of their similar structure, may be seen as one case. Having similar evidence coming from members of different official community plan advisory group members may serve to reinforce the validity of evidence and strengthen generalizations arising from collected data, a goal of case study research (Yin, 2008, p.15). Conversely, strong evidence that is seen in only one official community plan process may point to a particularity of that process and not be valid evidence for analytic generalization.

Face-to-Face, Semi-structured Interviews

Face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with local participants in the official community plan processes were used to gather the principal research material. Face-to-face interviews have the advantage of being relatively lengthy compared to other forms, such as telephone surveys, allow for complex questions and probes and enable the interviewer to use and pick up on non-verbal communication cues. On the other hand, face-to-face interviews open up the possibility of unintended interviewer influence on the respondent's answers because of the interviewer's actions, such as the tone of voice used, or physical characteristics, such as gender or race (Neuman, 2000). Interviews also tend to be the instrument of choice for researchers whose "concern is with establishing common patterns or themes between particular types of

respondents" (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002, p.85). In this case, common patterns or themes are investigated in and amongst the various official community plan participants.

In planning, face-to-face interviews have been increasingly employed as tools to understand planning practice. In the case of John Forester's *The Deliberative Practitioner* (1999), for example, face-to-face interviews figure prominently in helping to decipher and improve planning practice.

Zeisel (1997) puts forth road map for interviews, while at the same time emphasizes the need to be flexible in exploring the interview terrain as it unfolds. A key component of the interview road map is the probe, defined as "…primarily questions that interviewers interpose to get a respondent to clarify a point, to explain further what she mean, to continue talking, or to shift the topic" (p.140). Zeisel divides probes into six categories: *addition, reflecting, transitional, situational, emotion* and *personal*. *Emotion* probes and their subsets – *feeling* probes (as the name implies, these probes try to have the respondents express how they feel) and *projection* probes (which ask respondents to project their feelings onto a hypothetical person) are useful tools in flushing out any reservations about the interview.

For this thesis, face-to-face interview invitations were sent out to the advisory group members (including the elected representative) from three official community plan processes. Those responding with interest were interviewed. It was expected that a minimum of twelve interviews were completed. The data was digitally recorded and transcribed. Notes taken during the interview supplemented the digital data.

Qualitative Data Coding

The purpose of gathering and transcribing the data from face-to-face interviews is to gain insights into how local resident advisory group members saw and understood their roles in the official community plan processes. To achieve these insights, a three-pass data coding method (open, axial and selective coding) was used following (sources). Qualitative data analysis is a process of taking raw data and categorizing it according to themes or concepts, which are guided by the intent of the research project. It has the advantage of making large quantities of data more manageable and sifts out the most relevant nuggets (Neuman, 2000).

The three types of coding that form part of this analytical method require the data to be reviewed three times (passes). The first pass, called open coding, "brings themes to the surface from deep inside the data" (Neuman, 2000, p. 422). The process is meant to be flexible and broad-brushed, identifying major themes or concepts and extends to utilizing the notes taken by the researcher. The second pass is known as axial coding. Axial coding focuses on the concepts identified in the raw data during open coding. The aim is to identify relationships between the concepts, see if they can be grouped together or separated, for example, and the process allows for potential new themes to arise. Axial coding compares the nuggets of information highlighted through open coding and finds evidence for major concepts. Finally, selective coding is used to rescan the data for examples that illustrate the identified concepts. This third pass occurs after the researcher has a clear understanding of what the major

concepts are. It also enables him or her to expand on and delve deeper into the major concepts (Neuman, 2000).

Chapter 4

Analysis: Major and Minor Themes in Interview Responses

Using the three-pass qualitative data coding method, the transcribed data revealed four major themes, along with two minor ones. Each major theme is analyzed below both as an intra-theme, looking at similarities and differences within each of the three OCP processes and as an inter-theme, which looks at similarities and differences across the three OCP processes. The two minor themes were present in each of the three processes, but did not have significant differences between them. Therefore, these minor themes are described, but not picked apart for analysis of their dissimilarities.

Five people were interviewed from each of the three OCP processes: four local resident advisory group (AG) members (12 total) plus the Electoral Area Director for each area (3 total). Not surprisingly, the data shows shared experiences among the local resident advisory group members, lending itself readily to comparison. However, the experiences of the Electoral Area Directors, while similar to one another, are not easily compared to those of the local resident advisory group members. Therefore, the themes below concentrate on analyzing the experiences of the AG members. An analysis of the Electoral Area Directors interviews is provided following the themes.

A sampling of phrases from the data is provided in *("italics")* throughout the theme analyses to give a first-hand account of sentiment and tone. Following the description and analysis of the themes, the conclusion of the findings is provided by answering the original research questions set out in this thesis.

Major Theme 1: Sense of Agency and Level of Input

This theme was identified through phrases and sentences related to the respondents' sense of whether they as individuals or as the advisory group (AG) were listened to, their input genuinely influenced the outcome (i.e. the final plan) and the decision making process used in formulating the policies was fair and transparent.

For the Scotch Creek OCP, there was general consensus that the AG and general public were listened to throughout the process, though not as much as they should have been *("they were listened to"; "I don't think it was enough"; "they were listened to, but not heard")*. There was agreement that at least some of their input influenced the plan's policies, but not necessarily on the issues of most concern to them (e.g. maximum development densities). One of the respondents expressed strong pessimism over the group's actual influence on the outcome *("it was already pre-designed")*. Participants had contrasting views on density. Notably, there was far more data regarding this theme among the two respondents who self identified themselves as being in the "lower-density" camp versus those who self-identify in the "pro-development" camp. The difference in quantity of data may indicate dissatisfaction with the policies of the plan. In other words, respondents who wanted to see lower densities in the plan view the

higher density policies as evidence of lack of input or a decision making process that did not afford them equal status.

For the Area E OCP, the data also shows a general consensus that the individual members and the group were listened to and that their input influenced the plan *("people would listen and a lot the stuff was put in").* Similarly to Scotch Creek, one respondent voiced doubt over the group's ability to affect change and a lack of trust in the decision making process *("I think you guys* [staff] *work in committee behind our back").*

The RDC OCP data reveals a shift over time, as this process has a nearly decade long history and various starts and pauses. The respondents described an initial lack of awareness and participation as the catalyst for forcing greater public involvement in the OCP process *("people suddenly woke up and they phoned and said, hey, they're changing a whole bunch of stuff"; " now people were starting to watch. And then when they actually said, well, we are going to revisit this and do something, they asked for people to come forward")*. Following the formation of an AG, the experiences varied greatly depending on the staff members and elected representatives involved. Six different planners and three different Electoral Area Directors were involved over the course of the process *("He was going to do it his way and the community was just going to have to accept it. And our community just isn't built that way"; "…you stopped and listened to us. And I think that is one of the major things that has ensured that this thing has gotten as far as it's gotten").* At the end of the process, there was general consensus that individual and group input was reflected in the plan *("I thought they had an impact, like a good impact; And I think a lot of that went into the OCP").*

While all three processes acknowledged that the staff and consultants listened, it is less clear if this was taken as genuine or as going through procedural motions. Similarly, there was less agreement on how much influence they had on the plan's policies. Individual participants in the Area E OCP voiced the least amount of concern regarding input and that OCP process had neither the historical complexity of the RDC OCP nor the bifurcation of AG members that was seen in Scotch Creek. Individual RDC OCP participants provided the most data in this theme, creating a hard-fought battle narrative of how they were finally able to make the plan reflect the community's wishes.

Major Theme 2: Process

This theme revolves around the OCP public consultation process itself, including the roles of the actors involved (individual advisory group (AG) members, the AG as an entity, staff, consultant, public, elected representative) and the participatory techniques used at AG meetings and public open houses.

Participants in the Scotch Creek OCP tended to focus on the techniques used at the meetings. At two of the AG meetings, there were PowerPoint presentations followed by comments and questions from the audience. At the larger public open houses, the public was asked to review panels and write comments on Post-it notes on the panels. They were also asked to sit down and draw maps of preferred land use patterns on transparencies. The data from SC participants shows concern over the use of Post-it notes as a method of gathering public comments *("I think it was abused on both sides. And so the people that came in* […]*, they could put up as many as*

they wanted"; "Having public and put sticky notes on things is not a voice of the public"; "would have preferred to have an open mic"). The two respondents who identified themselves to be in the pro-development camp noted concerns about the level of public involvement *("A lot of them--unfortunately the silent majority—don't participate"; "the people that don't want it are the ones that show. The ones that are in favour don't show"),* while the respondents in the lower-density camp were more concerned about consultant bias *("I thought the facilitator was very one-sided,")* and of retired CSRD staff who attended a couple of the meetings and one of whom became a consultant to the group of developers in the community *("I didn't understand why he would be coming back," "he should not have flipped over and come as a consultant on part of the developers").*

The Area E OCP respondents' data conveyed a generally positive assessment of the process and a degree of deference to staff *("I think* [AG members] *were honoured. I think they enjoyed the privilege including myself," "lot of respect shown, appreciation for staff and their expertise"; "*[staff] *put it in the proper context and the proper rules, helped everybody gel into one unit").* Given that I was a staff person working on this OCP, the deference expressed may just be politeness on the part of respondents I interviewed; however, I was not the only staff person involved and the comments complement the overall positive assessment of the process. One respondent, the same one who voiced doubt about trust and the decision making process, voiced concerns that the process was too pacific *("would have liked to have seen a little more confrontation").*

By far, the RDC OCP data had the most material related to the process theme, no doubt due to the length and complexity of the process. The three main sub-themes related to process were (1) the amount of time it took to finish the plan (*"I think the biggest driver was the fact that it was taking too damn long. There would be three months, six months between a meeting. Issues would be forgotten"; "you know how long this bloody process took? These meetings were taking forever and ever"), (2)* the holding of meetings by AG members outside of those organized by the CSRD ("*There was a lot of meetings where staff and the director were not involved"; "I think having those independent meetings went a long ways to ensuring this paper became something that –I think the community will be able to accept"; "We thought maybe if we met separately we could get our consensus together and then present it to the OCP at our formal meetings.)* and (3) changes in staff (*"we had quite a number of different planners"; "the OCP committee felt they had enough under their belt that they had to educate a new director and a new staff member, so that took time as well).*

Unsurprisingly, Area E OCP data most positively assesses the actors involved and the process itself. When compared with the other two processes, the Area E process generally followed the original timeline for completion presented to the AG group, did not have staff changes during the process and lacked the type of development pressures that affected the Scotch Creek community. The confluence of these factors points to a general 'blank slate' atmosphere towards CSRD planning staff (also relative new hires). Respondents did not generally voice strong feelings toward CSRD planning initiatives which, if negative, could have complicated the process from the beginning.

This contrasts starkly with the RDC OCP experience, which saw the local residents having had a mixed experience with individual staff members and an overall exceptionally negative experience with the OCP process itself. Unlike the other two processes, which had specific budgets, timeframes, meeting formats and a consultant from start to finish, the RDC OCP process was open ended, involved the AG much more in decisions related to public consultation and saw less staff oversight of the process (residents often met without staff to discuss OCP policies).

While the RDC OCP responses focused on the relationship between staff and the AG, Scotch Creek interviewees focused on the influence of either the pro-development or lower-density camp (and their respective community supporters) on the process. The comments on the participatory exercises can be viewed in the light of the particular goals of these two camps- not enough involvement of the 'silent majority' was seen as a concern to those who wanted to see more growth, while the inability to stand up and speak at the meetings was seen as stifling those who wanted to voice opposition to proposed development.

Major Theme 3: Power

Words and phrases related to clout, influence, equality and power were coded under this theme. Most often, the data shows one particular actor wielding more power than another, though which actor and to what extent varied substantially between the OCP processes.

The data from Scotch Creek respondents reflects a conventional example of pro- versus anti-higher density forces tussling to exert influence on the plan. Respondents in the pro-

development camp generally felt advisory group (AG) members had the same amount of clout (*"pretty equal"*), whereas those for lower-density saw the other side having more influence *("I see an awful lot of language that was realtors' and from engineers," "I definitely feel some people had more clout").* There was also evidence that the lower-density respondents saw staff, the consultant and elected representative as influenced by and having similar interests to the pro-development camp.

One pro-development respondent, while viewing AG members as equal, saw "special interest groups" as working outside of and to the detriment of the process *("special interest groups were going out of their way to destroy the OCP process"; "…to come en masse to sign forms and make statements and opposition to the wishes of the majority of the OCP committee")*. In addition to referring to the lower-density AG members, it is also a reference to the Scotch Creek Ratepayers Association, which was formed during the OCP process out of concern for what was seen as a lack of true community representation on the AG. One of the reasons it was formed was because of the perceived power an organization can wield (versus individuals), which also points to a feeling of weak power in the lower density camp. The pro-development camp and the lower-density camp each had an organization which served to reinforce their positions: the North Shuswap Chamber of Commerce and the Scotch Creek Ratepayers Association. This was unique to the SC OCP process.

In Area E, the data demonstrated a sense of equality among the players *("Equal players on the whole, on the whole everybody was, each group were equal").* One respondent saw staff as having ultimate authority over the process *("the drive, and the authority, the end, the stop*

button was staff"), though no negativity was ascribed to this view. Another respondent saw staff as representing private equity and business interests, instead of average citizens *("the unwashed public in there, which was, I maintain, supports most of the tax base and is paying most of your wages, weren't properly represented")* and thought the process was designed to disempower the AG *("I think we were fractured in our way to apply power").*

As with their sense of agency and input (Major Theme 1), the RDC data on this theme reflected a shift over time from one of less AG power to more vis-à-vis CRSD staff. Among the AG members, there was a general sense of equality *("I wouldn't say any of them had more clout").* Their relationship with staff, however, was adversarial *("Just the whole bully aspect"; "I think we perceived them as having more power* […] *because we didn't push back strongly enough"; "Advisory Group sought to take on a more dominant, if I can use that word, position")*.

The theme of power is similar between the RDC and Area E OCP processes in that it is seen as equal when comparing AG members, but unequal when comparing the AG to CSRD staff, tilted toward the latter. While this power shifted in the RDC process, it did so because the AG forced it to, not by staff design. In the case of Scotch Creek, the concept of power was overtly exercised by two competing factions. The lower-density camp in this process saw staff and the consultant favouring the other camp, but this power relationship was secondary to the struggle over policies.

Major Theme 4: Group Identity and Cohesion

This theme springs from data relating to concepts of 'us' and 'them' and words that expressed the level of unity within each identifiable group. It tries to understand the underlying structure of who was part of a group and who was not. It also highlights to what extent there was a feeling of bonding together between the members of each group. This theme is concerned about the relationship between AG members and other actors in the process, in contrast to their relationship to the plan and their ability to its policies, which is discussed in Theme 1.

In the Scotch Creek OCP, there was a clear delineation between the pro-development and lower-density groups (*"we want growth and they didn't want growth"; "pro-development, pro-Chamber versus residents that lived here and made this their home"*). In addition, a distinction was made between long-time property owners and newcomers (*"I don't think that people who've been here all their life should have more weight on the process than people just new to the area"*) and, similarly, residency (*"because some of those developers actually – well, they don't live here, they have a house here"*). There was also evidence that the two opposing groups had their own supporters from the general public. The view that members of the general public were an extension of the two groups within the advisory group (AG) was unique to SC. Since the elected representative did not live or own property in Scotch Creek and was not involved in any of the developments, he was seen as being outside of either group (*"He isn't a resident. He represents us"*). Staff and the consultants also fit this category.

Area E responses showed a high level of AG group cohesion (*"we became a team"*). There was no mention of division within the AG based on issues. While there was explicit recognition that

people came from different communities within Area E, it was not seen as affecting the process negatively (*"we broke off into little groups and interacted very well with everybody. And it wasn't just that we broke off in Swansea Point and Malakwa, etc., we mixed"*). There was a distinction noted between part-time, mainly from Alberta, and full-time residents (*"The difference was, is the part-time had different requirements or different outlooks than the permanent"*) However, given that all the Area E AG members were full-time residents, this distinction did not impact AG cohesion.

The RDC responses also showed a high level of AG cohesion, but the data suggests it stemmed from the wish to persevere through various staff changes and because the group felt that by speaking with one voice, they were in a better power position to stand up to staff (*"We became fairly connected and coordinated"; "Because it was almost becoming two-sided, staff versus advisory group*"). Within the AG, there was acknowledgement that individuals had differing ideas and political views (*"it was really a diverse group. It was like a think tank"*), but the common goal of finishing the OCP coupled with the need to remain united in the face of a turbulent relationship with the local government suppressed those differences.

Comparing group belonging and cohesion across the three processes, Scotch Creek stands out in its division of AG members into two well-defined camps, whereas the other two processes had more unified AGs. While unified, the RDC and Area E became so for different reasons. In the case of Area E, it had to do with the absence of burning land use issues (e.g. development pressure) as well as with the large size of the area, which contained distinct and distant communities. This meant that even if AG members had opposing viewpoints on certain issues,

they could contain them to their own communities, thereby avoiding conflict with other members. For example, if a resident of Malakwa wanted to see higher densities, but a resident of Swansea Pt did not, policies could be tailored to each area which would not impact the other. In the case of RDC, while the area can be divided up into a few neighbourhoods, the history of the process and historical conflicts with local government staff meant geography and personality differences took a back seat.

Minor Theme 1: Lack of Knowledge or Expertise

This theme was present throughout the data, particularly in the RDC responses. It is comprised of phrases that convey a lack of understanding of the OCP or the OCP process *("I really didn't understand the OCP process. I didn't have a clear vision of what the official community plan was.")*. It also conveys a sense that the document is long and complex ("*The amount of information, what's happening, they were just totally overwhelmed"; "the general public really, even now still, really doesn't understand the OCP*").

Without a doubt, the OCP is a large, broad, complex document. The OCP policies are less precise than regulations in a zoning bylaw which can be quickly and easily understood. In some cases, the complexity of the document potentially compounds distrust of government, as participants in the process who do not (feel they) understand the purpose and effect an OCP has on them will feel less empowered.

Minor Theme 2: Concern as Reason for Involvement

The second lesser theme encountered in the data related to reasons for involvement in the OCP process that revolved around a particular concern or fear. In the Scotch Creek OCP, the concerns related to development and either slowing it down or ensuring that it would be allowed ("*chain the bridge mentality*"). In both the RDC and Area E data, there were some concerns voiced about too much government regulation ("*some of them were there because they were concerned that some of their rights and freedoms were going to be taken away from them*").

Historically - and certainly not uniquely - these areas had little regulation. In fact, the vast majority of Area E still does not have any zoning regulations and neither it nor RDC have building inspection. These areas also have not seen the types of development pressures that would create demand for regulations, as happened in Scotch Creek. Notably, SC & Area E have large part-time resident populations most of whom come from urban areas where land use regulations are common. However, because this group is not eligible to vote in their part-time communities and because they were not represented on the AGs, their potential support for– or at least indifference to– the introduction of regulations was not a significant factor in the AG deliberations.

Electoral Area Directors

The Electoral Area Directors' responses showed similarities in their focus on overseeing the process (*"smooth process"; "I was sort of the facilitator to keep them from fighting with one another"*). In line with this focus on process, the Electoral Area Directors' responses did not provide unique insights into the major themes. All three Directors saw themselves as separate entities with unique roles (as opposed being an extension of the AG or CSRD staff), though the Area E Director did participate the most in policy discussions. This can best be explained by the fact that she was also a resident of Area E, whereas the other two Directors lived outside their OCP areas. Two of the Directors stated they would not support the plan if it included certain policies during the process on one occasion each (*"where I was a bully"*), but these virtual vetoes were exceptions to the general focus on process.

Themes Summary

Analysis of the data through qualitative data coding discovered several major and two minor themes. The first major theme – Sense of Agency and Level of Input – affirmed a relationship between the input given and the policies of the plan. This sense that the individuals and the Advisory Group as a whole had an impact varied between the processes. It was most sustained in Area E, more timid in SC and most discussed in RDC because of the long struggle that the AG went through to complete the plan to their liking.

The second major theme, the AG's experiences with the process itself, varied significantly among the three groups. The Area E interviewees were generally content with the process, which followed the originally established timeline. The SC responses reflected the tug-of-war between those who supported higher density and those who did not, including comments on how each aspect of the processes favoured one side or the other. The RDC experience was focused on the length of the process and the revolving door of CSRD staff who worked with them on the plan. Interestingly, the RDC was the only plan with no set timeline for completion, making for a disorderly process, but the responses showed evidence that these respondents had the most open, even blunt, discourse in the process and felt strong ownership over the final product. In addition, the responses surrounding this theme hint at a broader understanding the OCP process, beyond the more mundane workplan with a set number of meetings, a timeline and a resulting policy document. Namely, this understanding is a general discussion on community's future, replete with a variety of individual and group visualizations and narratives. This most likely stems from the framing of the OCP as a future vision for the community and the breadth of topics (land use, environment, housing, transportation, etc.) covered.

Power was the third major theme identified. Area E AG members expressed the greatest sense of equality among each other and their data suggests an underlying understanding that staff were the key power holders in the process, though not necessarily in a negative sense. In SC, the group members fell into two well-defined camps (lower density and higher density) who

each tried to use their participation in the process to counter the other's influence. RDC responses supply strong evidence of a power shift over time from staff to the AG members.

The fourth major theme was related to group identity and cohesion. The Area E and RDC both had high degrees of bonding as a group, but for seemingly different reasons. Area E's relative lack of process tumult and confidence in staff and the consultant helped create a cooperative atmosphere among the group members. In the RDC, the cohesion was born out of a commitment to complete the plan in the face of staff turnover. The SC group, on the other hand, split into two distinct sub-groups around the issue of density. There was strong cohesion among members of these two sub-groups.

There were also two minor themes identified through the data analysis. The first was a sense that the AG members lacked enough knowledge or expertise about the OCP as a document and the process. This was also mentioned as applying to the general public, which implies that the public's input into the plan's specific policies is rather limited. The second was a common trend of participating in the OCP process as a result of a specific concern (in addition to a general interest in community affairs).

Chapter 5

Conclusions

Having fleshed out major and minor themes from the face-to-face semi-structured interviews through data coding, now I can apply those findings to the original research questions.

The Role of Legislative Requirements

Research Question 1: How do Provincial legislation and local government practices shape public participation in official community plans?

As previously noted, OCP public consultation requirements are found in the BC *Local Government Act*. The wording in the legislation, "…*must provide one or more opportunities it considers appropriate for consultation…,*" (BC Local Government Act, Section 879) means each local government has great latitude in deciding how much and what type of consultation to engage in. This means the influence of Provincial legislation in shaping the amount and type of consultation is limited. Notably, compared to previous legislation, this wording represents a raising of the bar by requiring more consultation than just one public hearing (requisite for the

adoption of any land-use bylaw). This can be viewed as evidence of further entrenchment of collaborative planning practices into law.

While the BC *Local Government Act* affords local governments broad discretion in their public consultation processes, many of them, including the CSRD, employ local resident AGs. This common practice usually involves advertising for local resident volunteers who represent various community sectors, like real-estate, agriculture, small-business, non-profit groups, etc. In the case of Area E and SC, AG candidates responded to ads looking for volunteers. In the case of SC, all candidates (11 total) were accepted, except one, as he was the husband of another candidate and staff felt no household should have more than one representative. In the case of Area E, the candidates were reviewed by both staff and the Electoral Area Director, with the Director guiding the selection. The final list of candidates was presented and approved by the CSRD Board of Directors, though there was little discussion or personal knowledge of the names put forth. For the RDC OCP, there was a formal recognition of their role by the Board after approximately six years of already being involved. This was done as part of a restart of the process and can generally be described as a procedural formality as opposed to a selection process by staff or the Director. Of note, as part of this process, some RDC AG members raised concerns about CSRD management staff picking members to another advisory group (the advisory planning commission, which mainly reviews zoning bylaw amendments). The concerns signified a lack of trust in the selection process (seen as controlled by CSRD management) and a feeling that whoever wants to serve should either be able to or be chosen by the community.

Another common practice is to find representation from different geographical areas within the plan area. (Other practices may be common, but are not described because they were not practiced by the CSRD during these processes.) It is not clear, though, that applying this practice to municipalities and regional districts, results in a shared experience. While municipalities may seek out representatives from different neighbourhoods when preparing a city-wide OCP, the size of regional districts means that it often involves a large Electoral Area with distinct communities and remote areas, with no land-based or social relationship to one another expect for their falling within the same political boundary. For comparison, the CSRD's Electoral Area E is over 1,600 sq. kms in size, whereas the nearest municipality with its own OCP, the District of Sicamous, is 100 times smaller. And whereas it is a fair assumption that people living within a smaller sized municipality would have some sense of identification with it, Electoral Areas remain a political construct that is not incorporated into people's sense of spatial belonging. This is evidenced by references to places where people live. For example, no one would say "I am from Area E"; instead, they mention a specific community or road. In short, AGs are commonly employed in both municipalities and Electoral Area OCP processes, but the participants in Electoral Area OCP processes may have only a vague, if any, relationship to large swaths of the plan area. So while the intent behind the common practice of geographical representation is well-intentioned, the CSRD's and other regional districts' experience leave its efficacy in doubt.

Another common practice in the creation of OCPs is to decide on a timeline, budget, number of meetings and terms of reference for advisory group (AG) members at the beginning of the process. This is necessary for administrative reasons (expenditure of public funds,

understanding staff time demands, having benchmarks, etc.). However, it also means that there is limited time for educating AG members on what the OCP is, how it is used, what its limitations are, etc. Often, this education takes the form of a few PowerPoint slides and a presentation by staff or a consultant during the first meeting. In that presentation the OCP is usually described in broad terms evoking the community's ability to decide its future. Underlying this approach is the wish by staff and the consultant to have the AG members focus on providing their thoughts without burdening them with the legal and technical complexities associated with the OCP. However, at the same time, the positive language and encouraging best practice imagery commonly used by planners during initial visioning exercises sets up a high expectation of what the OCP can accomplish. This expectation is further ratcheted up by asking the AG members to discuss a wide range of topics (densities, land uses, transportation, housing, parks, environment, etc.), which inevitably elicits strong feelings about at least one topic due to the broad scope of what is discussed. This scenario creates 'buy-in' and a sense of empowerment among the AG members early on, but it also creates conflict with the neat timeline and AG terms of reference which were, in theory, okayed by the AG at the start. It highlights the incongruent priorities between the AG and the staff/consultant. While the AG do as they are told and become engrossed in broad issues of community concern and their future, staff and the consultant focus on sticking to the timeline, which means managing discussions and avoiding controversy. This view is supported by the respondents' comments related to both process (Major Theme 2) and lack of knowledge (Minor Theme 1). It also adds proof to the findings by Brand and Gaffkin (2007) regarding acquiescence to milder positions in their Northern Ireland case study.

Public Participation Experiences – A Broad Analysis

Research Question 2: What do the experiences of local advisory groups, individual members and Electoral Area Directors tell us about public participation in planning in this case and generally?

Dialogue

Planning exercises using maps, dot-mocracies, markers, blocks, and Post-it notes are common. For planners, this is a valid method of gathering public sentiment that focuses the public's attention on spatial issues. It does not, however, offer a platform for a spirited and potentially raucous debate about the future of a community. Most often, the comments provided through such exercises are collated, analyzed and presented at another meeting months later. For planners, this is a core part of their work in creating a land use policy document like an OCP. However, some responses indicate frustration at not being able to *debate* these issues with other community members and a sense that the very structured nature of the planning exercises herds participants through the process. The time lapse leaves a lingering sense of resentment, often manifested through follow up e-mails venting a particular point of view or a more negative attitude towards the process at subsequent meetings.

Fed back into the literature review, the CSRD's experiences highlight just how important creating space for verbal communication is in planning processes. In particular, the SC OCP shows evidence that this space was missing during the public open houses and could not be replaced with methods (e.g. Post-it notes) that did not result in direct dialogue among

community members. This, I argue, lends support for the communicative turn in planning (Innes 1995) and Healy's (1999) link to participation in democratic societies. While none of the three OCPs were met the conditions for a truly pure dialogue as set out by Habermas, this (expected) shortcoming does not mean the theory is not applicable as a useful measure of participation. In fact, the messiest and most turbulent, to use Hillier's (2003) terms, planning process – RDC – came the closest to achieving the ideals of communicative action theory and involved the most direct dialogue, least amount of structured exercises and no pre-arranged process.

Seeking Refuge in Process

The three OCPs provide evidence of planners' continued reliance on and perception of safety in a pre-determined decision-making process, a hallmark of the rational planning model (Berke 2002). This is largely a result of the administrative reasons described in Research Question 1. In the case of the three CSRD OCPs, this decision making process is usually set up as a chain of meetings with the advisory groups (AGs) focusing on a particular topic (i.e. densities, land use designations, etc.). It starts with an introductory meeting to present the AG with their role, the process and timeline and provide a broad overview on what an OCP is. Agreement on these items is sought at the first meeting. As mentioned earlier, in the eyes of planners, this is a confirmation that there is group buy-in to the process and everyone has a clear understanding of what their role is and what an OCP is. However, the evidence suggests that the AG is really buying into a discussion – or narrative – about their community's future. This different slant of

process-focus by planners versus narrative-focus by AG members may result in friction if the process is followed, but the policies do not reflect the narrative of one or more members. This is best illustrated in the SC OCP, in which the lower-density camp's community narrative was not reflected in the policies of the plan, even though the process they had signed on to at the beginning was followed.

Quality over Quantity

Finally, the three OCP experiences affirmed Brody's (2003) findings that more participants do not necessarily result in a better plan. The CSRD's practice, common across local governments, uses flyers, posters and newspaper ads to draw as many people to OCP meetings as possible. There are usually three or four such public meetings, spanning two years in the case of an average CSRD process. On paper, this is a neat and justifiable approach to public involvement: a meeting at the beginning to introduce the plan, one or two meetings in the middle to gather additional input, and a final meeting to present the outcome. However, the complexity and number of topics covered coupled with the limited amount of time provided rarely translates into policy changes or 'discoveries' from the general public that would not have been made through the AG meetings alone. References to the public's lack of knowledge and wishes of more input and education on the part of AG members suggest that the time and resources devoted to ensuring broad public participation could be redirected to more in-depth consultation with the AG.

Applying the Planning Literature Lens

Research Question 2(a): Do their experiences enable a characterization of the process in terms developed in the lit review??

Overall, the existence of Advisory Groups (AGs) in the formulation of OCPs clearly supports the tenet that planning processes have undergone democratization. When we compare each of the OCP processes to the ideal discourse conditions at the heart of communicative action theory, the RDC process stands out as the closest to these conditions, but for unexpected reasons. As explained earlier, the RDC process was lengthy and tumultuous, involving various staff members. These conditions resulted in the RDC AG members in self organizing and sometimes meeting without staff to develop a consensus on issues of common concern. This banding together of the group members and focus on issues is the most proximate to the ideals of communicative action theory. Additionally, the RDC process also most fully represents the good consensus process criteria developed by Innes & Booher (1997), which was based in part on communicative rationality. These criteria include having representatives of different interests, a purpose driven process, self-organization, an engaging process, challenges to the status quo, high-quality information and in-depth discussions (p.419). In RDC's case, there is evidence that all except the high quality information criteria were present in at least the last three years of the process.

Another framework which may be used to locate the process is the one developed by Lowry, Adler & Milner (1997). In that framework, the experiences of the SC and Area E OCP squarely fall within the integrated participatory model. In both cases, there was a predetermined plan

for local resident input, which was carried out from the start of the process. In the case of SC, some members in the lower-density camp embarked on their own informal land use questionnaire during the process. This was in response to what they saw as a disconnect between what the consultant's data collection showed and what they knew to be true community sentiment. While allowing for discussion of the results, it was made clear that the OCP process would abide by the CSRD Board of Directors' sanctioned process, which was laid out at the first meeting of the group. This decision underscores the comfort and safety planners see in having a pre-approved, 'institutionalized' process. The fact that the process continued along according to the predetermined process also reinforces the location of the SC OCP in the integrated participatory model.

In the case of RDC, the process started out in the appendage model, where the CSRD hosted several open houses to present a pre-prepared draft for input at a late stage. However, due to community back lash and the ensuing staff and elected representative changes, the RDC AG began to exert more authority. Remarkably, this authority was not handed over by design or granted; it was self-realized over a long and often adversarial process. In that sense, the RDC case represents a modified version of Lowry, Adler and Milner's (1997) partnership participatory model.

Equality and Power Distribution

Research Question 2(b): What do their responses say about equality and distribution of power among the actors participating in the OCP process?

There were six actors identified in the OCP processes: individual AG members, the AG as a whole, staff, the consultant, the electoral area directors and general public. These actors were common to all three processes, except that no consultant was involved in the RDC OCP process.

The data related to equality and distribution of power is captured primarily in Major Theme 3, but is also present in responses related to input and process. When asked about equality among AG members, the responses revealed that no one member had more clout in terms of input into the process. There was mention of personal traits that made some members voice their concerns or comments more than others, but it was not correlated with inequality or more power.

In discussing advisory group equality vis-à-vis the other actors, SC stands out in its division of the AG into two factions (pro-development versus lower-density). There was clear evidence that the lower-density faction felt it was in a weaker position. The responses from respondents in the lower-density faction reveal a feeling that the interests of the CSRD, the consultants and the pro-development side were more aligned from the beginning. Namely, all these groups wanted to see more growth. This can be explained by the nature of the OCP, which is meant to guide future growth and therefore assumes that there will be more. This assumption leads to discussions of where development should be directed, what type of servicing should be

required, how much control over, say, form and character the community would like to see, and so on. In addition, many good planning principles that call for compact growth, less sprawl, higher density, varied housing forms, or sidewalks. represent a much larger departure from the status-quo for a rural community than an already established town. These discussions and the resulting policy proposals put the lower-density faction in a position of constant opposition.

The general public's power was a theme that was most prevalent in the Area E and SC responses related to the actual process. The Post-it notes used to gather public input were seen as disempowering, with respondents preferring instead to give the public a chance to *voice* their concerns. In the SC case, the public were given a chance to speak at two meetings, which can be described as heated and including some outbursts. Following that experience, open houses were employed that were more interactive with the materials, but did not offer the public a chance to voice their comments in a town hall meeting style. For planning staff and consultants, this was an obvious decision to make sure the process continued as planned and to avert discord and unpredictability.

Of the six actors, staff were most cited as having the most authority, but mentions of power were limited to the CSRD as an organization or to upper management, not the planners who most closely worked on the processes (including myself). Electoral Area Directors and consultants were not seen as holders of power, but rather as overseers, facilitators or mediators. The general public (those who were not AG members) was generally regarded as not having much power relative to the other actors. This was attributed to a limited

understanding, interest or faith in the plan on their part, but was also likely a result of their limited involvement in the process (attendance at three or four open houses).

Of the six types of actors identified as playing a role in the OCP process at the outset of this thesis, the responses showed that the AG and staff were felt by participants to be the key players in the process. In addition to staff, consultants and Directors, the CSRD as an organization — was also seen as nebulous power force. Similarly, the process itself, and participatory planning methods in particular, were recognized as structures reflecting power relations. Methods that were more akin to conversation, like round-table discussions most prevalent in the RDC process, resulted in a greater sense of power among the AG participants. Methods that involved individual interaction with posters or maps, but no ability to communicate with others, as employed in the SC OCP, were seen as disempowering.

The Link between Providing Input and the Final Document

Research Question 2(c): How do they see the relationship between their participation/ comments and the final OCP?

The responses revealed a direct relationship between participation and comments provided and the resulting document. That said, the broad range of topics covered in OCP processes makes it a relatively easy achievement to include some comments from individual members. So while respondents declared that they could see their points of view or comments included in

the document, there were numerous topics, including what they considered key topics, which were not. In the case of Area E, for example, two hot-button community topics – building inspection and firework bans – were not included in the plan due to their controversy. They were left instead for separate discussions. For planners, this is a suitable solution, as it does not delay or sacrifice the whole plan due to one or two issues. For those AG members who brought up the topics, it may add to an unfulfilled community narrative as explained in Research Question 2.

Influence of Socio-Demographic Characteristics

Research Question 3: What, if any, effect do socio-demographic characteristics (age, gender, occupation, education, residency, etc.) have and can generalizations be made from these differences?

Fifteen individuals were interviewed as part of this thesis: twelve advisory group (AG) members (four from each OCP process) and three Electoral Area Directors (one from each OCP process).

Of the fifteen, only two were females, one of whom was an Electoral Area Director. They were not part of the same process. As such, no generalizations can be made between male and female respondents, but also cannot be ruled out

The median age of respondents was 64. While no differences were detected through the identified themes based on age, it no doubt had an influence on the topics of discussion

throughout the OCP. Seniors' housing, aging in place, distances to health clinics were greater concerns than, for example, playgrounds.

The most common occupation category was retiree, with seven participants in this category. The other eight were all self-employed in various fields and trades. Participants' current or former occupation was the best indicator of their support for regulations. Those who were previously public sector employees were far more likely to support policies recommending stronger land use regulations than those self-employed. This is reflected in Minor Theme #2, which saw participation by some respondents in the OCP process as a way to guard against perceived over regulation. This is also a reflection of the historical lack of land use regulations in the CSRD compared to neighbouring local governments.

Educationally, the participants were diverse. Two did not have a high school diploma, two had high school diplomas, four had a high school diploma and some college or university courses, four had trade certificates, two had bachelor degrees and one had a masters degree. Those with some college or university courses or more were more likely to support policies calling for stronger land use regulations.

All respondents were full-time residents. Responses acknowledging different interests between part-time and full-time residents point to the fact that involvement of part-time residents would most likely add greater complexity to these processes, but cannot be determined as part of this thesis.

Chapter 6

Recommendations and Future Research Avenues

Synthesizing the answers to the research questions, a few practical recommendations seep out. The first is a re-evaluation of the cookie-cutter planning processes that typically accompany the creation of OCPs. The complexity of the document, the length of time it is usually in place before it is revisited (often 10 or more years) and its significance as a guide for community growth warrant a more considered approach. This approach should involve greater education of AG members on the OCP itself and greater discussion of good land-use principles at the very beginning. The CSRD's experience showed that spending an hour showing images of good examples from elsewhere, often including compact development patterns alien to the lifelong experience of the rural AG members, were unconvincing at best. It also started the process off on a negative footing by giving the impression planners were trying to impose an outside concept on the local community. Spending more time at the beginning on discussing density, housing diversity, rural and urban design principles, etc., and why they matter, should give residents more 'food for thought' and make a guttural rejection of these new concepts less likely.

In the same vein, more creativity and less structure should be considered in the planning processes for rural areas where sentiment towards regulations and government in general is not necessarily positive. Understanding this predisposition means that building trust with AG members and their concerns is critical. This should also influence decisions such as using an outside consultant versus a local staff person who already has built up a rapport with locals and which examples of best practices should be used to avoid exacerbating feelings of foreign concepts being imposed. This is not to infer that outside expertise should not be utilized; rather that extra care should be taken in ensuring that local sensibilities are given due credit.

Another recommendation stems from confirmation that the CSRD's experience did not see more participants producing a better plan (described in Research Question 2). This practice is commonly used, as it is the most democratic (informing all potentially affected residents of the process and offering a forum for input). The literature review shows that the overarching *intent* of very broad public participation is supported by planning theoreticians who embrace communicative action theory. Nevertheless, use of limited resources on what is superficial public engagement relative to more profound discussions that could take place with smaller groups (i.e. AGs) should be carefully appraised.

Finally, two avenues for future research came to light through this thesis. The first is looking at how planners' priorities, which this data has shown to be eschewed towards ensuring smooth processes, and those of local residents, which were more interested in a narrative of their future community, interact and potentially conflict. There is already significant literature on the topic of narrative and scenario (Forester 1989; Throgmorton, 1996; Mandelbaum, 1991;

Albrechts, 2005). It may be fruitful to see if and how that could be used to wean planners off the conservative predetermined planning process, which are still common, and if it results in better planning processes or plans. Secondly, the analysis of the RDC case points to an interesting version of Lowry, Adler and Milner's (1997) partnership participatory model in which the partnership formed from a tumultuous process rather than from a government sanctioned transfer of authority. There may be more examples of less orderly or even chaotic shifts of power from government. These examples may reveal further insights into power dynamics and planning processes generally.

References

Abram, S. (2000). Planning the public: Some comments on empirical problems for planning theory. *Journal of Planning Education and Research, 19*, 351-357. Retrieved from Sage Journals Online database.

Albrechts, L. (2005). Creativity as a drive for change. *Planning Theory, 4*, 247-269. Retrieved from Sage Journals Online database.

Alexander, E. (2001). The planner-prince: interdependence, rationalities and post-communicative practice. *Planning Theory and Practice, 2*, 311-324. Retrieved from EBSCOhost Academic Search Complete database.

Alexander, E. (1992). A transaction cost theory of planning. *Journal of the American Planning Association, 58*, 190-200. Retrieved from Taylow & Francis Online database.

Arnstein, S. (1969). A ladder of citizen participation. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners, 35*, 216-24. Retrieved from Taylor & Francis Online database.

BC Stats. (2010, February 10). *Regional District 39 Statistical Profile.* Retrieved from *http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/sep/rd/Rd_39.pdf*

Berke, P.R. (2002). Does sustainable development offer a new direction for planning? Challenges for the twenty-first century. *Journal of Planning Literature*, *17*, 21-36. Retrieved from Sage Journals Online database.

Bish, R. (2006). Inter-Municipal Cooperation in British Columbia. *Public Manager, 2006/2007* (Winter), 34-39. Retrieved from Gale Cengage GREENR database.

Booher, D., & Innes, J. (2002). Network power in collaborative planning. *Journal of Planning Education and Research, 21*, 221-236. Retrieved from Sage Journals Online database.

Brand, R., & Gaffikin, F. (2007). Collaborative planning in an uncollaborative world. *Planning Theory, 6*, 282-313. Retrieved from Sage Journals Online database.

Brody, S. (2003). Measuring the effects of stakeholder participation on the quality of local plans based on principles of collaborative ecosystem management. *Journal of Planning Education and Research, 22*, 407-419. Retrieved from Sage Journals Online database.

Carp, J. (2004). Wit, style and substance: How planners shape public participation. *Journal of Planning Education and Research,* 23, 242-254. Retrieved from Sage Journals Online database.

Catanese, A. (1974). Plan? or process? *Planning, 40* (June), 14-17.

Columbia Shuswap Regional District. (2010, February 10). Retrieved from http://csrd.iwebez.com/siteengine/ActivePage.asp?PageID=234

Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (2000). *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Etzioni, A. (1967). Mixed Scanning: A "third" approach to decision-making. *Public Administration Review*, *27*, 385-92.

Fischler, R. (2000). Communicative Planning Theory: A Foucauldian Assessment. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 19: 358-368. doi:10.1177/0739456X0001900405

Forester, J. (1989). *Planning in the Face of Power*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Forester, J. (1999). *The Deliberative Practitioner: Encouraging Participatory Planning Processes*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Friedmann, J. (1973). *Retracking America: a Theory of Transactive Planning*. Garden City: Anchor Press.

Friedmann, J. & Abonyi, G. (1976). Social learning: a model for policy research. *Environment and Planning A*, 927-40.

Gallowaym T.D. & Mahayni, R.G. (1977). Planning theory in retrospect: The process of paradigm change. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, *34*, 62-71.

Godschalk, D., & Mills, W. (1966). A collaborative approach to planning through urban activities. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners, 32*(2), 86-95.

Gubrium, J. & Holstein, J.A. (2002)**.** *Handbook of interview research: Context and method*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Healey, P. (1992). A planner's day: Knowledge and action in communicative practice. *Journal of the American Planning Association,* 58, 9-20. Retrieved from Taylor & Francis Online database.

Healy, P. (1999). Institutionalist Analysis, Communicative Planning, and Shaping Places*. Journal of Planning Education and Research, 19*, 111-121. Retrieved from Sage Journals Online database.

Healy, P. (2003). Collaborative planning in perspective. *Planning Theory, 2*, 101-123. Retrieved from Sage Journals Online database.

Hillier, J. (2003). 'Agon'izing over consensus: why Habermasian ideals cannot be 'real'. *Planning Theory, 2*, 37-59. Retrieved from Sage Journals Online database.

Hoch, C. (2007). Pragmatic communicative action theory. *Journal of Planning Education and Research, 26*, 272-283. Retrieved from Sage Journals Online database.

Howe, J. & Langdon, C. (2002). Towards a reflexive planning theory. *Planning Theory, 1*, 209-225. Retrieved from Sage Journals Online database.

Huxley, M. (2000). The limits to communicative planning. *Journal of Planning Education and Research, 19*, 369-377. Retrieved from Sage Journals Online database.

Huxley, M. & Yiftachel, O. (2000). New paradigm or old myopia? Unsettling the communicative turn in planning theory. *Journal of Planning Education and Research, 19*, 333-342. Retrieved from Sage Journals Online database.

Innes, J. (1995). Planning theory's emergent paradigm: Communicative Action and Interactive Practice. *Journal of Planning Education and Research, 14*, 183-189. Retrieved from Sage Journals Online database.

Innes, J. & Booher, D. (1999). Consensus building as role playing and bricolage: Toward a theory of collaborative planning. *Journal of the American Planning Association, 66*, 9-26. Retrieved from Taylor & Francis Online database.

Innes, J. & Booher, D. (1999). Consensus Building and Complex Adaptive Systems. J*ournal of the American Planning Association*, 65, 412-423. Retrieved from Taylor & Francis Online database.

Kvale, S. & Brinkman, S. (2006). *Interviews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Local Government Act*.* (2010, February 10). *Province of British Columbia*. Retrieved from *http://www.bclaws.ca*

Lindbolm, C.E. (1959). The science of 'muddling through'. *Public Administration Review, 19*, 79-89.

Lowry, K., Adler, P., & Milner, N. (1997). Participation and the public: Group Processes, Politics and Planning. *Journal of Planning Education and Research, 16*, 177-87. Retrieved from Sage Journals Online database.

Mandelbaum, S. 1991. Telling Stories. *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 10: 209-14. Retrieved from Sage Journals Online database.

Margerum, R. 2002. Collaborative planning: building consensus and building a distinct model for practice. *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 21: 237-253. Retrieved from Sage Journals Online database.

Melingrana, J. (2000). British Columbia's Growth Strategies: a policy critique. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research, 9*, 94-107. Retrieved from EBSCOhost Academic Search Complete database.

Melingrana, J. (2003). Developing a Planning Strategy and Vision for Rural-Urban Fringe Areas: A Case Study of British Columbia. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research, 12*, 119-141. Retrieved from EBSCOhost Academic Search Complete database.

Neuman, W. (2000). *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Needham Heights: Allyn and Bacon.

Regional Districts. (2010, February 10). *BC Ministry of Community and Rural Development.* Retrieved from *http://www.cd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/pathfinder-rd.htm*

Riparian Areas Regulation. (2008, September 7). *BC Ministry of Environment.* Retrieved from *http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/habitat/fish_protection_act/riparian/riparian_areas.html*

Rolke, R. (2011, May 15). Surplus saves school budget. *Vernon Morning Star*. Retrieved from http://www.bclocalnews.com

Sager, T. (2006). The logic of critical communicative planning: transaction cost alteration. *Planning Theory, 5*, 223-254. Retrieved from Taylor & Francis Online database.

Sager, T. (2007). Dialogical Values in Public Goods Provision. *Journal of Planning Education and Research, 26*, 497-512.

Sandercock, L. (2005). The democratization of planning: elusive or illusory? *Planning Theory and Practice, 6*, 437-441. Retrieved from Taylor & Francis Online database.

Takahashi, L. & Smutny, G. (2001). Collaboration among small, community-based organizations: strategies and challenges in turbulent environments. *Journal of Planning Education and Research, 21*, 141-153. Retrieved from Sage Journals Online database.

Throgmorton, J. (1996). *Planning as Persuasive Storytelling*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Umemoto, K. (2001). Walking in another's shoes: epistemological challenges in participatory planning. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, *21*, 17-31. Retrieved from Sage Journals Online database.

Wikipedia. (2010, February 10). Retrieved from http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Columbia-Shuswap_Regional_District,_British_Columbia_Location.png#file

Wilson, N. (2005). The dark side of community development. *Planning Theory and Practice, 6*, 517-541. Retrieved from Taylor & Francis Online database.

Yin, R. (2008). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Appendix

Schedule of Interview Questions (Questionnaire)

Area: (1) Scotch Creek (2) Ranchero/Deep Creek (3) Electoral Area 'E'

Date of Interview:

Consent form Signed: yes no

Length of Interview:

Part A: Background

One of the things this research wants to understand is: are there are any connections between an individual's characteristics and their experience in the OCP process? For example, did women have a common experience that differed from men, or did those that work in a certain field have something in common? Therefore, the first few questions are going to be about yourself.

1. **Gender: Male Female**
2. **In what year were you born?**
3. **Do you consider yourself a part-time, full-time or other (*please describe*) resident in Scotch Creek?**
4. **What is your occupation?**
5. **What is your educational background?**
6. **How long have you lived in "___"?**
7. **Prior to living in "___", what type of community did you in; for example, rural, remote, suburban, urban, etc.?**
8. **Prior to participating on the OCP Advisory Group, had you ever been involved in a local government planning process? If yes, can you describe it?**
9. **What would you say were the main reasons that led you to be on the OCP Advisory Group?**

Part B: Roles

For this part, I'm going to ask you a few questions about the role of the OCP Advisory Group, the consultant, staff, the electoral area director and the general public in the OCP process. For the most part, these questions will ask you to describe the roles of each of these players.

10. What was <u>your</u> role on the OCP Advisory Group? In other words, what were you on the OCP Advisory Group to do?

[PAUSE FOR RESPONSE]

<u>Probe:</u>

a) Did your role change over the course of the process? If so, how?
b) *Did you represent a certain geographic area, a certain group, or a particular concern?*

11. What about the role of other Advisory Group members? Would you say that they had the same role as you or was it different in any way?

12. Can you describe the interaction between the individual members of the OCP Advisory Group?

[PAUSE FOR RESPONSE]

<u>Probe:</u>

a) Were all members generally equal in the process, or did some have more clout? If so, why? Can you give any examples?

13. Can you describe the role of the Advisory Group as a whole in the process?

[PAUSE FOR RESPONSE]

14. Can you describe the role of the consultant in the process?

[PAUSE FOR RESPONSE

15. Can you describe the role of CSRD staff in the process?

[PAUSE FOR RESPONSE]

16. Can you describe the role of the Electoral Area Director?

[PAUSE FOR RESPONSE]

17. Can you describe the role of the general public in the process? By this I mean people who weren't on the OCP Advisory Group.

[PAUSE FOR RESPONSE]

18. What about the interaction between the players? How would you describe that?

[PAUSE FOR RESPONSE]
<u>Probe:</u>

a) Was any one player more central to the OCP process than another?

Part C: Input

Now, I'd like to shift a little and ask you about the comments you provided as part of the OCP process. My aim is to understand the way you viewed the interaction between your comments and the OCP process and plan.

19. Thinking about the times you provided comments, either verbally or in writing, can you describe how you saw those comments having an impact on the process or plan?

[PAUSE FOR RESPONSE]

Probe:

a) Can you describe how your comments were used? For example, did they shape the opinions of fellow Advisory Group Members?

b) Did you provide specific comments intended to change certain policy language in the plan? Did you see those changes?

c)

Part D: Conclusion

And finally, I just want to get a general sense of your experience with the process.

20. What words would you use to describe your overall experience with the OCP Advisory Group and the OCP process?

21. Were there any aspects of your experience with the OCP process that were particularly positive or negative?

22. Would you like to raise any other issues that have not emerged from the questions of this interview? Are there any questions that you would have liked to have been asked?

23. Do you still consent to the terms outlined in the letter of consent?

If respondent withdraws: *You have chosen to withdraw your consent from this interview. I thank you for your time and assure you that all the data collected during the interview will be completely destroyed within three days. If you have any questions, concerns, or complaints about the way this interview was handled, please contact the Human Ethics Secretariat at 204-474-7122. Thank you again for your time.*

Ask if participant would like a copy of the completed project. If yes, obtain e-mail or mailing address.