

Dumb Mistakes

Those of you who read “The Great Watershed Giveaway” will have noticed that two lines were missing from each side of the flyer. This “censorship” was done by Hall Printing’s copy machine for reasons known only to the machine. Hall Printing has kindly made it right by providing this correction free of charge.

What was deleted from the front page of “The Great Watershed Giveaway” were parts of the following sentences: “The main question is whether you want to give away that part of the Topping Creek watershed which supplies an estimated two-thirds of the town’s water during the nine most water-short months of the year. Removing the lower Topping Creek area from our watershed would also mean giving up the Blue eyes Swamp, which includes springs which supply water *year around*.”

What the copy machine eliminated on Page 2 were parts of these sentences: “You cannot reasonably expect councillors to do what you want if you don’t let them know what that is. Write letters. Send e-mails. Phone them. Tell them. *Keep doing it until they get the message*.”

The flyer contained another error which was my own. I said that a land speculator plans to build a 500-unit hotel and 350 or so resort estates around the proposed golf course. In fact, what Red Mountain Ventures announced back in November were plans to build a 120-room hotel, 160 single family houses, and 330 condos. Six months later—like now—that may or may not be the number RMV is planning to build. RMV has submitted a development application to the City of Rossland, but the City, in its infinite wisdom, has decided to ignore its own Freedom of Information bylaw, and not let the public see the application until—well, someday.

Section 13 (1) of the City’s Freedom of Information bylaw says: “The categories of records that are in the custody or under the control of the public body and that are available to the public on demand without a request for access under the Act are set out in Schedule B of this Bylaw.” Schedule B lists as one of the types of records to be made available to the public: “Copies of applications for rezoning, development permits and development variance permits and information supplied in support of such applications.”

That’s what Rossland’s own Freedom of Information bylaw says, but City staff and elected officials seem to think they are above the law, and so far have flatly refused to let the public see RMV’s development application.

So forget about the numbers I gave you, or for that matter, those RMV made public six months ago, about how many units it hopes to build. We will find out exactly what Red Mountain Ventures is proposing to do in our watershed—or even whether lower Topping Creek continues to *be* part of our watershed—when they decide to tell us. Right now it’s a big secret. Only the City and the developer know for sure.

-Rosa Jordan-

