

Disclaimer: These minutes were prepared as a reasonable summary of the essential content of this meeting, not as a transcription.



Minutes of the Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting

February 13, 2025, 10:00 a.m.

Meadows Room

12007 Harris Road, Pitt Meadows, BC V3Y 2B5

Voting Members: J. Bachmann
T. Hopcott
L. Kemper
D. Kosicki
T. Vader

Non-Voting Members: D. Bondar, BC Ministry of Agriculture and Food

Regrets: A. Aquilini
H. Bitter
S. Howkins
W. Jack
Councillor Meachen (Alternate)

Council Liaison: Councillor Manion

Guests: Applicant 1 - 12770 McTavish Road
Members of the public
R. Shih, Planner, Pacific Land Group Inc. – Consultant for Applicant 1 -
12770 McTavish Road

Staff: M. Baski, Manager of Agriculture and Environment (Chair)
A. Dominelli, Planner
P. Ward, Director of Planning & Development

Recording Clerk: T. McCaw, Administrative Services Supervisor

1. CALL TO ORDER

M. Baski, Manager of Agriculture and Environment, acknowledged with respect and gratitude that the City of Pitt Meadows is located on the traditional, unceded territory of ᑭᑭᑭᑭ (Katzie) First Nation who were stewards of this land since time immemorial.

The meeting was called to order at 10:06 AM.

2. LATE ITEMS

None.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There was general consent amongst the committee to approve the February 13, 2025 Agricultural Advisory Committee agenda.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

There was general consent amongst the Committee to approve the minutes from the November 14, 2024 Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting as circulated.

5. NEW BUSINESS**5.1 Non-Adhering Residential Use Application for 12770 McTavish Rd**

A. Dominelli, Planner, provided a presentation on a Non-Adhering Residential Use Application for 12770 McTavish Rd (PID: 011-439-343), where the property owner is seeking to retain an unauthorized third dwelling unit.

R. Shih, Planner with Pacific Land Resource Group Inc. provide a few comments for the consideration, some of the highlights included:

- Property has been owned and farmed by the family for over 75 years;
- Property is a bona fide farm with a diverse range of farming;
- Organic certified garlic farmer with plans to expand this year;
- The Applicant has no plans to add another footprint to this property;
- The total combined floorplan for all properties is 520.1 m2 which is within the Agricultural Land Commissions regulations;
- The property has long term potential to protect farmland;
- The Applicants intentions are to keep parcel in tact and not move forward with the approved home site severance; and

- The property requires year round labour in order to maintain farming operations.

The Committee participated in a discussion with the following main themes noted:

- The question was raised as to whether the Applicant has the legal right to sever the property creating a one (1) acre parcel (Staff confirmed yes);
- Discussions were held around the potential loss to agriculture (although allowed in the ALR) if the one (1) acre is sold further stating it would be more detrimental to agriculture then having the existing agricultural building converted into a dwelling;
- Support was given for the long term farming operation, the dwellings placed on the perimeter of the property with the family farming and living on site;
- Comments were made around the location of the agricultural building supporting the location not being in the centre of the parcel;
- The question was raised whether the property is one legal 65 acres parcel;
- Some members of the AAC did not support the ability to sever the one (1) acre parcel;
- Questions were raised around the size of the shop and the living quarters for the home in question (The Applicant confirmed that the shop was approximately 1000 sq ft. with the living quarters around 1500 sq ft.);
- General support was given for the application as it was promoting farming with a minimal footprint on agricultural land;
- Succession planning was discussed (The Applicant confirmed there are no plans to sell the property);
- The question was raised around how much for the 65 acres was currently being farmed for food production (The Applicant confirmed it was approximately 1/3); and
- The question was raised whether there was any unfarmed land that could be farmed? (The Applicant confirmed they currently lease out 40 acres which could be farmed in the future).

It was **MOVED** and **SECONDED** THAT the Agricultural Advisory Committee:

- A. Recommends that Council forwards to the ALC the Non-Adhering Residential Use application for 12770 McTavish Rd subject to no further subdivision of the property.

CARRIED

5.2 Proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendments Related to Uses of Agricultural Land

A. Dominelli, Planner, provided a presentation and sought the Agricultural Advisory Committee's feedback on potential amendments to the Zoning Bylaw related to residential uses of agricultural land, implementing objectives of the Agricultural Viability Strategy and Official Community Plan.

The Committee participated in a discussion with the following main themes noted:

- The expansion of processing opportunities were discussed;
- The question was raised around potential impacts to smaller farms in the community with these proposed changes (Staff confirmed that there would be no impacts to the smaller acres ie: 5 acre lots as they are already be too small to subdivide);
- A question was raised was whether 80% land use was enough for someone needing greenhouses for farming;
- Discussions were held around the definition of a farm vehicle including the wide variety of different types used on a farming operation and the recommendation was made to use definitions with caution;
- Food security, food production, and processing were discussed;
- The potential farm home plate was addressed and members noted that the variety of property shapes and sizes must be considered;
- Support was given to the protection of farming in the community;
- A suggestion was made to limit the size of a single family dwelling in relation to the size of parcel instead of the current allowance being approved on square meters for any size parcel of land;

- Discussions were held around the variety of farming which could impact the amount of farmable land required;
- General support was given for the home plate requirements on the perimeter of the property;
- There were generally no concerns with the size of the home as long as it was built on the farm home plate the footprint;
- Comments were made noting small acreage landowners may not support the smaller house size for the smaller parcel;
- A suggestion was made that the size of the farming operation must be considered when implementing new zoning;
- There were mixed reviews received regarding regulating owners of smaller parcel restricting home sizes due to the size of the parcel;
- Discussions were held around regulations for accessory residential structures limited to single storey;
- Comments were made around restricting garden suites not supporting or addressing the current housing concerns and rental availability;
- Maximum number of farm workers per farm operation were discussed recommending increasing the number of workers to 130 for all farming operations;
- Discussions were held around Temporary Farm Worker Housing (TFWH) being added to the farm home plate which was not generally supported; and
- Committee members recommended a separate home plate for TFWH for larger parcels in an effort to improve site security.

It was **MOVED** and **SECONDED** THAT the Agricultural Advisory Committee:

- A. Receive the recommended amendments to the Zoning Bylaw, as outlined in the February 4, 2025 Staff Report titled “Proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendments Related to Uses of Agricultural Land”, and presented at the February 13, 2025 Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting inclusive of comments from the meeting.

CARRIED

5.3 Metro Vancouver Development Cost Charges [DCC] Update

P. Ward, Director of Planning & Development, provided verbal overview on the Metro Vancouver DCC update, some of the highlights included:

- DCC updates were focused on new residential and non-residential developments which overlooked agriculture;
- Metro Vancouver has identified an oversight which they are working to rectify by Q2 of 2025; and
- Currently under review and looking for an interim solution.

The Committee participated in a discussion with the following main themes noted:

- Comments were made that the costs for DCC's were exceeding the cost of the project for one particular local farmer (Staff confirmed that Metro Vancouver is working on an interim solution taking effect within the next few months);
- Threats to food security were discussed; and
- Discussions were held around how voices from Pitt Meadows agriculture can be heard at the Metro Vancouver tables.

5.4 Draft Union of British Columbia Municipalities [UBCM] Resolution

M. Baski, Manager of Agriculture & Environment, provided an overview of the draft UBCM resolutions gathering feedback from the Committee which included discussing the next steps.

The Committee participated in a discussion with the following main themes noted:

- General support was given to for the proposed resolution; and
- Members voiced opinions around the importance of agriculture and policies that support the growth of farmers and farming in the community.

It was **MOVED** and **SECONDED** THAT the Agricultural Advisory Committee:

- A. Support the proposed ‘UBCM Resolution: Increased Ministry Funding for Agriculture’ as presented at the February 13, 2025 Committee meeting, and which states:

WHEREAS provincial funding for agriculture in British Columbia (BC) as a percentage of the sector’s contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the lowest in Canada;

AND WHEREAS an increase to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food’s budget would demonstrate the province’s commitment to food security and the sustainability of agriculture;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM call on the Provincial government to raise agriculture funding in BC to the national average to support much-needed investments in the agricultural sector.

CARRIED.

5.5 AAC Application Tracker

M. Baski, Manager of Agriculture and Environment, provided update on the Application Tracker attached in today's agenda.

There were no further discussions or comments made by the Committee on this topic.

5.6 AAC Action Items

This item was deferred until the March 6, 2025 meeting.

5.7 2025 Committee Recruitment Campaign & Membership Expiration

T. McCaw, Administrative Services Supervisor, provided a verbal overview on the 2025 Committee Recruitment Campaign, highlighting applications will be accepted online or in person at City Hall from January 27th - February 23rd with openings on seven (7) different City committees.

The Committee participated in a discussion with the following main themes noted:

- A question was raised around the number of expiring AAC committee members.

6. **ROUNDTABLE**

The Committee participated in a roundtable discussion there were no formal motions or recommendations put forward. Items regarding staff action and takeaways have been added to the Action Item Tracker.

7. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:13 PM.

*The next **Agricultural Advisory Committee** meeting is scheduled for **March 6, 2025** at **10:00 AM.***

Certified as correct:

Tatiana McCaw

Tatiana McCaw,

Administrative Services Supervisor