

**CITY OF PITT MEADOWS  
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

MINUTES OF THE AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
Held at the Pitt Meadows City Hall, Meadows Room, Pitt Meadows, BC  
Thursday, November 9th, 2017

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

Joe Bachmann, Co-chair  
Leo Captein, Co-chair  
Macky Banns  
Hank Bitter  
Janis Elkerton, Alternate Council Liaison  
Dieter Geesing, Ministry of Agriculture  
Dan Kosicki  
Mike Manion  
Bill Park  
Scott Pelton  
Mike Stark, Acting Council Liaison  
Wayne Wisselink

**REGRETS:**

Bruce Bell, Council Liaison  
Bob Hopcott

**STAFF:**

Kate Zanon, Director of Community Services,  
Meeting Chair  
Lisa Grant, Manager of Community Development  
Susanne Sloboda, Environmental Stewardship  
Officer  
Mike Bandy, Development Services Technician  
Elaine Harrison, Recorder

**GUESTS:**

Councillor Bill Dingwall  
Patricia Gordon  
Robert Liva

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 am.

**Agenda items**

Kate Zanon, Director of Community Services asked if there were any late agenda items. No items were brought forward.

The Committee asked if the maintenance of ditches could be included on the next AAC Agenda. Ms. Zanon agreed.

The Committee also asked if more background information could be included in the Agenda packages to allow members time to thoroughly understand and appraise the Agenda. Ms. Zanon advised that staff could prepare a single page memo with bullet points for any PowerPoint presentations and a single page overview for general discussion items. The Committee agreed that they would like this to happen.

Moved by Leo Captein and seconded by Dan Kosicki that the Agenda as provided be discussed.

**CARRIED**

**Adoption of Minutes June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017 and discussion group Minutes September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

Moved by Leo Captein and seconded by Joe Bachmann that the minutes of June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017 and the minutes from the discussion group of September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2017 be adopted.

**CARRIED**

### **Housing in the ALR – Update**

Lisa Grant, Manager of Community Development made a presentation to the Committee which forms part of these minutes as attachment A.

Ms. Grant advised that the topic had received first and second reading by Council and a Public Hearing would be held on November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017. Ms. Zanon advised that the Committee's recommendations from the meeting held on April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017 had been forwarded to Council and had been taken into account during their deliberations. The reason this was on the Agenda was for information purposes and to update the Committee on the current status.

Council had examined various options and are considering the introduction of a maximum footprint of 600m<sup>2</sup> for residential farm houses if the lot size permits within lot coverage limits. The limit would include all attached portions and be limited to 2½ stories. Council were also recommending that ALC approval be required for second farm houses once they have been considered by Council. With regards to manufactured or mobile homes, Council was recommending that these be permitted for family members if a doctor's note is provided, a covenant would be required to confirm occupancy. Modular homes would no longer be permitted and mobile homes could be no wider than 9m.

The Committee asked how the 600m<sup>2</sup> footprint compared to other municipalities and staff advised that this was at the higher end of the limits. The Committee expressed concern at the requirement that second homes be within 50m of the residential farm house and staff advised that a variance permit could be applied for if it was felt that this requirement was unacceptable. The Committee members also asked if restrictions on the location within the land parcel were part of the recommendations and staff advised that Council had decided not to restrict location, just the size. The Committee felt that location was extremely important and a structure in the middle of a lot was detrimental to farming.

Mike Manion offered to take the Committee's concerns to the next meeting of Metro Vancouver's Agricultural Advisory Committee.

Ms. Zanon informed the Committee that they were welcome to attend the public hearing or submit their concerns individually.

### **Agricultural Land Use Map Review**

Kate Zanon, Director of Community Services asked the Committee members to review the 2016 Agricultural Land Use Map to identify any changes since it had been produced and to make any amendments where necessary. Some modifications were made.

Ms. Zanon asked that the map be included on the Agenda for consideration at the next meeting to give members more time to review it.

### **Farmland – Regulatory Challenges**

Ms. Zanon advised the Committee that Ms. Hook would not be able to present her portion of the Regulatory Challenges item but in order for the Committee to start to discuss the issues Ms. Sloboda would start to explain the subject. The presentation made by Ms. Sloboda forms part of these minutes as attachment B.

Ms. Sloboda presented a series of photographs of observations she had made throughout the municipality. Firstly she referred to 'other materials' which she had noticed were widely used as road base on farm properties. These fill materials contained many items such as metals which should not be

deposited on farmland but recycled or deposited at authorised locations. She said that construction debris is not acceptable fill and that asphalt can cause leaching concerns into ground water.

The Committee discussed that farmers had historically used recycled concrete and gravel and a small percentage of foreign debris but only for the purpose of creating driveways and roadways on their land. If the City feels that violations were occurring then Bylaws should be used to regulate the practice. The Committee also pointed out that farmers need to produce food safe products so they adhere to regulations so as not to jeopardize the sale of their crops.

Ms. Sloboda then provided a photograph of dirty roads which she advised can pollute watercourses and a photograph of elevation changes caused by fill which can in turn affect drainage for adjoining properties.

Ms. Sloboda then talked about invasive species, specifically knotweed, which can compromise concrete foundations. She advised that the City is currently tracking and monitoring sites on City land but not private land and she said that advice can be provided on knotweed management if residents require it. She also said that the Invasive Species Council of British Columbia could make a presentation to the Committee if they felt it would be beneficial.

### **Roundtable**

Mike Manion – talked about several issues:-

- At the recent Metro Vancouver AAC meeting Henry Henrickson from Delta had offered to make a presentation regarding damage by wild fowl. The Committee appreciated this offer and asked if this could go ahead.

Other recent topics on the Metro Vancouver AAC include:

- The AgRefresh proposal by the City of Abbotsford which he offered to circulate to all Committee members.
- The National Industrial Symbiosis Symposium which connects waste producers with waste users.
- The company Boost who have the technology to remove phosphorus and produce fertilizer.

Leo Captein – mentioned that on a recent visit to Holland he had noticed that boats with mower attachments were being used in their ditches and canals to cut back weeds and it appeared to be very effective.

Hank Bitter – asked for an update of the replacement of the #4 pump station and whether the decision was still to have a fish friendly pump or if it would be a turbine. He felt that the City should lobby for a turbine pump to stop invasive species being pumped into the Pitt River; the fact that it would not withstand an earthquake; and it would cost an extra \$60,000 per year in running costs.

Ms. Zanon advised that the funding for the replacement pump station was dependant on the pump being fish friendly.

Joe Bachmann – questioned the sustainability of farming in Pitt Meadows, he felt it was being compromised by:-

- High land costs which affects farmers
- Loosing farm properties to non-farmers who build mansions
- More uses being permitted on farm land making the land more valuable
- Farmers being unable to afford to buy out family members
- Death taxes being too high

- Succession taxes
- The Carbon Tax
- Property Purchase taxes being too high
- The new foreign buyers tax not extending to farm land
- Fish set-backs
- The Heritage Act
- Water restrictions on potable and river water with the prices being punitive for farmers
- GVRD emission taxes
- Too many rules from different levels of Government
- Animal health
- Animal ID rules
- Antibiotic free beef
- GMO's
- No spraying
- Greenhouse noise
- Army worms
- Non-farming neighbours
- Farm help wages
- The difficulty of moving farm machinery due to increased traffic on the roads

Dan Kosicki – concurred with Joe's points.

Bill Park – agreed with the comments made by Joe and added that traffic especially on the Old Dewdney Trunk Road should be added to the list. He said he had had the same sentiment 20 years ago and had made a decision not to continue farming.

Dan Kosicki – said that Mr. Evans and the Public Works staff had done a good job of balancing the amount of water in the ditches over the past few months to accommodate the needs of all land owners.

He also said he thought the presentation made by Ms. Sloboda was a worthwhile discussion and dealt with real issues in the farming community.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 11:59am.