



MINUTES of the Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting held on Thursday, September 10, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. via video conference.

PRESENT:

Voting Members:	J. Bachmann L. Kemper M. Manion P. Robinson W. Wisselink
Non-Voting Members:	N. Mori, Ministry of Agriculture
Council Liaisons:	Councillor MacDonald* Councillor Simpson
Staff:	A. Berry, Director of Planning & Development (Chair) S. Ahrabian, Manager of Engineering & Facilities A. Dominelli, Development Services Technician C. O'Byrne, Project Manager D. Parr, Planner II A. Seed, Engineering Technologist A. Wallace, Manager of Community Development
Regrets:	M. Banns H. Bitter S. Howkins D. Kosicki
Secretary:	T. McCaw, Committee Clerk II

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m.

2. LATE ITEMS

There was general consent to add the following late item to the agenda:

- 5.8 – Soil Permit Application – 19831 McNeil Road

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was **MOVED** and **SECONDED** THAT the September 10, 2020 agenda for the Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting be approved as amended.

CARRIED.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

It was **MOVED** and **SECONDED** THAT the Minutes of the Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting held on March 12, 2020 be adopted.

CARRIED.

5. NEW BUSINESS

(1) New Member Introduction

A. Berry was introduced to the Committee as the City's new Director of Planning and Development, and the new Chair for the Committee. The Committee participated in a brief roundtable of introductions of all voting members.

(2) Environmental Inventory and Management Strategy

C. O'Byrne, Project Manager, provided an update on the Environmental Inventory and Management Strategy through a PowerPoint Presentation, which is included in the minutes as **Attachment 1**.

**N. Mori joined the meeting at 10: 28 a.m.*

Following the presentation, the members of the AAC provided feedback and comments where the following points were raised:

- Recommendation to invite Dr. H. Bears from Zoetica Environmental Research Services to the next AAC meeting;
- Food production needs to be the primary purpose of the ALR;
- Discussions were had around properties in Pitt Meadows that have the potential of being farmed but are not being farmed;
- Importance of determining how the study determines what is an environmental asset;

- Questions regarding experience of the consulting firm (*Staff response: the consultant has a vast amount of experience in this field*);
- Stressed importance of food production in the City especially during the pandemic; and
- Recommendations that the City is collaborating with Metro Vancouver while working on this study.

(3) **Official Community Plan Review**

D. Parr, Planner II, provided a PowerPoint presentation on the draft Agriculture Chapter and proposed policies related to Agriculture in the new draft OCP. The presentation is included in the minutes as **Attachment 2**.

Comments and questions from the Committee included:

- Concerns around the impact on farms with the 30m riparian assessment zone from a water way (*Staff response: does not apply to agricultural operations; only for residential buildings*);
- Concerns that Pitt Meadows residents will not be supportive of these new policies;
- Question regarding how this information will be presented to the public (*Staff response: the public hearing has not yet been scheduled and there will be continued discussions on a staff level on how this will unfold*);
- Request that AAC members be notified specifically when this public hearing will be held;
- Concerns that the 30m riparian assessment will be taking away a significant parcel of farmable land;
- Local concerns for sustainability of farming;
- Request for the definition of land “unavailable for farming” which was found in Chapter 9 of the draft OCP (*Staff response: will provide this definition to AAC; document has only come to council once in July 2020 and only in a draft form; OCP info can be found online at <https://www.pittmeadows.ca/our-community/city-planning-projects/official-community-plan>; encouraged AAC members to provide comments and input which can be brought forth*);

- Question regarding current riparian setback (*Staff noted that current provincial legislation is 30m for an area that triggers a riparian assessment; from there a setback is determined*);
- All AAC members, colleagues and farmers can submit in writing to the public hearing as well as submit ahead of time directly to dparr@pittmeadows.ca. Feedback will be *compiled and presented to Council*;
- Question whether the draft OCP would be coming back to the AAC (*Staff response: intent is to take all comments that are received and include them in feedback to Council as part of 2nd reading*); and
- Concern that the proposal was encouraging property owners to build without completing a riparian assessment; the cost associated with the assessment may deter people from completing it.

It was **MOVED** and **SECONDED** that the Agricultural Advisory Committee recommend to Council that the Official Community Plan include policies that support financially viable farming operations for current and future generations.

CARRIED.

(4) **Update on 2020 Action Item Tracker**

A. Berry provided a brief update on the AAC Action Item Tracker.

(5) **Update on Application Tracker**

A. Berry provided a brief update on the AAC Application Tracker.

(6) **Terms of Reference**

A. Berry reviewed the revised Terms of Reference for the AAC highlighting most significant revisions. Highlights included:

- The inclusion of a clear mandate;
- The authority to establish the Committee;
- Clear definition of governance principals and procedural rules;
- The Staff Liaison will chair all AAC committee meetings;
- The CAO determines the appointment of all new members;
- The Committee will be given an annual budget which is determined each year through the business planning process;

- There was an increase of non-voting members from five to six; and
- The membership term increased from two years to three years.

Comments and questions from the Committee included:

- Clarity was requested around the point that a member who has missed three consecutive meetings may be deemed to have resigned effective immediately as of the end of the third such meeting (*Staff response: staff will initiate a conversation with the Committee member once two consecutive meetings had been missed*); and
- Question regarding who would be the main point of contact for AAC members.

(7) **Non-Adhering Residential Use Application – 19831 McNeil Road**

A. Dominelli, Development Services Technician, presented a non-adhering residential use application for 19831 McNeil Road through a PowerPoint presentation, which is included in the minutes as **Attachment 3**.

Questions and comments from the Committee included:

- Recommendation to increase the bond;
- Concerns that the applicant may not demolish the original dwelling once the new home is built;
- Recommendation that the policy be reviewed by Council; and
- Preference to see the original home renovated instead of new home built (*Staff response: staff intend to review the policy and present it to Council in 2021*).

* Councillor MacDonald left the meeting 11:37a.m.

It was **MOVED** and **SECONDED** THAT the AAC support the non-adhering residential use application for 19831 McNeil Road subject to:

- The existing dwelling and garage being demolished upon completion of the new dwelling; and
- Receipt of a \$100,000 bond and second dwelling agreement.

CARRIED.

(8) **Soil Permit Application – 19831 McNeil Road**

A. Seed, Engineering Technician, presented a soil permit application for

19831 McNeil Road through a PowerPoint presentation, which is included in the minutes as **Attachment 4**.

Question and comments from the Committee included:

- Concerns around the applicant's lack of knowledge and awareness of City rules and regulations;
- There was general consent that this application was presented too prematurely and is not supported by the members of the AAC;
- When the applicant is in compliance with the regulations; it was requested the application be presented back to the AAC (*staff concurred with this approach*).

It was **MOVED** and **SECONDED** that the Agricultural Advisory Committee recommend that the applicant begin to move into compliance and, at the appropriate time, re-present the soil permit application to the Committee to review at that time.

CARRIED.

(9) **Committee Budget**

A. Berry provided a brief update on the 2020 Committee budget. The Committee was provided a \$10,000 budget for 2020; however, the budget has been eliminated as a result of COVID-19 impacts and costs.

Questions and comments from the Committee included:

- Members were in support of the City's decision to remove the \$10,000 budgetary allocation from the AAC;
- Question regarding was raised on whether there was any awareness by individual farmers and their risk management in Pitt Meadows and their seasonal migrant workers (Staff response: will discuss with Emergency Management Coordinator);
- The City has had to make difficult budget decisions in light of COVID-19; and
- Recommendation that AAC budget be made available for farmers and migrant workers.

6. ROUND TABLE

The Committee participated in a roundtable discussion. Highlights included:

- J. Bachman's farm has written a letter to the City's consultant Dr. Heather Bears which has been forwarded to the Committee members.
- A recommendation was made to have local farmers sponsor a food truck which would provide agricultural awareness that feeds patrons;
- It was noted that Metro Vancouver has available grants, and applications have been made for ideas similar to this;
- Thanks was given to the Committee for embracing this new form of digital meeting;
- The Pacific Agriculture Show will be moving forward this year virtually <https://www.agricultureshow.net/>;
- Great support was given for Zoom and continuing to have meetings virtually; and
- Question whether there was a backlog of applications due to not having meetings for so long (*Staff response: there was only one application that had bypassed the AAC and went straight to Council*).

7. SUMMARY OF TODAY'S ACTION ITEMS

1. Staff to invite consultant to the next AAC meeting to discuss Environmental Inventory and Management Strategy.
2. A. Berry to discuss with Corporate Services the lead role position within the newly revised Terms of Reference.
3. T. McCaw to invite B. Morgan, Emergency Management Coordinator to November AAC meeting.
4. A. Berry to provide an update on the 2021 budget for the AAC.
5. T. McCaw to send AAC members Chapter 9 of the OCP and request feedback by September 30, 2020.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:11 p.m.

*The next meeting for the **Agricultural Advisory Committee** is set for
October 8, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.*