



MINUTES of the Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting held on Thursday,
November 12, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. via video conference.

PRESENT:

Voting Members:	J. Bachmann M. Banns H. Bitter S. Howkins L. Kemper D. Kosicki M. Manion W. Wisselink
Staff:	A. Berry, Director of Planning & Development (Chair) B. Morgan, Manager, Emergency Program A. Wallace, Manager of Community Development
Council Liaisons:	Councillor MacDonald Councillor Simpson *
Guests:	Dr. W. Polasub, Senior Research Associate, Institute for Sustainable Food Systems.
Regrets:	N. Mori, Ministry of Agriculture P. Robinson
Recording Clerk:	T. McCaw, Committee Clerk II

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m.

2. LATE ITEMS

None.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was **MOVED** and **SECONDED** THAT the agenda for the November 12, 2020 Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting be approved.

CARRIED.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

It was **MOVED** and **SECONDED** THAT the Minutes of the Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting held on October 8, 2020 be adopted.

CARRIED.

5. NEW BUSINESS

(1) ALC Approved Non-Farm Use & Subdivision Application Study Update

Dr. W. Polasub, Senior Research Associate, Institute for Sustainable Food Systems, provided a presentation on the preliminary results of an analysis of approved non-farm use subdivision applications in Metro Vancouver, from 1997 – 2016, which is included in the minutes as **Attachment 1**. Highlights included:

- Results of a recent study across Canada showed 8/10 Canadians felt it was important to strengthen our local regional food systems;
- ALR land is minimal in BC and it must remain protected in order to sustain viable agriculture;
- Only 5% of BC's land base is sustainable for agriculture;
- Although the ALC protects the ALR; the ALC cannot force land owners to farm;
- Data analysis was done on subdivision and non-farm use applications in order to assess the land use outcome of parcels where subdivision and non-farm use activities were approved;
- When analyzing data across six local municipalities, it was identified that there were more non-farm use applications than subdivision applications across all six municipalities; and
- The study further analyzed post approval status of each parcel and if the land had changed ownership since the application was approved.

Questions and Comments from the Committee included:

- Feedback was given stating the importance of having acreage identified in the study;
- The request was made for the study to present the geographical orientation of each parcel being removed from ALR in proximity to urban boundaries;
- Clarification was requested on the definition of 'farming' in this study *(the presenter shared that acreage identification of each parcel was an oversight in the study; there are maps that identify the lands which can be shared as long as there is no breach of privacy; definition of farming was based off of the farmland classifications of BC Assessments);*
- What percentage of approved non-farm use applications were presented and approved by the AAC vs. ones that were presented and not approved by the AAC but still approved by the ALC *(the presenter noted that ALC has this information and will work to include this in the final version of the study);*
- The question was raised as to how many of the home site severance subdivisions transpired in the timeframe of this study *(the presenter noted the number was quite low);*
- Feedback was given expressing the importance of sharing this information with the public; there is only 5% of BC's land available for agriculture and farming which is vital for the future of farming;
- The request was made to have this study presented to Council once completed;
- It was requested to have the applications plotted and identified on a map which would be a helpful visual tool *(Staff to look into this to determine if there are any privacy concerns with this);*
- The request was made to provide more data on commercial applications *(the presenter noted that commercial categories were identified and coded in the study);*
- Maps of ALR areas in BC and Metro Vancouver can be found at:
 - <https://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/alc/content/alr-maps/maps-and-gis>
 - https://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/assets/alc/assets/about-the-alc/alr-and-maps/maps-and-gis/south_coast_administrative_region.pdf

* Councillor Simpson left the meeting at 11:01 a.m.

(2) **Evacuation Plan for Local Farms, Livestock & Migrant Workers**

B. Morgan, Manager of Emergency Programs, provided a verbal presentation on the evacuation plan for the City of Pitt Meadows in the event of an emergency. Highlights included:

- There are opportunities for activation & response recovery in the event of a catastrophic event which can be claimed through EMBC (Emergency Management of British Columbia);
- The City is working on a joint evacuation plan with our neighboring cities; and
- The City does not have a current Agricultural Evacuation Plan; however, would like to engage with the members of the AAC and work on updating this plan together.

Questions and Comments from the Committee included:

- Concerns were raised that the City did not have a concrete agricultural evacuation plan;
- Concerns were raised around financial aid & support for farmers experiencing damages to agricultural land & structures due to natural disasters (*Staff responded that Disaster Financial Aid would generally provide support where insurance did not cover; however, there is an expectation that farm owners are self-insured*);
- The question was raised if therapeutic riding centres would be provided with compensation in the event of an evacuation even though they are not technically farming (*Staff will look into this and report back to the AAC*);
- The question was raised if bees were considered livestock under the City's program (*Staff will look into this and report back to the AAC*);
- The question was raised around assistance for migrant workers in the event of an emergency under the City's program (*Staff noted there is a program with Emergency Support Services which includes a plan for all people living/working in Pitt Meadows*);
- It was noted that in the event of an emergency evacuation, it would be imperative that farmers be allowed back and forth to their farms as it takes many trips to move livestock (*Staff will confirm that this is a part of the Evacuation Plan*).

(3) **Terms of Reference**

A. Berry, Director of Planning and Development, verbally provided an update to the Committee regarding the questions brought up during the September 10, 2020 review of the new Terms of Reference. Highlights included:

- Committee is able to appoint a “go to” person who will act as point of contact for the AAC and not City Staff.

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

A. Berry, Director of Planning and Development, provided an update on the AAC Action Item Tracker.

(5) **Update on AAC Application Tracker**

A. Berry, Director of Planning and Development, provided an update on the AAC Application Tracker.

6. ROUND TABLE

The Committee participated in a round table discussion. Highlights included:

- Thanks was given to Dr. W. Polasub for today’s presentation on behalf of Kwantlen Polytechnic University;
- Appreciation was given to the City for the generator upgrades to the pump stations;
- It was stressed that updating of the City’s agricultural evacuation plans was an important task to complete;
- Concerns were raised around the S. Alouette River regarding the halting of dredging and if the water levels were closely monitored as the water levels are getting higher;
- The recommendation was made to see freeboard monitoring between the bottom of the river and the top of the dikes on the S. Alouette River (*Staff will look into the details on how this is currently monitored*);
- Concerns were raised around the number of homeless people on the north side of Pitt Meadows;

- There was a recommendation that the City become more vigilant with the concerns around the homeless population in the City (*Staff responded that property owners must monitor their vacant lands; however, the City is doing their best in working with Bylaws, Fire and Police to keep this issue contained*);
- One AAC member noted their tractor was stolen from their rental property on Kennedy Road which has now resulted in the installation of cameras (*The City is looking into an independent detachment and all members of the AAC and residents of Pitt Meadows are encouraged to report all criminal activity to the local RCMP detachment*);
- The suggestion was made to discuss the homeless concerns along the trails and dikes in Pitt Meadows that are maintained and owned by Metro at the next Metro AAC meeting;
- The recommendation was made for members of the AAC to write a letter to Council voicing their concerns on the issue of increased homelessness and crime within the City; and
- The question was raised about Metro adding 56 hectares into the Codd Wetland Ecological Conservancy, and if Pitt Meadows would see any funds from the land acquisition (*Council Liaisons noted that Pitt Meadows did not sell any land and Metro had purchased this from other entities*).

7. SUMMARY OF TODAY'S ACTION ITEMS

1. Emergency Management workbooks to be shared digitally with the AAC as an attachment in conjunction with the presentation by B. Morgan.
2. Revision and update of the TOR to be presented at the next AAC meeting.
3. Staff to look into how the S. Alouette River is being monitored and if dredging is still being completed.
4. Members of the AAC to put forward a letter to Council regarding their experience with the increased theft and homeless activity in the area.
5. Staff to look into what percentage of approved non-farm use applications were presented and approved by the AAC in the last 10 years vs. ones that were presented and not approved by the AAC but still approved by the ALC.

6. KPU to present findings upon completion of the ALC approved non-farm use and subdivision application study to Council.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:46 a.m.

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