



AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDA

Tuesday, July 28, 2020

Meeting will be Held Online via ZOOM

CALL TO ORDER 3:30 pm

AGENDA

1. Adoption of the Agenda

DELEGATION

MINUTES

2. Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of February 25 & June 23, 2020 (*Receipt and Adoption*) Pages 1 - 6

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

REPORTS

3. Community Amenity Contribution for Agriculture on the Sunshine Coast Pages 7 - 10

NEW BUSINESS

NEXT MEETING

ADJOURNMENT

**SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

February 25, 2020

MINUTES FROM THE AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN THE CEDAR ROOM AT THE SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT OFFICES, 1975 FIELD ROAD, SECHELT, BC

PRESENT:	Chair	Paul Nash
	Members	Gretchen Bozak Raquel Kolof (part) Jon Bell Gerald Rainville Erin Dutton David Morgan Barbara Seed Faye Kiewitz
ALSO PRESENT:	Electoral Area F Director	Mark Hiltz (Non-Voting Board Liaison)
	Electoral Area E Director	Donna McMahon (Non-Voting Board Liaison)
	Senior Planner	Yuli Siao
	Water Conservation Assistant	Jen Callaghan (part)
	Recording Secretary	Genevieve Dixon
	Public	4

CALL TO ORDER 3:32 p.m.

AGENDA The agenda was adopted as follows:

DELEGATION

Angela Boss, Regional Agrologist (Sea to Sky/Central Fraser Valley) B.C., Ministry of Agriculture

Key points of discussion:

- Support local government by reviewing referrals at meetings.
- The land use inventory results will be presented to the SCRD Board and staff in May 2020.
- Visits to the Sunshine Coast will be based on demand.

MINUTES

Recommendation No. 1 *AAC Meeting Minutes of January 28, 2020*

The Agricultural Advisory Committee recommended that the meeting minutes of January 28, 2020 be received and adopted as presented.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Note for staff to send clarification to AAC members if farmers are eligible to get the additional \$500.00 water harvesting rebate, if already received the first \$500.00 rebate.

REPORTS

First Reading of Bylaw No.s 310.174 and 675.3 (Secret Cove Heights)

Key points of discussion:

- Senior Planner gave a brief introduction on the proposed bylaw and OCP amendments.
- Dynamic rural zoning being proposed.
- Rural land covered up by 50% by greenhouses and 35% for other structures the land for farming will be reduced for future use.
- Not ALR land.
- No concrete flooring in greenhouses.
- One hectare lots. (2 ½ acres)
- Chickens for personal use and could obtain a Class D/E license for abattoir for local sales.
- Small scale agriculture is the future.
- No issues from an agriculture perspective.
- Could be farm implications from land alterations near farmland in the close proximity.

Recommendation No. 2 *First Reading of Bylaw No.s 310.174 and 675.3 (Secret Cove Heights)*

The Agricultural Advisory Committee recommends and supports commercial farming in addition to personal use in this rural dynamic zone.

Recommendation No. 3 *First Reading of Bylaw No.s 310.174 and 675.3 (Secret Cove Heights)*

The Agricultural Advisory Committee supports the proposal as presented with the condition that the combined coverage of all buildings, structures and impermeable surfaces not exceed 50% lot coverage.

West Howe Sound Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw 640.3 and Zoning Amendment Bylaw 310.188 (O'Toole)

Key points of discussion:

- The Senior Planner gave a brief introduction on the proposed bylaw and OCP amendments.
- Proposed buffer on the east side of the property is five metres wide.
- Property is adjacent to farmland. Future property buyers should be made aware of agricultural noise around this property.

Recommendation No. 4 *West Howe Sound Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw 640.3 and Zoning Amendment Bylaw 310.188 (O’Toole)*

The Agricultural Advisory Committee supports the staff report as presented.

NEW BUSINESS

Notice of BCTS Operations Plan

- Received as information

New Residential Options Proposed for Agricultural Land

- Staff to add onto March agenda package.

NEXT MEETING Tuesday, March 24, 2020

ADJOURNMENT 5:11 p.m.

**SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

June 23, 2020

MINUTES FROM THE AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ONLINE VIA ZOOM MEETING DUE TO COVID-19 RESTRICTION

PRESENT:	Chair	Paul Nash
	Members	Gretchen Bozak Raquel Kolof Barbara Seed David Morgan Erin Dutton Faye Kiewitz Jon Bell
ALSO PRESENT:	Electoral Area F Director	Mark Hiltz (Non-Voting Board Liaison)
	Electoral Area E Director	Donna McMahon (Non-Voting Board Liaison)
	Planner 1/Senior Planner	Julie Clark
	Recording Secretary	Genevieve Dixon
	Public	0
REGRETS		Gerald Rainville

CALL TO ORDER 3:39 p.m.

AGENDA The agenda was amended with the following:

New Version: Community Amenity Contribution for Agriculture on the Sunshine Coast

MINUTES

Recommendation No. 1 *AAC Meeting Minutes of January 28, 2020*

The Agricultural Advisory Committee recommended that the meeting minutes of January 28, 2020 be received and adopted as presented.

REPORTS

Application ALR00012 CRN00098 for a Proposed 3-Lot Subdivision in the Agricultural Land Reserve (2061 Twin Creeks Road)

Key points of discussion:

- Planner 1/Senior Planner gave a brief introduction on the application on behalf of the report author.
- The subdivision is not supported without further information from applicant.
- Applicant wouldn't be taking any land out of the ALR. An issue would be if the bottom Lot was made into two then it would be taken out of the ALR.
- Proposed Lot C is out of the ALR and Lots A & B are in the ALR.
- Proposed community garden was not planned out in the report.
- In favour of dividing Lot A & B diagonally.
- Fencing for the community garden would be sufficient.
- Main Lot has access issues.
- Current proposal does not provide enough information on feasible agricultural cultivation?
- Surface water collection makes an ALR application a great feature.
- Provincial water licence would be required.

Recommendation No. 2 *Application ALR00012 CRN00098 for a Proposed 3-Lot Subdivision in the Agricultural Land Reserve (2061 Twin Creeks Road)*

The Agricultural Advisory Committee supports the staff recommendation to not approve the subdivision in the ALR portion of the proposal.

Community Amenity Contribution for Agriculture on the Sunshine Coast

Key points of discussion:

- The Planner 1/Senior Planner gave a brief introduction on the report on behalf of the report author.
- Two amenity contributions, offered on a voluntary process.
- Applications that are associated with agricultural in some way. Lots of different types of amenity contributions.
- No policy currently.
- 2013 there was a contribution.
- Any proposals that lower costs to farmers would be supported.
- Processing and cold storage nearly all a failure, costly to manage and maintain.
- Rebates for water for farmers in the coming year.
- Community gardens have very little to contribute to food security, more for hobbyists.
- Community building for agriculture education workshops for local farmers.
- Lack of food sources (animals) on the Sunshine Coast due to quota and processing.
- Class D & E licences are needed.
- Processing packaging facility that includes cold storage.
- Contribution to farmers with farm status.
- Poly Tunnels and water infrastructure.
- Money should be given directly to farmers.
- High commercial water rates with three month rate charges.
- Funding issues, Provincial funds would eventually diminish.
- Further discussion is required.
- Winter and fall food production is important and currently not happening for majority of farmers.
- Funding for equipment for poly tunnels.
- Hobby gardening is not relevant for this money.
- Long term food resiliency.

- No deadline in place currently.
- No recommendations made at this time.
- Staff to bring report back to the July AAC meeting.

NEXT MEETING Tuesday, July 28, 2020

ADJOURNMENT 5:00 p.m.

SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT STAFF REPORT

TO: Agricultural Advisory Commission – June 23, 2020

AUTHOR: Kasha Janota-Bzowska, Planning Technician I

SUBJECT: Community Amenity Contribution for Agriculture on the Sunshine Coast

RECOMMENDATION(S)

THAT the report titled Community Amenity Contribution for Agriculture on the Sunshine Coast be received;

AND THAT this report be referred to the Agricultural Advisory Commission for comment and a recommendation.

AND FURTHER THAT an updated report be provided to a future Planning and Community Development Committee meeting.

BACKGROUND

The SCR D Board adopted the following resolution at its regular meeting of July 25, 2019.

204/19 **Recommendation No. 22** *Community Amenity Contribution for Agriculture*

THAT staff research options and seek advice from the Agricultural Advisory Committee regarding uses for the community amenity contribution, such as helping farmers with water, and report back to Committee.

This report highlights existing policies and accessible funds received through various voluntary community amenity contributions in relation to supporting agriculture on the Sunshine Coast.

The report identifies areas of opportunity for utilization of the voluntary community amenity contribution funds to create a program in support of agriculture on the Sunshine Coast.

The purpose of this report is to begin preliminary consultation with the Agricultural Advisory Commission on how the SCR D can best offer support to the local Agricultural industry.

DISCUSSION

Analysis

The SCR D has secured \$83,500.00 in funding in support of Agriculture on the Sunshine Coast.

As part of first steps towards staff research and information gathering, the Agricultural Advisory Commission is requested to provide comments and a recommendation as to how the community amenity contribution funding to support agriculture can best be utilized for the community benefit.

SCR D Community Amenity Contribution Revenue

Below is a summary of the voluntary agricultural amenity contributions received to date:

Table 1 – Available Funding

Related Planning File	Funding Rationale	Amount Received
Bylaw Amendment No. 310.175 (Youngman).	Voluntary Amenity Contribution to Support Agriculture on the Sunshine Coast.	\$8,500.00
ALR # D-59 (Green for 1312 District Lands Inc.).	Voluntary Amenity Contribution to Support Agriculture on the Sunshine Coast.	\$75,000.00

The total amount to be used in support of agriculture on the Sunshine Coast is **\$83,500.00**.

Funding Limitations for Local Governments and Local Farmers

When collaborating on the possible ways in which the funding can best be spent for the community benefit, it is important to consider SCR D’s obligations to the *Local Government Act*.

Section 273 “General prohibition against assistance to business” of the *Local Government Act* states that “as a limitation on section 263 (1) (c) [assistance for community benefit], a board must not provide assistance to an industrial, commercial or business undertaking”.

It is important to note that property owners who utilize their land for agricultural purposes have the opportunity to obtain “farm status” from BC Assessment. Farm Status indicates that a farm business is being run on the property that has a net income greater than the Farm Status threshold.

Property owners with Farm Status are running a business, and as referenced above are therefore unable to be supported by Local Governments such as through funding opportunities or rebate programs.

Existing Policies for Agriculture on the Sunshine Coast

The text below summarizes existing SCR D policies relating to Agriculture in the region:

1. We Envision: Regional Sustainability Plan

Under the Targets and Actions for Community Food Security, the Plan states that:

In order to connect the community to the local food system by 2020, we need to;

- a) Increase the skills and knowledge of local residents to both produce for, and purchase from, the local food system;
- b) Encourage organizations in the businesses, food security, and education sectors to work together to leverage skill and jobs in the area of food production and preservation;

- c) Provide incentives for public-sector and community groups to promote food security and grow and preserve their own food, as well as make local foods accessible to, and affordable for all people;
- d) Encourage community gardens in neighbourhoods, schools, civic and business areas; and
- e) Link farmers to social service, supportive housing, and care providers.

2. 2015 Sunshine Coast Agricultural Area Plan

The Sunshine Coast Agricultural Area Plan also is intended to enable local agriculture – not only as a viable economic sector, but as a means for all Sunshine Coast residents, individually and collectively, to become more food self-sufficient and, as a community, more resilient. The Plan presents a growing opportunity for the community.

To be successful, this Plan focuses on sowing the seeds for the many collaborations necessary to identify, prioritize, strategize, implement and grow a Coastal food system. Overall it sets out to:

- a) Identify opportunities to strengthen farming and develop agriculture as an economic driver;
- b) Increase the amount of, and access to, locally grown and produced food;
- c) Build community resilience to geopolitical uncertainty, climate change and rising costs of food and energy; and
- d) Develop clear policies that serve to protect, preserve and promote agriculture while preserving the rural character of the Sunshine Coast.

This Plan has six strategic goals and areas of focus for achieving its mission:

- (1) Protect farms, improve farming opportunities, and expand access to land for agriculture;
- (2) Secure a sustainable water supply for agriculture;
- (3) Develop a viable Coastal food system;
- (4) Educate and increase awareness of Coastal food and agriculture;
- (5) Advance and promote sustainable agricultural practices; and
- (6) Prepare for and adapt to climate change.

3. Current Official Community Plans

Currently the Official Community Plans for West Howe Sound, Elphinstone, Roberts Creek, Halfmoon Bay and Egmont / Pender Harbour contain policies regarding Agriculture.

However, there is an opportunity to improve these policies by expanding their scope and enhance the coordination and consistency among these plans.

Possible Options to Consider

An internal review by staff in several departments generated a preliminary list of ideas for utilizing the community amenity contribution. These ideas can be used to start the conversation with the AAC, further ideas are welcome:

- Build on the existing Rainwater Harvesting Rebate Program;
- Investigate options for offering rebates micro-drip irrigation systems on a per acre basis;

- Engage with SCREDO (Sunshine Coast Regional Economic Development Organization) on how best to spend the accumulated funds, as they may have more flexibility than the SCRDC.
- Implementation of a Plan that identifies sufficient space for the collection of waste, recycling, and organics, as well as disposal options, end of life of the infrastructure, and cross collaboration between farmers, such as accepting spent grains from breweries;
- Promote organic agriculture and improve the well-being of farm animals;
- Establish a “Sunshine Coast Community Garden Task Force” to identify suitable areas for constructing community gardens in the village hubs for local citizens to utilize and enjoy;
- Food Systems Planning and investing in a “Regional Food Strategy” for the Sunshine Coast.
- Start a “Farmland Trust” in partnership with the Sunshine Coast Farmers Institute; and
- Install permanent high fencing around existing agricultural areas along the Sunshine Coast to help keep the elk and deer out, which would likely enhance crops that might yield higher.

Organizational and Intergovernmental Implications

The Agricultural Advisory Commission may have input on stakeholders who would have a vested interest in the creation of a program in support of agriculture on the Sunshine Coast.

Financial Implications

The voluntary community amenity contributions in support of agriculture on the Sunshine Coast will benefit the community.

Timeline for Next Steps

A staff report incorporating referral comments will be provided to the Planning and Community Development Committee at a future meeting.

STRATEGIC PLAN AND RELATED POLICIES

The subject of this report aligns with SCRDC values for engagement, collaboration and environmental stewardship.

CONCLUSION

The SCRDC Planning Division has obtained \$83,500.00 from two voluntary community amenity contributions in support of Agriculture on the Sunshine Coast.

Staff are actively engaged in researching a suitable program to utilize the allocated funds.

It would be appreciated if you would examine this report and give us your comments.

Reviewed by:			
Manager	X – D.Pady	Finance	X –
GM	X –	Legislative	X –
CAO	X –	Other	