

**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, April 13th, 2017

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Joe Bachmann, Co-chair
Leo Captein, Co-chair
Macky Banns
Bruce Bell, Council Liaison
Janis Elkerton, Alternate Council Liaison
Dieter Geesing, Ministry of Agriculture
Bob Hopcott
Dan Kosicki
Mike Manion
Scott Pelton
Mike Stark, Acting Council Liaison

REGRETS:

Hank Bitter
Bill Park

STAFF:

Kate Zanon, Director of Community Services,
Meeting Chair
Forrest Smith, Director of Engineering and
Operations
Lisa Grant, Manager of Community Development
Dana Parr, Planner
Elaine Harrison, Recorder

GUESTS:

Mark Barclay
Christian Hall
Bill Leverage
Steve Robinson
Harry Severinski

The meeting was called to order at 10:00am.

Adoption of Minutes February 9th, 2017

Moved by Leo Captein and seconded by Dan Kosicki that the minutes of February 9th, 2017 be adopted.

CARRIED

Housing in the ALR – Council in Committee Presentation

Lisa Grant, Manager of Community Development gave a presentation to the Committee regarding proposed changes to the size and zoning of housing in the ALR following a Resolution from Council (marked Attachment A). Staff had been instructed draft new zoning regulations and obtain comments from interested parties before taking it back to Council for first reading. The AAC was asked to provide input and they had raised the following points:-

- Farmers need to have options for more than 1 dwelling on a parcel of land to accommodate farm help
- One policy cannot cover all situations and applications need to be looked at on a case by case basis
- Placement of houses can be an issue as houses in the middle of the parcel can have large driveways and take away agricultural land
- Defining the location of the house on the parcel can cause issues for the farmer, farmers need to be allowed discretion
- 18,000 sq. ft. is an extremely large limit for house size, could this be reduced to 10,000 sq. ft.

Other related comments:

- People who build large homes in the ALR often then make complaints about farming practices
- Question whether parcels of less than 10 acres can produce a lot of agriculture

- Questions whether farm hands need to live on the parcel of land 24 hrs a day
- Questions if a farmers move away, what will happen to the large structures

Proposed Regulations for Special Events on Farmland

Dana Parr, Planner gave a presentation to the Committee regarding special events on farmland (marked Attachment B) as follow up to the new ALC policy created in the fall of 2016. The City proposes to track the applications and events that take place in 2017 and then review the findings in the fall. Staff is in the process of determining the most common City Bylaws that will cover such events such as noise levels and working though information to provide applicants and enforcement procedures. An additional Bylaw Officer position is in progress of being hired to cover evenings and weekends.

Some Committee members were concerned that the extra traffic the events create may cause parking problems on the roadway and make it difficult for large farm equipment to pass by. They felt that there was value in talking to other municipalities to get their feedback on how the Policy had been interpreted and include that information in the review.

Drainage Policy Review – update

Ms. Zanon asked the Co-Chairs if they would be willing to suspend the usual procedures to allow the public to take part in the discussion. The Co-Chairs agreed.

Forrest Smith, Director of Engineering and Operations reminded the Committee of the Sub-Committee meeting that had taken place on November 30th which had been well attended by the farming community and where an agreement had been made regarding suggested changes to the pump settings in all 4 areas. The costs of making the changes had been estimated to be roughly \$10,000 annually. Since the meeting two letters had been received from Meadowlands Farms asking the Committee to re-consider the decision and had asked for a different level in their farming area. Staff represented the policy information to see what recommendation the AAC would like to take forward for Council consideration.

The Committee and guests raised the following issues:-

- The Sub-Committee had accommodated all of the suggestions raised by the stakeholders present and had recommended 3 changes
- Meadowlands Farm was asking for closer to summer levels in the spring
- Farmers had made applications for water licences but the changes in pump settings made the licences worthless
- Farmers should not be pitted against each other
- The weather should dictate the settings not the policy
- Structures could be placed in the ditches to help retain more water
- A policy is needed so that staff has clear guidelines on the settings; it will be challenging to have farmers phoning the Operations Superintendent asking for changes on an individual case by case basis.

Moved by Joe Bachmann and seconded by Leo Captein that the recommendations from the November 30th, 2016 sub-committee meeting be forwarded to Council except for the pump settings for Area #3 pump (McKechnie) which now be -0.1 to -0.3 for the months of March and April

CARRIED

Roundtable

Dan Kosicki – said that he had recently attended the Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Awards and two Pitt Meadows farmers had been acknowledged by the Chamber in the Agricultural Industry category. These were Leo Captein’s farm and Kevin Severinski’s farm. The Severinski farm had won the award. He commented how nice it was to see Pitt Meadows businesses being recognised.

Mike Manion – said that he had recently handed out four \$20,000 cheques on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture for the Innovative Challenge Awards in the following areas

- a solution to biodegradable twine for the greenhouse industry
- early disease detection in greenhouses
- waste treatment research on a farm digester to make it economical
- the use of drone technology to scare off birds

Leo Captein – asked if an Agenda item could be included in an upcoming meeting regarding the new #4 pump station and how it will affect drainage.

Dieter Geesing – advised that there had been some staff changes at the Ministry of Agriculture.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:23 am.

Attachment A

Council Resolution

- At the November 1, 2016 Council Meeting the following resolution was passed:

“...THAT the letter from the AAC dated September 23, 2016 be referred to staff for advice and further that staff be directed to include reference to other jurisdictions, such as the City of Richmond and report back to Council.”



Overview

- Current situation
- City's current regulations
- Survey of other communities
- Options for addressing housing



Provincial Context

- Agricultural Land Commission regulates farming and other uses;
- Ministry of Agriculture provides guidance on the use of agricultural land; and
- Housing is a mandate of local governments.



Current Situation

- Pressure on small (under 4 ha) ALR parcels to provide housing for estate developments.
- Estate developments lead to loss of farm land and conflicts with neighbouring farm operations.



Current Situation: Pitt Meadows

- Approximately 80% of land base is in the ALR;
- 729 parcels located in the ALR;
- 553 are classified as “farm” by BC Assessment;
- 224 of 339 parcels are classified as “farm” are less than 4 ha (10 acres) – 66 % are farmed.



Current Situation: Pitt Meadows

- Since 2016, the number of building permits is increasing for large residential structures in the ALR.
- largest proposal is for a 2,880 m sq (31,000 sq ft) structure.

	Number of Building Permits Issued over 465m sq (5,000 sq ft)
2013	1
2014	1
2015	0
2016	5
Total	7



Current Situation: City of Richmond

- City of Richmond has received 30 Building Permit Applications since 2013 for structures exceeding 929 m sq (10,000 sq ft).
- Largest proposal to date 3,809 m sq (41,000 sq ft).



Current Situation:

- **Characteristics of these large structures:**
 - Many ancillary uses (e.g. tennis courts, pools, detached garages, etc.);
 - Structure has similarities to accommodation type buildings (lack of relationship to a backyard, limited common gathering areas, sparse laundry and cooking space).



Pitt Meadows' Current Regulations

- **Residential uses are limited to:**
 - Lot coverage is 5% or less for properties less than 4ha (10 acres);
 - Lot coverage is 1% or less for properties 4 ha (10 acres) or greater;
 - Maximum height is 2 ½ storeys or 10 m (33 ft);
 - A second dwelling is permitted on lots greater than 8 ha (20 acres) in size.



Ministry of Agriculture

- Enacted a Minister's Bylaw (2011).
- Requires that Local Government consider the Bylaw when applying zoning changes.
- Sets out siting (building location) and size restriction guidance:
 - Locate residential uses within 60 m (197 ft) of a roadway;
 - Restrict the residential footprint to 2000 m sq (0.49 acre);
 - Restrict the floor area of a residence to 500 m sq (5,381 ft sq).



Examples from other Communities

Corporation of Delta

- Delta's zoning bylaw limits the size of single family dwelling based on parcel size:
- On a lot less than 8 ha (20 acres)
 - Principal residence 330 m² (3,552 ft²)
 - Second residence 180 m² (1,938 ft²)
- One a lot greater than 8 ha (20 acres)
 - Principal residence 465 m² (5,005 ft²)
 - Second residence 233 m² (2,508 ft²)

City of Richmond

- Considering the following approaches:
- Limiting residential uses consistent with the Minister's Bylaw including location, size of the residential footprint and limiting the size of the single family dwelling;
 - Limiting house size only based on Minister's Bylaw;
 - Model regulations based on the Corporation of Delta's Zoning Bylaw including dwelling size, farm home plate and setbacks;
 - Model regulations based on the Corporation of Delta's Zoning Bylaw to control dwelling size only.



Key Questions

- What is the best approach to prevent large estate homes and other non-farm use structures in the ALR?
- How does the City want to continue to preserve and protect the future viability of farmland in Pitt Meadows?



Additional Considerations

- Ensure regulation does not negatively impact multi-generational family farm operations.



Option 1: Ministry of Ag Guidelines

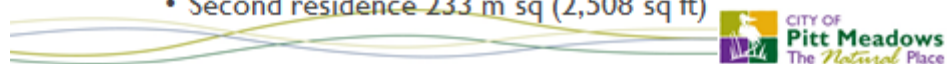
- Amend Zoning Bylaw to limit house size to 500 m sq (5,382 sq ft)

*house size is limited regardless of the number of storeys



Option 2: Delta Model

- Limit house size based on lot size
 - Lots less than 8 ha (20 acres)
 - Principal residence 330 m sq (3,552 sq ft)
 - Second residence 180 m sq (1,938 sq ft)
 - Lots greater than 8 ha (20 acres)
 - Principal residence 465 m sq (5,005 sq ft)
 - Second residence 233 m sq (2,508 sq ft)



Option 3: Building Code

- Limit building footprint size based on the BC Code to 600 m sq (6,458 sq ft).
*this is the threshold for a complex building
- This would allow for a house size up to 1,672 m sq (18,000 sq ft).



Option 4: Number of Dwellings

- Limit the number of dwellings to one;
- Applications for an additional dwelling would require rezoning.




Next Steps

- Staff is seeking Council direction on a preferred option.



Appendix B




Gathering for an Event in the Agricultural Land Reserve

Agricultural Advisory Committee
April 13, 2017



Background

- New ALC Policy “Activities Designated as a Permitted Non-Farm Use: Gathering for an Event in the ALR” adopted in October 2016.
 - Allows gatherings for an event that are not connected to agri-tourism



Gathering for an Event: Conditions of the ALC Policy

- Must be assessed as farm
- No permanent facilities constructed for gatherings under the policy
- Parking must be available on the farm
- Not more than 150 people
- No more than 24 hours in duration
- Not more than 10 gatherings of any type in a year



Interpretation

- Cannot be prohibited by local government. Can be regulated
- Where more than one farm business is being operated on a farm, the maximum of 10 events a year applies
- No requirement to market or promote agriculture or agricultural products
- Negative impact to agriculture must be avoided
 - Noise
 - Trespass
 - Vandalism
 - Blocking access
- Events can include weddings, corporate retreats, concerts, art festivals, theatre, fund raisers, sports
- Permanent facilities include buildings or permanent structures, hard surface parking areas, concrete pads, structural foundations, retaining walls, permanent tents (erected for more than 90 days) and permanent alteration to the landscape (fill, gravel, berms, hills, dugouts, amphitheatres).
- The conversion of existing buildings and the construction associated with bringing them up to public assembly building code is also deemed as the construction or erection of a permanent facility.



Proposed City of Pitt Meadows Permitting Process

- Purpose: To track events, ensure compliance, avoid conflicts
- Dedicated application form based on business licence application form
- Report all events on single form (event type, contact name, date, estimated number of people)
- Option to add events at later date
- Site Plan (for parking)
- Application fee (charged under the Business Licensing and Regulation Bylaw)



Proposed Best Practices Brochure

- Contents:
 - Conditions of the ALC Policy
 - Recommended best practices
 - Parking standard (1 parking spot per 5 guests, relaxation if shuttle used)
 - Noise (no music after 11 pm) & must also comply with City noise bylaw
 - Other?



City Bylaws

- Events must comply with all other City bylaws:
 - Zoning Bylaw (parking)
 - Noise Control Bylaw
 - Fireworks and Pyrotechnics Bylaw



Other

- Must comply with all other agency bylaws
 - Liquor Control and Licensing
 - Fraser Health
 - Right to Farm
- Review application process late 2017



Next Steps

- Preparation of application form and information brochure
- Council update report

