

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO

**MINUTES OF THE AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY, JUNE 22, 2012 AT 2:00 PM
IN THE RDN COMMITTEE ROOM**

Present:

Director D. Johnstone	Chairperson
Director J. Fell	Electoral Area F
C. Evans	Representative (South)
A. Benson	Representative (South)
C. Springford	Representative (North)
A. Brown	Representative (North)
K. Reid	Representative (North)
R. Wahlgren	Representative (North)

Also in Attendance:

W. Haddow	BC Ministry of Agriculture
S. Kass	Vancouver Island Exhibition
K. Streeter	Vancouver Island Exhibition
B. Veenhof	Director, Electoral Area H
P. Thorkelsson	General Manager of Strategic and Community Development
J. Holm	Manager, Current Planning
L. Rowett	Senior Planner
N. Hewitt	Recording Secretary

Regrets:

Director B. Dempsey	District of Lantzville
J. McLeod	Representative (South)

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:08 pm by the Chair.

DELEGATE

Karen Streeter, Vice President and Stephen Kass, Treasurer, Vancouver Island Exhibition, re Verbal Update on Plans for Future Use of the VIEX Agricultural Buildings.

Mr. Kass provided a brief overview of the goals and objectives of the VIEX and updated the committee on potential uses for the proposed VIEX Agricultural Buildings.

MINUTES

MOVED J. Fell, SECONDED C. Springford, that the minutes of the Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting held on April 27, 2012 be adopted.

CARRIED

REPORTS

Agricultural Land Use Inventory / Water Demand Model Project.

MOVED J. Fell, SECONDED C. Springford, that the presentation be received.

CARRIED

Survey Results for Agricultural Area Plan and Media Coverage.

MOVED C. Springford, SECONDED J. Fell, that the presentation be received.

CARRIED

Draft Agricultural Area Plan and Summary of Revisions.

The Committee received the Draft Agricultural Area Plan dated June 15th, 2012 and a summary of revisions since May 1st, 2012 draft. The Committee considered further revisions to the plan based on survey feedback.

MOVED C. Springford, SECONDED J. Fell, that Vision Statement be revised to:

“Agriculture and aquaculture in the region will be valued and farmland will be protected from development. Residents will recognize agriculture and aquaculture as important industries and will respect the role of food producers within both rural and urban settings. Farms will be affordable and profitable and apprenticeships and other training programs will be locally available so that younger generations will be able to join a thriving industry. Alternative land tenure arrangements for housing family and workers on farmland will be common practice. More collaboration will occur between stakeholders and communities to promote shared resources and develop value-added products. Sustainable farming techniques will be elevated and supported. All levels of government will provide expertise and support for agriculture and aquaculture through: the provision of extension services and information; proactive planning for infrastructure, emergency management, and climate change; and the creation of bylaws and streamlined regulations that support agriculture and aquaculture”.

CARRIED

MOVED A. Brown, SECONDED K. Reid, that the following statement be included in the Introduction:

The Agricultural Area Plan supports both agriculture and aquaculture (as defined in the Plan) and recognizes that there are potential sources of conflict between the activities of these industries, in particular the issues of water use and the potential effects of runoff

from agricultural and urban land uses into aquaculture sites. The recommendations and actions outlined in the AAP endeavour to address these potential conflicts in a proactive manner in support of both agriculture and aquaculture and to encourage better communication between the two industries. For example, refer to actions 1.3G, 2.2F, 2.5D, 4.1B, 4.1F, 4.2B, and 7.1D.

CARRIED

MOVED J. Fell, SECONDED C. Evans, that the following statement be incorporated into Section 1.0 – Introduction:

The relationship between food production to food consumption provides us with a theoretical estimate the local food capacity of a region. However, it can be challenging to obtain accurate numbers regarding current levels of local food consumption vs. production vs. capacity. Furthermore, the types of crops being grown change rapidly according to market conditions. Most regions do not contain enough nutritional variety to form a complete diet (Morrison, 2011). Some studies have been completed to perform statistical analysis to compare food capacity between Local Health Areas (which make up the Regional Health Authorities) in BC (Morrison, 2011; Morrison, Nelson, and Ostry, 2011). Results from these studies suggest that food capacity on Vancouver Island is more limited than that of the Northern and Peace Region, the Okanagan, and the east Fraser Valley.

CARRIED

MOVED R. Wahlgren, SECONDED C. Springford, that the following paragraphs be inserted into Section 5.1 after paragraph 2 to explain the purpose and history of the ALR:

Up to the 1970s nearly 6,000 hectares of prime agricultural land were lost each year to urban and other uses. The Provincial government responded by introducing BC's Land Commission Act on April 18, 1973. The Land Commission, appointed by the Provincial government, established a special land use zone called the "Agricultural Land Reserve". The Act required that the ALR be technically based on biophysical characteristics as outlined by the Canada Land Inventory mapping system. These preliminary technical maps were prepared by the provincial Ministry of Agriculture.

In BC, most soils were mapped for agricultural capability ratings in the 1980s, and these maps remain in use throughout the province. Throughout the 1980s, significant funding was allocated to develop a more detailed set agricultural capability maps to assist with fine-tuning the ALR boundaries in cooperation with municipal and regional district planning efforts (Smith, 2007). Sixty percent of all land excluded from the ALR was approved in the first 10 years (1973-1983) a time of "sorting out" in which the Commission undertook an ALR enhanced fine tuning program and partnered with several local governments in ALR reviews (Smith, 2007).

Reference:

Smith, B. E. 2007. "A Work in Progress—The BC Farmland Preservation Program," in *Farmland Preservation Land for Future Generations*, eds. W. Caldwell, S. Hilts, and B. Wilton (Guelph: Centre for Land and Water Stewardship).

CARRIED

MOVED J. Fell, SECONDED C. Evans, that the following paragraphs be inserted at the end of Section 1.0 - Introduction highlighting the effort of private enterprise in ensuring the viability of local agriculture and aquaculture:

While the RDN is spearheading the creation of the AAP, the implementation will require the collaboration of a host of individuals and organizations. These include farmers institutes, commodity groups, private industry, community food action groups, environmental NGOs, academic institutes, and provincial and federal government agencies. Therefore, the RDN itself is not solely responsible for the outcomes of the AAP. Many of the recommended actions identify the RDN in a supportive role rather than a lead role, and several actions don't involve the RDN at all. In order for the AAP to be successful it will require leadership and action from all of those involved in the local food system.

CARRIED

MOVED J. Fell, SECONDED A. Brown, that Recommendation 5.3B be amended from "medium" to "high" priority and to state:

Investigate opportunities to connect regional composting and zero waste initiatives with the current nutrient cycling (composting) needs of farmers and aquaculture operators so that excess waste can be made available to those in need of extra nutrients. Identify any regulatory impediments that may exist in achieving this goal.

CARRIED

MOVED J. Fell, SECONDED R. Wahlgren, that Key Players will be added as required and as appropriate. Additional funding agencies will be considered in the context of the recommended actions and will be added to Section 9.2) Funding Resources sections of the AAP.

CARRIED

MOVED R. Wahlgren, SECONDED C. Springford, that the Agricultural Advisory Plan be deemed as a "Living Document".

CARRIED

MOVED K. Reid, SECONDED R. Wahlgren, that the Draft Agricultural Area Plan dated June 15, 2012, as amended be received and forwarded to the Regional Board upon completion of the final revisions with a recommendation that the Board adopt the Plan.

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED J. Fell, SECONDED K. Reid, that this meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

Time: 4:01 pm

CHAIRPERSON