

**MINUTES**  
**HEALTHY SAANICH ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room #2  
**October 23, 2019, 6:01 p.m.**

Present: Chair: (A) Nadia Rajan

Members: Claire Atwell, Ryan Clayton, Ryan Henderson and, Jean Hodgson (SCAN).

Staff: Kelli-Ann Armstrong, Senior Manager, Recreation, Cameron Scott, Manager of Community Planning; Pierre Iachetti, Agriculture and Food Security Planner (6:11p.m.); and, Jeff Keays, Committee Clerk

Regrets: Councillor Chambers; Merie Beauchamp; Zhongwen He; Jasmintra Jawanda; Ryan Painter (SD 61); and, Teri VanWell (SD 63)

Guests: None

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The Clerk shared the Chair's regrets, and well wishes for a good meeting, before calling the meeting to order at 6:01 P.M.

The Clerk then called upon committee to nominate a member to serve as (A) Chair for the duration of the meeting.

## **MOTION**

**MOVED by R. Clayton and Seconded by C. Atwell: That member N. Rajan act as Chair for the October 27, 2019 Healthy Saanich Advisory Committee."**

**CARRIED**

**MOVED by R. Clayton and Seconded by J. Hodgson: "That the minutes of the Healthy Saanich Advisory Committee meeting held June 26, 2019 be adopted as circulated."**

**CARRIED**

## **SAANICH AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY PLAN UPDATE**

The Manager of Community Planning introduced the District's new Agriculture and Food Security Planner, Pierre Iachetti who will be responsible for the implementation of the plan over the next two years.

The Manager of Community Planning then provided the committee with a high-level overview of their memo titled, Saanich Agriculture and Food Security Plan Update, dated September 23, 2019. The following was highlighted:

- Farming is a key issue for the District.
- Saanich developed this plan in order to support and protect agriculture and farming.

- The development of the plan was a comprehensive process, which included broad public and focused stakeholder engagement.
- A task force comprised of stakeholders, non-profits, academics, farmers and scientists was struck to support the plans development.
- The District retained Upland Agriculture Planning Consultants to draft the plan.
- The plan was adopted by Council in September 2018, and included the hiring of an Agriculture and Food Security Planner for two years.
- The plan has a 10 – 15 year horizon.
- Its vision statement reads: In Saanich, food security starts in our backyard.
- The plan is comprised of seven themes, including:
  1. Provide a foundation to take action on agriculture and food security.
  2. Connect gaps in the local food system to improve food self-sufficiency.
  3. Strengthen awareness of the local food system.
  4. Improve the interconnection between food production and the environment.
  5. Manage land use to protect and support farmland.
  6. Support multi-generational farmers and emerging farmers.
  7. Expand opportunities for urban agriculture.
- The strategy's implementation will focus on those actions within the scope of the municipality.
- Collaboration with community partners is vital.
- Priority Actions will be undertaken in 3 phases.
- Phase 1 has fifteen identified priority actions (Priority 1 Actions table is held on file)
- These actions are in varying states of completeness.
- Healthy Saanich will play a supporting role in the implementation of the plan, with a focus on advice on food security or issues specific to the Saanich context.
- Accordingly, the Healthy Saanich Advisory Committee will:
  - Receive comprehensive bi-annual updates on the implementation process.
  - Receive additional periodic updates.
  - Provide advice on specific items relative to the committee's expertise.
  - Participate in sub-committees, if needed.

Committee discussion ensued, the following was highlighted:

- Action 4.3 will aim to develop educational resources to assist residents in the protection of urban crops from damage by wildlife.
- Multi-generational farming will be supported through a number of initiatives and actions, including:
  - Affordable access to farmland
  - Succession planning
  - Farm worker housing
  - Supporting the “farm economy”
  - Innovation with regard to technology and practices.
- The long-term sustainability of the land is paramount. Accordingly, the District maintains a robust Environmental Services Department and a number of supporting policies and initiatives.
- The scale of farming being considered under the plan is not industrial, and as such supports biodiversity.
- There is an inherent interconnectedness between food security and the environment that influences a significant amount of the District's work.

- The Local Area Plan update process will consider localized farming uses, in the context of walkability, community amenities and shared uses such as designated areas for community gardens.
- The budget allocation is sufficient, as early action items are mostly policy related, and don't require significant operating and/or capital funding.
- Future initiatives and actions could leverage grants and other sources of funding.
- In the event additional funding is required for a future initiative the department would come back to committee and council seeking support for additional funding.
- Non-farm use on ALR lands requires the approval of the Agricultural Land Commission.
- Saanich Council has a public hearing process in place.
- Council has indicated that they would like more community engagement with development community.
- The District is participating in the CRD's Farmland Trust which is undertaking a review of municipal lands that could potentially be used for agricultural purposes.

### **UPTOWN DOUGLAS CORRIDOR PLAN**

The Manager of Community Planning shared highlights of the recently released Draft Uptown Douglas Corridor Plan. The following was noted:

- The draft plan is now available for public feedback.
- Significant changes in land-use are being proposed for the subject area.
- Historically the plan area developed in a manner that concentrated industrial and commercial uses in the core, while residential developed around the periphery.
- The draft plan would see residential uses expanding into this predominantly commercial/light industrial area.
- The overarching goal of the plan is to transform the UDC area into a liveable, walkable community.
- A rapid transit hub is being considered for the lands in the vicinity of the switch bridge.
- It is evident from the overhead maps that the area is lacking in park space, accordingly the development of three parks is planned:
  - TH
  - Oak St.
  - Rudd Park (expansion)
- Staff will continue to explore and consider small parcels of land that could accommodate small pocket parks.
- Staff intend to bring a revised plan back to Council in 2020.
- As a baseline, there are currently 10,000 employees and only 4,000 residents within the subject area.

Committee discussion ensued, the following was noted:

- Mayfair lanes has not been considered for parkland; however, all similarly sized large parcels of land will be required to include an amenity such as parks.

### **SCAN REPORT**

Member J. Hodgson provided the committee with the monthly SCAN Report. The following was noted:

- Council has a desire to the various associations to operate in a more formal and organized manner.
- Not all associations agree, as many wish to maintain their loose and more informal associations.

Committee discussion ensued, the following is noted:

- It is hard to maintain administration of community groups, as they are predominantly volunteers.
- Larger associations, with existing and strong governance capacities do not wish to be shoe-horned into a formal body.
- There have been 3 or 4 capacity building workshops for SCAN member associations.
- Volunteer recruitment is a struggle, accordingly it is growing increasingly more difficult to ensure that these groups remain relevant and representative of the communities they represent.
- European models of community organization often utilize a centralized administration whose function it is to help develop and maintain organizational capacity and effectiveness.
- The District is responsive, and reasonable with regard to the day-to-day operations of the various community associations. Additional oversight is not necessarily warranted, or desired, by the various associations.

#### **DIVISION UPDATE – RECREATION**

The Senior Manager – Recreation provided an overview of the June Recreation Division Update report dated, October 22, 2019.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for Jan 22, 2019.

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Councillor Chambers, Chair

I hereby certify these minutes are accurate.

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Committee Secretary