



**MINUTES OF THE  
PENINSULA AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION  
Council Chambers, Saanich Municipal Hall  
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2016 AT 7:30 PM**

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**Present:** Bob Maxwell in the Chair; Samantha Charlton, Treasurer; Linda Geggie; Bernadette Green; Jack Mar; Bev Marley; Larry Sluggett; Councillors Weisenberger (N.Saanich) and Holman (C.Saanich). Also present was Isobel Hoffmann, Recording Clerk.

**Guests:** Bruce Greig, Central Saanich Planner; Jane Evans and Pam Hartling, Saanich Planners; Derek Messelink, Regional Agrologist, Alex Nichini, UVIC student, Shannon Berch.

**Regrets:** Councillors Derman, McLennan and Kahakauwila; Terry Michell, Phil Christie and Dianne Williamson.

**Agenda:** Moved by Bev Marley and Seconded by Sam Charlton: "That the Agenda be amended to add the following items: Bee Habitat on Vancouver Island; Winter Lecture Sessions for Young Farmers; Keating Corridor Business Analysis Study."

Carried

**Minutes:** Moved by Bernadette Green and Seconded by Sam Charlton: "That the Minutes of September 8, 2016 be approved as circulated."

Carried

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### **TREASURER'S REPORT – Samantha Charlton**

The treasurer stated that the costs to date for the Saanich Fair are \$588.60; she is waiting for a few more receipts from Linda Geggie. The total for the photo display (including the display boards) is \$968, some of which came directly out of PAAC's funds and the remainder was paid through PAAC's account with the District of Saanich. We have a total of \$324 in our checking account and \$26,000 in our investment account, which can be accessed easily if required.

### **SPEAKER'S BUREAU – Pam Hartling, Saanich Planning – Farmers' Markets**

Pam stated:

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- Saanich zoning does not allow for farmers' markets and she has been asked to prepare options to regulate such markets.
- The Planning Department is supportive of the zoning change to allow farmers' markets and we have a couple of proponents who are interested in operating a classic market similar to the Moss Street Market.
- There are a few options to present to Council:

#### **1. Temporary Use Permit (TUP):**

- This is used currently by North Saanich and North Cowichan.
- It will allow Council to have control over the chosen site and apply conditions such as permitted uses and hours of operation.
- Ancillary uses are important to the success of the market – such as food trucks, liquor sales, live music, handicrafts, etc. Staff are recommending that these be permitted.
- Planning is suggesting a streamlined permit and there would be no cost to the applicant.

- The permit would be handled through the community planners so it will get through the system quicker.

## 2. Broad zoning option

- The zoning bylaw would be amended to allow farmers' markets in institutional zones
- Currently there are about 130 parcels of land that could be rezoned to accommodate markets.
- The applicant would find a parcel with the right zoning and apply for a business licence.

## 3. Site-Specific zoning option

- The zoning bylaw would be amended to allow farmers' markets on specific parcels within institutional zones
- We have selected about 10 parcels that would be appropriate for this use; it would be an individual specific zone.
- The applicant would identify a parcel with the right zoning and apply for a business license.

The draft report is almost finalized. She expects the report will go to Council within the next month. The matter has been discussed at the Task Force on Food & Agricultural Security and she asked PAAC members if they had any comments or suggestions.

### PAAC comments:

Will the number of markets be controlled? There is a glut of markets right now; too many markets results in not enough buyers and the farmers don't make money. Small growers need our support, but a market can be a hard way to make a living.

### Pam responded:

- There are no farmers' markets in Saanich right now; she feels the number of markets will be controlled naturally and there will not be a lot of applicants.
- The biggest question is will there be community interest and what will the impact be. She is aware that some areas on the Island are saturated with farmers' markets and some farmers prefer to do gate sales or have a food box delivery system.
- Allowing farmers' markets is not the only way to help small growers; the intent is to support all local growers.
- In response to a comment about site selection, she stated Planning has looked at sites within the Urban Containment Boundary; the size of the property and facilities on site were also considered. It is up to the market organizer/applicant to deal with the issues. If it is on Saanich property, then the District will be a partner in the enterprise.
- One of the current proponents is thinking about a Sunday market at Reynolds or Braefoot schools.

PAAC noted that a TUP seems to have more flexibility on a case by case basis.

- Some markets have too many stalls with non-produce items, getting away from the intent of a "farmers' market".
- Pocket markets were tried a few years ago; these are similar to farmers' markets but with only one or two vendors and mostly produce from multiple farmers.
- Hopefully when talking about having a "classic market" there is room to consider other options as well.
- A mid-week evening market could be an option.
- The BC Association of Farmers' Markets has information about how to help municipalities with zoning issues.

- Councillor Holman noted that Central Saanich has used TUPs for a few years and it is more flexible than a rezoning; not many applicants have come forward. The permits are reviewed every 3 years.

The Chair thanked Pam for her presentation.

## **Welcome to Derek Masselink – Regional District Agrologist Vancouver Island South**

Derek explained that he has assumed some of the responsibilities from both Rob Kline's and Wayne Haddow's positions, both of whom have now retired.

- He provided information about his educational and work background, noting he has degrees in Wildlife Biology and Farm Design.
- The Regional Agrologist network within the Ministry works as a team: we each have areas we are responsible for but also bring areas of expertise.
- Unfortunately we have lost a lot of our capacity for extended services but we are here to help.
- The Ministry has been very explicit about wanting to grow the agricultural sector, with a goal to reach \$15 billion in sales and bringing 19,000 ha of land into production across the province.
- Province-wide we do not have the people to cover all the issues: it is about managing expectations and we have to be very strategic.
- For the first year, he will spend a lot of time listening and will be going to a lot of meetings.
- He wants to be informed about what issues are important to farmers.
- Most of his time will be spent working with the CRD, Municipal staff, helping with complaints and enquiries from farmers and residents, providing feedback to the Ministry of Agriculture, and on strategic planning for agriculture.
- He is interested in economic development and issues involving First Nations.
- He works with the ALC and attends some of their meetings. He noted the ALC has its own officers and it may be possible to get some of the current issues addressed through them but they are their own entity.

Councillor Holman stated:

- A few years ago, Central Saanich and its Agricultural Advisory Committee worked with PAAC to develop a long "shopping list" of issues that was eventually brought to the UBCM. The response was these issues and extension services requested were not a common ask around the province.
- The Ministry wanted specifics and she wondered if now would be a good time for PAAC and the Central Saanich Agricultural Advisory Committee to re-evaluate the list.
- In addition, she pointed out how important local food production is to the economy and she would like to see PAAC work on this issue, noting that Central Saanich has an Economic Development Advisory Committee.

Linda Geggie stated that Rob Kline used to crunch the census numbers to give a CRD snap shot for issues related to agriculture that was very helpful. As well, he participated in PAAC meetings, CRD wildlife management groups (geese and deer) and the annual Farmer2Farmer workshop.

Derek advised he will be able to provide the census information when it is available and will do his best to assist in the other areas as well. He is a 'connector' and collaborates effectively by bringing people together rather than be a fountain of knowledge himself.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

The Chair referred to a letter dated September 12, 2016 from Clayton Fox of Silver Rill Farm sent to Central Saanich Council, PAAC and AquaTex Consulting regarding Maber Flats. Mr. Fox suggests that PAAC is bias, and he was concerned about comments made at the September 6, 2016 Central Saanich Council meeting.

The Chair stated:

- PAAC members may speak on many issues that are global or regional in nature that touch all farmers – for example, geese and deer, water pricing, farm worker housing, drainage and composting, etc.
- PAAC has to consider the impacts and benefits to farmers in general – not to one particular farmer.

Discussion ensued:

- As has been noted during PAAC discussions and presented to Central Saanich Council in a report from our sub-committee, more data is needed before proceeding with work on Maber Flats.
- PAAC is an advisory commission and provides expert input in a non-biased way.
- Conflict of interest has been discussed previously at meetings and Anne Moskow has assisted the Commission with revisions to its Terms of Reference, including a Conflict of Interest statement.
- It was suggested that the Chair could ask if any member had a conflict with a certain issue to be discussed: we need to clarify this as a part of our meeting practices.
- Commission members have the same responsibilities as Council members: if an issue directly impacts them, or even if there is a perception of a conflict, then there is a conflict. It could be a regional or global issue, but if the land in question borders their property they are in direct conflict.

The Chair stated he will draft a letter to Clayton Fox in response and circulate the members for comment.

## **AGRICULTURAL ISSUES: NEW**

### **◆ PAAC Historical Agriculture and Food Project – Linda Geggie**

An outline of the project was circulated to PAAC members. The idea of compiling a historical book and/or CD/video has been discussed recently at PAAC meetings. There is a long history of food and farming in the region and there are many long-time farmers with a wealth of knowledge. Before it is too late, we need to capture their stories.

At the Saanich Fair this year, we focused on the history of agriculture by putting together a historical photos display showing the changes that have taken place over the past 100 years or so. The display drew a lot of interest, with people noting their families were long time farmers in the region and they had old photos and other information.

There are a couple of similar projects underway: one with the North & South Saanich Agricultural Society who is preparing a book on the history of agriculture and another project by Brad Morrison (who received funding from the Fruit Growers Association, as did PAAC). We don't want to duplicate these projects but perhaps we can collaborate and end up with a better product. On the other hand, we don't want to wait around, but rather get started by capturing information on video from the long-established farming families in the area.

Linda introduced Alex Nichini, a UVIC student working in Social Sciences in a community engagement class. He has been assigned up to 40 hours to work with PAAC on this project and will conduct oral interviews with farmers, producing a short video – which will form the start of our project.

The Chair noted that if this model is successful, and not too expensive, PAAC can form a sub-committee not only with PAAC members, but others who are interested in the project. Maybe some First Nations people would like to be involved.

Referring to the handout on the proposal for the first stage of the project, Linda noted the 3 farmers to be interviewed initially are Vern Michell, John Pendray and Jack Mar. She asked the Commission if they had any other suggestions and what kind of questions should we ask.

The following suggestions were noted:

- Important to involve First Nations people; they were the first farmers on the Island.
- Form a connection between elders (First Nations) and older farmers to youth, our future farmers, is important.
- Newmann Farm has a huge photo collection; contact Bonnie McKenzie at Central Saanich.
- The Pioneers' Society (Heritage Acres) has information that could be useful as well.
- The BBC had an interesting series about farming during WWII, with each episode focusing on a different aspect of farming.
- As there are other similar projects in the works, perhaps we should focus on one theme. Such as 'What is the major lesson for new farmers?', or 'What is the main thing that has changed in farming over the years?'. If we have a narrow focus the project may be less redundant.
- Once we decide on a theme, it can be brought into the bigger project.
- Interview young farmers and female farmers as well as the old-timers and First Nations.
- The videos could be lengthy and then edited to focus on a few questions to suit the purpose.
- Farming can be defined in different ways; important to include First Nations farmers as they have passed stories down from generation to generation.
- We could start by doing a small pilot project by asking a few focus questions.

Each person was asked to suggest a question:

1. What is the biggest change that you have seen?
2. What is old that should be new again?
3. Did you use immigrant workers to assist with farming activities, and if so, where from?
4. What different techniques and technology are being used today?
5. What were the climate conditions when you started farming; are they different today?
6. Has the volume of food production changed to counter the population change? (*note Island Vegetable Coop has food production figures from the 1960s to 2000*)
7. Where did you buy supplies and how did you market your goods? Has this changed today?
8. How did you process food as there were no commercial facilities?
9. How has the landscape changed over the years?
10. Did you harvest crops yourself or did you get assistance from First Nations people or others?
11. What kind of weather-related issues did you have to deal with?
12. How did you preserve and store food? Did you eat off the land?
13. Was farming less work in the past than it is today, even with modern equipment?

Alex stated he will conduct the interviews and have a trailer “teaser” available for the November 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Linda suggested we contact Brad Morrison to find out what his project is about. Isobel will try to get in touch with him.

- ◆ **Bee Habitat Programme on the Peninsula:** In the interest of time, it was agreed to postpone this discussion to the November 10, 2016 meeting. Beekeeper Lindsay Dault will be speaking at that meeting also.
- ◆ **Winter Lecture Sessions for Young Farmers:** It was agreed that this issue be deferred to the November 10, 2016 meeting as well. Max to prepare some discussion points.

## **AGRICULTURAL ISSUES – CURRENT**

a) **Goose Management Strategy (Bev Marley)** – nothing new to report.

b) **CRD Food Systems Strategy (Linda Geggie)**

Linda advised that Councils will be asked to participate in a farm tour instead of a meeting to discuss the Regional Food Strategy. October 22<sup>nd</sup> was the tentative date but Derek Masselink stated he talked recently with Jeff Weightman of the CRD who advised that the tour may be canceled as there was not a lot of interest.

c) **Saanich Agriculture & Food Security Plan (Jane Evans)**

Jane stated the public survey closed on July 31.

- In addition to meeting with PAAC (last time was June), she has met with other committees and interviewed stakeholders.
- The consultant has completed an analysis and the task force has reviewed the input and developed draft key recommendations.
- Final comments and recommended action will be received from the task force at their October 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. The next public engagement session will be at the end of November.
- Because the dates don't tie in with the November 10 PAAC meeting, she will send information by email to the secretary, who can forward to PAAC members for comment, so all the information from the Task Force and PAAC (and other stakeholders) can be presented at the public meeting. Stakeholder input is important – and PAAC is a major stakeholder.
- She has a list of specific questions for PAAC from the public survey that would help her understand where we can make the biggest difference from a local government point of view – because we cannot address everything.
- She has also gathered input from attending the Strawberry Festival, the Root Cellar, the Red Barn, youth organizations and schools.
- Information on the feedback received will be on-line next week.
- She has been in touch with Jeff Weightman at the CRD and reviewed the CRD Food Strategy. All these elements will be addressed in the Saanich Plan and will dovetail with the CRD. The CRD is looking for a partnership with the local communities.
- She has also looked at the North and Central Saanich Plans.
- This is a bigger issue than just Saanich; our plan will identify things we can do within our community, but there is a lot we have to do working as partners.

**f) Shellfish Harvesting Committee Update (Jack Mar)**

Jack Mar and Linda Geggie attended the September meeting of the Committee. This is only the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting that has been held.

- Tim Wellman with DFO stated that almost all the shellfish are contaminated; there is just a small area near Cole Bay that is safe. This is due to sewer outfall, run-off, drainage, etc.
- Testing will be done before and after heavy rains to compare contamination levels.
- Unfortunately there is not enough funding to address all the issues.
- The Committee is chaired by the CRD and First Nations are involved as well.
- Linda explained that the goal is to see if there can be traditional harvesting on the beaches again. First Nations have to establish if there is an interest within their communities to harvest.
- Specific testing needs to be completed to determine the contaminants.
- Currently testing is infrequent and inconclusive. There have been many environmental changes that impact testing.
- It is not known if there is the ability to remove the contaminant source.
- There are a lot of players at the table: First Nations, Environment Canada, CR-Fair, PAAC and the CRD.
- There is interest in moving forward.

Jane Evans noted that restoring the shoreline is one of the key issues raised in the public survey and one of the questions she was planning to put to PAAC about the Saanich Ag Security Plan. This is one of the typical issues we have to work on together as a region.

Sam Charlton stated she is part of a volunteer non-profit group that does testing on regional beaches. They have good data records although she is not sure if the group has tested the specific beaches in this study.

**UBCM Resolution re Migratory Bird Act (Goose Management)**

Councillor Holman informed PAAC that the Resolution proposed by PAAC and presented by Central Saanich was passed at the UBCM with a minor change giving municipalities the option of participating, rather than making it a requirement. *Below is part of the Resolution:*

***“B59 Non-migratory Resident Canada Geese Endorsed with Amendment as Proposed***

*Therefore be it resolved that UBCM petition the Government of Canada to exempt non-migratory resident Canada Geese from the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918;*

*And be it further resolved that local government authorities in British Columbia be offered the option of choosing to undertake management of non-migratory resident Canada Geese in their communities;*

*And be it further resolved that other orders of government provide funding to assist local governments who choose to undertake management of non-migratory resident Canada Geese in their communities.”*

Jack Mar stated:

- Central Saanich should be asked to modify its shooting regulations to allow recreational hunting and using a target approach from Island View Road to Martindale and Lochside.

- The restrictions on how far you can discharge a firearm also need to be changed because you cannot shoot across the road.

Councillor Holman suggested this request be put in writing to Central Saanich.

Derek Masselink noted the geese are an issue across southern Vancouver Island and he has talked to Jeff Weightman, who was part of the CRD committee. A pilot cull in Nanaimo was effective, killing 500+ birds. He did not understand why the project in Central Saanich was not as successful, killing just 20+ birds. He agreed there should have been a final report on the pilot project(s) and he will track down a copy for the next meeting.

## **Vision Sandown**

A request for input from PAAC on the proposal was requested by North Saanich and e-copies were sent to PAAC members.

Councillor Weisenberger pointed out that this project is still in the very early stages and North Saanich does not own the subject property. He suggested it would be better to wait until the project is closer to reality to provide more input.

The secretary will send a letter to North Saanich accordingly, requesting that we be invited to provide input in the future.

## **KEATING CORRIDOR BUSINESS PLAN**

Councillor Holman stated:

- PAAC was identified as a stakeholder in revitalizing the Keating Corridor.
- Council is looking at redevelopment potential for the area and has endorsed a median growth strategy with a focus on housing and light industrial areas.
- There is a strong connection to the agricultural community and when the Butler Pit is finished what do we do as it is presently zoned for agriculture?
- There is another Open House on Tuesday, October 18 from 4:30 – 6:30 at the Firehall on Keating X Road and she encouraged members to attend.

## **AGRICULTURAL STRATEGY – SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- a) **Water (Michael Doehnel)** - not present
- b) **Farm Economics (Terry Michell/Larry Sluggett)** – nothing to report
- c) **Agricultural Land Base (Phil Christie)** not present

### **Maber Flats:**

Larry Sluggett stated:

- PAAC has submitted two documents to Council: a sub-committee report in April to which there has been no official response; and a letter dated August 23 requesting a technical review, with Central Saanich responding by holding a public Open House on October 17, 2016.



- He attended the September 12, 2016 Committee of the Whole meeting where the April sub-committee was considered by Council.
- The sub-committee has many concerns about the Maber Flats project, mainly that there has not been enough discussion with stakeholders, there is insufficient funding, the data in the consultant's report is out of date and lacking detail, and there has been no due diligence.
- A Motion was passed for PAAC to meet with the consultant, where PAAC will have an opportunity to express its concerns.
- The Central Saanich Agricultural Advisory Committee also feels there is insufficient information for the project to proceed.

Councillor Holman stated:

- There were representatives from all areas at the Open House; there is definitely interest in the project.
- Council has requested the consultant provide updated data on the soil/topography of the area.
- She is confident we will end up with a design that will balance all needs.
- She stated she would like to attend the PAAC meeting with the consultant.

**Martindale Flats** \*\*Jack Mar left the meeting due to a conflict of interest\*\*

Larry Sluggett stated:

- An Open House was held on September 15, 2016 regarding the proposed project; it was well attended and a lot of concerns were raised.
- There is a proposal on the table, but a lot of work is still needed.

Linda Geggie stated:

- Central Saanich will look at installing a flow meter as requested by PAAC.
- It is acknowledged that during heavy rainstorms, water from the Ridge is an issue.
- There is support for the Central Saanich Agricultural Advisory Committee's suggestion to build a retention pond (some of it being on Jack Mar's property). Water could be collected on the west end of Martindale Road and released slowly.

Councillor Holman stated she attended the meeting and one of the outcomes is that Central Saanich and Saanich have requested a joint Council meeting to discuss this and other issues, as well as reviewing maintenance schedules for ditch clearing. It is likely this meeting would be held late November.

\*\*\*Jack Mar returned to the meeting\*\*\*

#### d) Education and Outreach – Linda Geggie

Linda advised that the Farmer2Farmer Workshop will be held on March 2, 2017.  
Royal Roads will be a partner.

Adjournment: On a Motion from Bernadette Greene the meeting adjourned at 9:37 pm  
Next Meeting: The next regular PAC meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, November 10, 2016.**

**WEBSITE: Members were asked to advise of any information items to place on the website.**

<http://saanich.ca/living/afs/index.html>

I hereby certify this is a true and correct copy of the Minutes.

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Isobel Hoffmann, Recording Secretary  
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