

**MINUTES**  
**PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room No. 1  
**November 14, 2019 at 5:36 p.m.**

Present: Councillor Zac de Vries (Chair), Sophia Baker-French, Suzanne Bartell, Lois-Leah Goodwin, Richard Michaels and Peter Rantucci.

Staff: Jeff Keays, Committee Clerk

Regrets: Allan Cahoon, Robin Kelly and Travis Lee

Guests: Councillor R. Merserau; Member of the Public

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**MINUTES**

**MOVED by L. Goodwin and Seconded by S. Bartell: “That the Minutes of the Planning, Transportation and Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting held September 19, 2019 be adopted as circulated.”**

**CARRIED**

**CHAIR’S RCOMMENTS**

The Chair advised the members that the EV Ride Hailing presentation has been postponed to a later date, before providing the committee with brief overview of their November 7, 2019 memo titled, Chair’s Remarks – Discussion Items. The following was highlighted:

**1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STAFFING**

Committee discussion ensued, the following was highlighted:

- An Economic Development strategy, as proposed in the committee’s 2018 report to Council, will require staff to develop/implement and provide ongoing strategic support.
- There is a high return on the investment in the position.

**MOTION**

**MOVED by S. Bartell and Seconded by S. Baker-French: “That the Planning Transportation and Economic Development Advisory Committee recommend that Council give consideration to a request to staff to investigate and present options for the creation of new economic development position as part of the 2020 Financial Plan process.”**

**CARRIED**

**2. LAND LEVERAGING AND REAL ESTATE SERVICES STAFF**

Committee discussion ensued, the following was highlighted:

- The Chair’s memo clearly outlines the functionality of the position.
- Functions and duties of the position are currently spread across a number of departments.



- Paired with an Ec. Dev. Staffer, the position will be integral to strategic land-use as it pertains to commercial, industrial and residential development.

## **MOTION**

**MOVED by L.L. Goodwin and Seconded by S. Baker-French: “That the Planning Transportation and Economic Development Advisory Committee recommend that Council give consideration to a request to staff to investigate and report on potential options for the development of a Strategic Real Estate function for Saanich.”**

**CARRIED**

## **3. DEVELOPMENT COST CHARGE WAIVE**

Committee discussion ensued, the following was highlighted:

- A balance needs to be struck between outright waivers and over regulation and/or high fees.
- Staff are bringing a report on Development Cost Charges to Council on November 25, 2019.
- Implementation of a DCC waiver policy would be of benefit to the development of affordable rental housing as it increases the viability of projects.
- In addition to the information presented in the Chair’s report there are other permitted uses for waivers; accordingly, any recommendation by committee to Council should encourage staff to consider a broad array of uses.
- The enabling legislation, Bill 27 The Local Government (Green Communities) *Statutes Amendment Act, 2008*

## **MOTION**

**MOVED by L.L. Goodwin and Seconded by P. Rantucci: “That the Planning Transportation and Economic Development Advisory Committee recommend that Council give consideration to a request to staff to investigate and develop a Development Cost Charge waiver and reduction policy options based on (but not limited to) the information presented in the Chair’s November 7, 2019 memo, and in accordance with *Bill 27 – 2008 The Local Government (Green Communities) Statutes Amendment Act, 2008*, to encourage and support the development of affordable rental housing in Saanich.”**

**CARRIED**

## **4. HOME PLATE MODEL**

Committee discussion ensued, the following was highlighted:

- Aimed at protecting Agriculture Lands with the ALR through policies limiting the total lot coverage are of all principal and accessory residential buildings, structures and land uses.
- Employed throughout the urban core.
- The Agricultural Land Commission policy limits these use to 500m2
- The City of Richmond’s policy is 400m2; this should be the demarcation point any Saanich policy
- The Council adopted Agricultural and Food Security Plan proposes measures.



- Not all lands are easily developable, any proposed policy should be nuanced in such a way as to consider such variables.
- Size restrictions are in place in other jurisdictions.
- Any policy should be flexible enough to consider housing needs for farmworkers.
- Every time a large parcel of agricultural land is developed its future use as farmland is precluded, which in turn diminishes our farming capacity.

## **MOTION**

**Moved by P. Rantucci and Seconded by R. Michaels: “That the Planning Transportation and Economic Development Advisory Committee recommends that Council give consideration to a request to staff to investigate and report back on options for regulating house sizes and home plates on agricultural zoned property.”**

**CARRIED**

**\*\*\*\* S. Baker French left the meeting at 7:50 p.m. \*\*\*\***

## **5. PARKING VARIANCE FEE SCHEDULE**

Committee discussion ensued, the following was highlighted:

- Anticipated modal shifts are being held back, despite the abundance of facilities.
- Transportation modes are still predominantly car centric.
- Is there a sweet spot that balances needs for revenue, and creating conditions that encourage multi-modal travel?
- Funds raised through a cash-in-lieu (CIL) program could be directed towards new active transportation infrastructure.
- An enticing price point for this would be anything lower than the current construction costs associated to developing these required spaces, which can run upwards of \$50,000 for an underground stall.
- Parking requirements have an impact of the value of land. If the price of the variance is too low, it will drive the value of land up, which could preclude certain uses.
- A market analysis would help to inform and develop a balanced approach.
- Any proposed policy should give consideration to the recently adopted electric vehicle charging station in new buildings policy.
- Active transportation policies have a greater impact environmental sustainability and affordability than Electric Vehicles in the medium and long-term.
- Engagement with the development industry is required in the development of any policy.
- For context, each \$1 spent by the municipality results in approximately \$3 in service. This is an exceptional return on investment.

## **MOTION**

**MOVED by P. Rantucci and Seconded by R. Michaels: “That the Planning Transportation and Economic Development Advisory Committee recommend that Council give consideration to a request to staff to investigate and report back on potential options for creating a cash-in-lieu policy, including a fee schedule that takes into consideration the new minimum parking requirements and other factors as appropriate.”**

**CARRIED**



## **CANNABIS PRODUCTION**

The Chair provided the committee with a brief overview of Council's November 4, 2020 consideration of the proposed zoning bylaw amendment for cannabis production, and their subsequent referral to committee for additional input and consideration of cannabis production in other – adopted amendment would permit production in all "M" zone industrial lands – zones.

Prior to committee discussion, the Chair acknowledged a piece of correspondence received and circulated on-table. Per the Chair's direction, the author of the correspondence was invited to address the committee.

The Clerk reminded the members of their obligation to declare a conflict of interest in accordance to Section 91 of the Council Procedure Bylaw. Committee discussion ensued, the following was highlighted:

- Out of a fear of reprisal the presenter requested that their name and address be withheld.
- Lives in close proximity to a large medicinal cannabis grow operation, which is operating in a residentially zoned property.
- Cannabis is not like other agricultural products with regard to things like security, lighting and noxious odors.
- Health Canada has advised that they do not have the means, or resources to investigate or enforce violations.
- Cannabis production should be limited to industrial zones only.
- Expansion of permitted areas is to provide a pathway to legalization for small scale or "craft" growing, but why?
- Many of these growers are suspected of growing with the necessary permits, or licenses.
- In the absence of the appropriate approvals and licenses they are most likely supplying the black market, and thusly not paying the necessary local, provincial and municipal taxes.
- If there is to be a pathway to legalization it should be limited to "M" zoned industrial lands, and be subject to the required inspections and regulations.
- The matter of the amendments have been sent to a public hearing.

The Chair thanked the member of the public for sharing their experiences with the committee..

## **MOTION**

**Moved by R. Michaels and Seconded by L.L. Goodwin: "That the Planning Transportation and Economic Development Committee receive:**

- 1. Minute excerpt, Zoning Bylaw Amendment – Cannabis Production, from the November 4, 2019 meeting of Saanich Council.**
- 2. Citizen Correspondence dated November 13, 2019."**

**CARRIED**

Committee discussion ensued, the following was highlighted:

- There are two important questions that must be answered prior to any recommendations by this committee:
  1. What is the specific product that is to be cultivated, processed (edibles, distillates etc.)



2. How is this use considered from a farming standpoint – it is reasonable to assume that this is high intensity farming.
- A corollary of the significant security needs for these production facilities is the compatibility within existing zone uses – they must be compatible, and/or appropriate.
  - Directing production to agricultural land may have a negative downstream impact, including associated noises from vehicles, pesticides/herbicide use, security measures, site management, and facility design and eliminating future farm use through the disruption of soil etc.
  - The Province has designated cannabis as a permitted farm product.
  - Any policies should give consideration to provisions such as minimum lot size, setbacks, hours of operation etc. that will to limit the impact on neighbouring parcels.
  - Limiting all production to industrial lands only is an opportunity loss.
  - Opportunities in agricultural lands should not be precluded.
  - The inclusion of provisions like setbacks, buffers, security measures, and limits on smell and light pollution should be included with any expansion of permitted areas. Provincial regulations for micro-grow (boutique or craft cultivation) licensing would be a fit for Saanich.
  - Regulations are must – grows ops should not be able to pop-up just anywhere. Proposed lands should have to meet minimum requirements first.
  - *The Cannabis Act, S.C. 2018, c. 16 states that: Unless authorized under this Act, if two or more individuals who are 18 years of age or older are ordinarily resident in the same dwelling-house, it is prohibited for any of those individuals to cultivate, propagate or harvest any cannabis plants if doing so results in there being more than four such plants being cultivated, propagated or harvested at any one time in the dwelling-house.*
  - Are there any potential impacts to public safety by allowing small scale grows in non-industrial lands?
  - What is the economic potential of these small scale grows?
  - An upside to being a late comer to regulations is being able to review and consider a wide number of policies and best practices.
  - Further exploration of the matter is warranted.
  - Saanich is already facing issues of scarcity with regard to services and available industrial land.
  - A pilot project could be considered.
  - Noting that staff are not here to speak to the item, or answer committee questions, it would be appropriate to make a motion inviting them to present on the matter at a future meeting, and prior to any committee recommendation.

## MOTION

**MOVED by P. Rantucci and Seconded by S. Bartell, that: “The Planning Transportation and Economic Development Advisory Committee table the item to a future meeting, where staff can attend to speak to the item and answer member’s questions.”**

**CARRIED**

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

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Councillor de Vries, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.



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Committee Secretary