

ADOPTED



North Pender Island Local Trust Committee

Minutes of Special Meeting

Date: October 24, 2020
Location: Electronic Meeting (Zoom Webinar)

Members Present: Laura Patrick, Chair
Benjamin McConchie, Local Trustee
Deb Morrison, Local Trustee

Staff Present: Robert Kojima, Regional Planning Manager
Shannon Brayford, Recorder
Maple Hung, Planning Team Assistant, Host

Public: There were approximately nineteen (19) attendees in the webinar.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Patrick called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. She acknowledged that the meeting was being held in traditional territory of the Coast Salish First Nations.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

By general consent the agenda was approved as presented.

3. BUSINESS ITEMS

3.1 Staff Presentation

Chair Patrick invited Regional Planning Manager Robert Kojima to deliver a presentation.

The presentation, which included a slide show delivered through the “shared screen” function, included the following topics:

- The inventory of agricultural land on North Pender Island.
- The Agricultural Land Commission (ALC), their role, and their policies.
- The development and role of the North Pender Island Special Agricultural Advisory Planning Commission (AAPC)

- Key topics of consideration including: Cannabis production, Agricultural Land Reserve boundaries, and technical amendments to maps.

3.2 Community Information Meeting – Agriculture Regulations Amendments Review 4.

Chair Patrick introduced the AAPC and noted that the first portion of the discussion time would provide an opportunity for that commission to discuss the matter and ask questions.

Chair Patrick invited each member of the AAPC to introduce themselves in turn. Following the introductions, she recognized members for comments and questions.

Matthew Vasilev, Barbara Johnstone, George Leroux, and Ben Kadel addressed the difficulty that local farmers face in securing housing for farm workers. They also discussed the Proposed Land Use Bylaw (LUB) Amendment c) prohibiting manufactured homes and that proposed amendment's relation to the ALC's position on manufactured homes for farm workers versus general secondary residences on a property.

Martha MacMahon, Ann Stephenson, and George Leroux addressed permitting agriculture as a primary use in rural residential zoning. The benefits of allowing farmers to purchase smaller, more affordable rural residential lots were noted.

Trustee Morrison request input from the Commission regarding whether a lower limit on land size should be considered for permitting agricultural activity outside of the agricultural zone.

George Leroux, Barbara Johnstone, Ben Kadel, and Matthew Vasilev addressed the benefits of allowing agri-tourism and agri-processing. The following points were discussed:

- The ALC regulations that are in place to discourage or prevent these activities.
- The matter of slaughter plants, including the benefits of local access, consideration of mobile units, and success stories in similar locations.
- The importance of remembering that solutions can be scaled to suite the location and that the community can form collaborative models.
- The ALC's regulations that limit the amount of imported material that can be processed on site and the rationale for considering "Pender-wide" boundaries as local versus the property's boundaries only.
- The building regulations that prevent development of agri-tourism and sustainable building in general

George Leroux and Ben Kadel addressed marine permaculture, noting its benefits for food production and sequestering carbon.

The LTC noted that the matter should be considered when they undertake their Marine foreshore work.

Richard Piskor encouraged the LTC to advocate to the ALC on the famer's behalf to help the ALC to understand and consider the unique and special requirements of the Outer Southern Gulf Islands.

It was noted by the LTC will provide further direction to the AAPC following the LTC's October meeting.

George Leroux requested that the LTC reconsider placing arbitrary size restrictions on structures because they may not remain relevant and they can then discourage incoming farmers.

Michael Sketch encouraged the LTC to prioritize the protection of prime agricultural soil.

Ben Kadel noted that building regulations need to become adaptive to protecting health and safety, and also, promoting sustainable living arrangements, which has specific benefit for farmers looking to increase sustainable housing to support their land.

Trustee Morrison discussed some of the regulations that would need to be considered when moving toward sustainable housing. She encouraged the AAPC to consider what regulations would promote their objectives and what regulations would need to be in place to prevent activities that they would not like to see on farm land.

A discussion of composting and burning was held, including cooperative composting and regulations that prevent large scale burns that might be required in the management of farm lands.

4. ADJOURNMENT

By general consent the meeting was adjourned at 11:41 a.m.

Laura Patrick, Chair

Certified Correct:

Shannon Brayford, Recorder