

**JUAN DE FUCA ELECTORAL AREA
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING held Monday, November 7, 2011 at 5:00pm
At 2-6868 West Coast Road, Sooke, BC**

PRESENT: Mary Johnson (Vice-Chair), Josie Hill, Teresa Willman

REGRETS: Jim Gowans (Chair)

ALSO PRESENT: Emma Taylor, CRD Planner/Recording Secretary

PUBLIC: Applicant and 3 members of public

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mary Johnson called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED by Josie Hill, **SECONDED** by Teresa Willman that the agenda be approved.

CARRIED

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

MOVED by Josie Hill, **SECONDED** by Teresa Willman that the minutes of June 16, 2011 be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

4. AGRICULTURAL LAND RESERVE APPLICATION FOR INCLUSION ALR-01-11

Mary Johnson asked the Commission members if they had any specific questions regarding the application. A question was directed to staff regarding the water supply on the property. Staff indicated the pond in the rear of the property was used for irrigation and the properties were serviced by Kemp Lake Water District. A member asked about the density of the property and permitted land uses. Staff advised that each property was currently zoned for a single family dwelling or duplex with a minimum parcel size of 2ha.

It was discussed that the application was crucial to an application for exclusion of land from Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) in the District of Sooke. A member asked if the Commission should be considering this when reviewing the inclusion application. Staff outlined that the inclusion application is within the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area jurisdiction; however, the exclusion application is within the District of Sooke. The District of Sooke Council reviewed the ALR exclusion application on October 11, 2011 and the Council recommends that the exclusion is in accordance with the District of Sooke Official Community Plan and that it be considered in conjunction with the inclusion application in Otter Point. The Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) ultimately makes the decision.

Discussion ensued regarding a 15m development permit area buffer around ALR properties and how it would affect adjacent properties. Emma Taylor explained that after the ALC makes a decision on the inclusion application, the owner will be required to make a formal application to CRD to amend the zoning, Official Community Plan designation and development permit area

and the Regional Growth Strategy. The community will have another opportunity to review the implications at that time.

The applicant described the land within the District of Sooke and stated that it did not have much road frontage making development difficult and that the land was not suitable for agriculture. He stated that the ALC is the authority that makes the decision and they may turn down the exclusion application but accept the inclusion. The applicant would proceed with the inclusion regardless.

An adjacent neighbour stated her concern for the 15m buffer as she has a 650ft² shop within 15m of the property line and is requesting a waiver of the DP buffer on her property. Staff clarified that the DP guidelines would apply to new construction and existing structures would be grandfathered.

A member asked if there was any other legislation that required a buffer around ALR land. Staff was only aware of the development permit tool to establish buffers at a local government level. A member stated concern that the buffer would affect property values. Staff noted that the agricultural activity on the subject properties occurs to the rear of the dwelling. A member suggested that the owner should have the responsibility for the buffer in this case and that it should be applied on the subject land and not affect the adjacent properties.

It is understood that the quality of the soil was improved to Class 2 and 3. A member expressed concern that the quality of soil of the District of Sooke parcels was improvable to Class 1 and 2 and therefore had more potential for agriculture.

The applicant indicated the buffer was a CRD bylaw to enforce, not the ALC and that this Commission should not be concerned with the exclusion application. Applicant left meeting at 5:30pm.

Members discussed the implications of having more land within the ALR. A member inquired about the tax implications. Staff will look into whether taxes are inherently lower on ALR properties even if not under production. Another member mentioned that smaller parcels are not necessarily negative for agriculture as they are more affordable and allow younger farmers to start farming.

A member of the public asked if the exclusion application was reviewed by an Agricultural Advisory Planning Commission for the District of Sooke. Staff indicated that there is not an AAPC in the District of Sooke and that Council made the recommendation. It was discussed that the governance is awkward as the inclusion and exclusion applications are a cross-jurisdictional issue.

MOVED by Josie Hill, **SECONDED** by Teresa Willman that the Agricultural Advisory Planning Commission welcomes inclusion of land in the Agricultural Land Reserve; however, the Commission is concerned with the regional implications of this inclusion application because it is tied to an exclusion of a larger area in another district within the local bioregion and that the 15m development permit area buffer will have an impact on adjacent neighbours. **CARRIED**

5. NEW BUSINESS

Mary Johnson reminded members that their terms are expiring and new members will be appointed for 2012. Membership currently represents Shirley, Otter Point and Malahat but a new member from East Sooke is sought.

Mary Johnson requested that an orientation be held for new Commission members to outline their roles and responsibilities and meeting conduct.

Members stated that they would appreciate follow-up on applications they have commented on. Better mapping and site visits to properties would assist the Commission making recommendations on applications.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50pm.

STAFF ACTION ITEMS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review Right-to-Farm legislation for any buffer requirements;• Review tax implications of having land in ALR vs. farm status;• Organize orientation for new Commission members.