

**District of Maple Ridge**

**AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING**

The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee, held in the Blaney Room at the Maple Ridge Municipal Hall, 11995 Haney Place, Maple Ridge, British Columbia, on Thursday, June 25, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.

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**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Candace Gordon, Chair	Community at Large
Councillor Cheryl Ashlie	Council Liaison, Maple Ridge
Councillor Linda King	Council Liaison, Maple Ridge
Christian Cowley, Co-Chair	Community at Large
Margaret Daskis	Maple Ridge Rep to the Metro Vancouver AAC
Tony Pellett	Agricultural Land Commission
Steve Pelton	Economic Advisory Commission
Steve Wynnyk	Food Producing Agricultural Sector
Chris Zabek	Regional Agrologist, Ministry of Agriculture & Lands
Matt Buchanan	Haney Farmer's Market
Heather Laity	Non-Food Producing Agricultural Sector
Matthew Laity	Food Producing Agricultural Sector
Jo Anne ten Brink	Community at Large

**GUESTS**

Darrell ZBeetnoff  
Mike McPhee

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS REGRETS**

Kerry Davison	Non-Food Producing Agricultural Sector
Kevin Davison	Maple Ridge Rep to the Metro Vancouver AAC
Lorraine Bates	Agricultural Fair Board

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT**

Diana Hall	Staff Liaison, Planning Department
Christine Carter	Planning Department
Tracy Camire	Committee Clerk

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**1. *Call to Order & Introductions***

There being a quorum present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

**2. *Adoption of the Agenda***

R09-018 Motion was moved and seconded

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That the Agenda dated June 25, 2009 be adopted as circulated

**CARRIED**

**3. Minutes of the Agricultural Advisory Committee Regular Meeting**

R09-019 Motion was moved and seconded

**That the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee of May 28, 2009 adopted with the following change**

Page 5 under Roundtable Tony Pellet's comment should read "he and the Commissioners attended"

**CARRIED**

**4. Delegations & Presentations**

**5. Current and Unfinished Business**

**5.1 Agricultural Plan Update – Darrell Zbeetnoff and Mike McPhee**

Darrell Zbeetnoff gave a review of the development process for the Draft Agricultural Area Plan Phase 3 report which takes the issues and develops goals to alleviate the defined issues. Mr. Zbeetnoff advised the Committee that the report will go before Council and then be reviewed at a public open house. The Committee then reviewed each Issue in the report and had the following comments.

**Issue 1: Loss of the Agricultural Land Base**

- Would like to see "Metro's Support" added to the second bullet point (how can the rest of Metro support Agriculture on a greater span).
- Should be more specific on the recommendations as to what area it refers to; an irrigation strategy needs to be mapped out and a study will be completed to determine the irrigation strategy.
- In so many areas of BC not only lower mainland there are conflicting issues and competition for water; in Metro Vancouver and the Fraser Valley a study and understanding of the water system needs will have to be completed and then decisions can be made.

**Joanne ten Brink joined the meeting at 7:24pm**

**Issue 2: Deterioration of the Agricultural Infrastructure**

Diana Hall reviewed the RS-3 Zoning along with the greenhouse setback requirements.

- Have a contact person between Fisheries and Farmers to act as a Council friendly go between.
- Need to do more work on drainage and flood control (Albion area was used as an example).
- It was suggested to have someone from the Department of Fisheries attend a future meeting.
- This issue relates back to Issue #9 (Stress in the Agriculture-Residential Interface) as a cross commodity.

***Issue 3: Difficulty in Gaining Access to Underutilized Agricultural Land***

- Agricultural tax; taxes go up if it's not used as working agricultural land.
- Enforcement of agricultural land tax requirements
- There needs to be a strategy first to figure out how you encourage people to get their land on the agricultural database.
- Website for urban agriculture; a property owner would put an icon that they have land for rent along with the terms and the renter can contact the owner directly no staff is needed. The website address is: [www.sharingbackyards.com](http://www.sharingbackyards.com) and sample agreements are also available on the website.

***Issue 4: Gaps in the Knowledge Base of Farmers***

- Investigate partnership with other organizations; some synergies that might work.
- Delete the fourth bullet
- Add "mentorship" to bullet one.
- In reference to the third recommendation; there is a need for multiple workshops so that the learning information is always current.
- Use technology to host information however some felt that there is not enough hands on to maintain the information.
- Younger farmer's that are going into Agriculture end up going into regulatory positions and not the technology side of Agriculture.
- Being aware of what is going on elsewhere and facilitating and connecting people with farmland.
- Secure some land to offer to the young farmer's as training land.

***Issue 5: Gaps in the knowledge Base of the Consumer Public***

- Other municipalities are more focused on farming education.
- Encourage local Farmer's to put on education based courses.
- Add "Partnering" with Agriculture in the classroom.
- Advertising where we are getting our local produce from.

***Issue 6: Gaps in the Local Distribution and Marketing System***

- This is the real challenge; developing infrastructure, distributing infrastructure, increasing the consumer awareness.
- The recommendations are valid, one thing we have going for us is the fact of the new bridge to coordinate marketing efforts with Langley that didn't exist previously.

- All considerations are integral; matching up suppliers with consumers.
- A lot of things in the document are due diligence to be a good farmer and should be done before you start a farm.
- Struggle with the implementation of these recommendations.
- Working with people like Margaret Daskis and Joanne ten Brink that are so knowledgeable in our sector to work with the issues and keep us up to date on the things that are happening province wide.
- Documentation required to go into any large company is very rigorous and difficult, putting templates assist clients to meet this challenge.
- Good thing happening; global food systems trying to put together three major food quality audits.
- Paperwork involved is unattainable, this plan is going to be a plan for Maple Ridge, and we're not looking at mass marketing, match local marketing issues.
- One addition to recommendation; encourage co-ops or non-profits, help with education and help to create the traceability plan. Market could be the whole lower mainland.

***Issue 7: Gaps in the Local Food System Infrastructure***

- Changes in regulations; no way anyone could afford to ship livestock out to be slaughtered and shipped back to be sold.

***Issue 8: Limited Diversity in Agricultural Activity***

- Would like to see FRINGE changed to a better suited word as Fringe is not always reflected in the ALR.
- Look at all zoning bylaws with regards to Agriculture, comments made about RS-3 we have a zone that identifies Agriculture as a main function but we need to make it flexible.
- Expanded types of agriculture.
- Definition of Agriculture should be broadened.
- Needs to have some perimeters.

***Issue 9: Stress in the Agriculture-Residential Interface***

- Would like to see consistency between Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows.
- See explicit mention of buffer zones and which side they belong on.
- Still working on the guidelines.
- Move beyond policy to stronger regulatory.

***Issue 10: Impacts of Agriculture on the Environment***

- Encourage farmers through incentives; encourage is not a strong enough word, rewarding those who do the farming.
- Would like to see the word encourage changed to educate.
- Idea of recognizing the environmental/wildlife policies that have made a positive contribution to agriculture.
- Change the word Impacts to Benefits in the title of this Issue.

***Issue 11: Agriculture Land Use-Wildlife Conflicts***

- Don't mind the word conflict on this Issue title as a number of farmers identified these issues as serious to their production.

***Issue 12: Inconsistent Regulation of Agricultural Areas***

- Concern expressed about regional wide playing field.

***Issue 13: Inadequate Land Use Zoning Context for Preserving Rural Character***

- Add the word "to" after "relate this" on the second bullet.
- When people are talking rural they don't always mean agriculture and this might actually erode some of the work we've already done.
- Rural Character been around for many reviews and because it's so diverse it's difficult to protect and put agriculture into that.
- Darrell Zbeetnoff confirmed that second bullet was identified as an outstanding issue in the 2004 review.
- Change bullet two to read; to explore changing the RS3 as it applies to the ALR in Maple Ridge Zone as it applies to ALR land Rezone land that is RS3 and A1 or A2".; doing this would bring (not A2 or any other land designation) land in the ALR seems ridiculous that it's designate RS3...set up expectations at to what will be done on the land. Really honest statement of a problem area and it's a continuous theme, addressing some things that the municipality can do and if it went beyond the ALR land it would be hard to do anything about but inside we can do something.
- Replace bullet with bold words.
- The Committee discussed the different zoning within the ALR.
- The Committee discussed the issue of multiple people making a farm work and what the requirements are for putting another farm related homes on farm land.
- The intent of this one is heard but should be designed by the planning department.
- Putting in regulations and enforcing regulations that already exist to address the problem.

Matt Buchanan thanked Mike McPhee and Darrell Zbeetnoff and the general consensus was that this report is practical and user friendly.

Cheryl Ashlie advised the Committee that the title doesn't reflect the direction of the policy. It was agreed that the title of the report should be Agricultural Plan and not Agricultural Area Plan

The Committee discussed the possibilities of dates for a public open house. The Committee will communicate via email and confirm a date soon and also discussed advertising the open house at the Agricultural Fair. The Committee also discussed a media release to update the community on where we are at with the report.

**5.2 Agricultural Advisory Committee Business Plan 2009 – 2011**

- 5.2.1 Banner Sub-Committee Update**
- 5.2.2 Education Sub-Committee Update**
- 5.2.3 Taste of Maple Ridge Sub-Committee Update**

Items 5.2.1 – 5.2.3 were deferred to September meeting

**5.3 Council Appointed Advisory Committee Manual**

Item 5.3 was deferred to September meeting

**6. New Business**

**7. Committee Reports**

**8. Correspondence**

**9. Roundtable**

**10. Public Questions & Answers – NIL**

**11. Next Meeting -** Thursday, September 24, 2009  
**7:00 p.m. Blaney Room, Maple Ridge Municipal Hall**

**Agenda Deadline -** Wednesday, September 9, 2009

**12. Adjournment – 9:25 pm**

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Chair  
/tc