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**Present:**

Councillor Bose, Chair  
Councillor Bains, Vice Chair  
Mayor Locke – left at 6:35 p.m.  
D. Bondar  
P. Harrison  
S. Keulen  
M. Schutzbank – joined at 6:09 p.m.  
R. Sihota  
R. Vanderende

**Absent:**

R. Brar  
H. Dhillon  
B. Favaro  
W. Kim  
S. Rai  
R. Tamis

**Staff Present:**

M. Kischnick, Senior Planner  
A. Barn, Planner  
S. Meng, Legislative Services Coordinator

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**A. ADOPTIONS****1. Adoption of the Agenda**

It was

Moved by S. Keulen

Seconded by P. Harrison

That the agenda of the Agricultural and Food Policy Committee meeting of May 14, 2024, be amended to add "Mayor's Update" under "Other Business" and consider this item immediately following the adoption of the agenda.

Carried

M. Schutzbank joined the meeting at 6:09 p.m.

**H. OTHER BUSINESS****1. Mayor's Update**

Mayor Locke provided the following verbal updates:

- A press release was made by the Chair recently and he stated City of Surrey is discouraging innovation and entrepreneurship in the agriculture sector. This statement became a concern for Mayor Locke and she expressed the City is trying to increase innovation and help businesses grow.
- Mayor Locke expressed the importance of the Agricultural and Food Policy Committee (AFPC) and ask the committee for their feedback particularly on roadblocks the farming industry are facing.
- Mayor Locke mentioned the notice of motion the Chair was going to put forward regarding the Agriculture industry and farming communities and suggested the Chair instead to put forward a motion in the section Other Business at the next Council meeting.
- Mayor Locke mentioned she contributes to the Regional Planning service of Metro Vancouver and the Metro Vancouver Climate 2050 Agricultural Roadmap report could be a valuable resource to look into.

The Committee provided the following comments:

- A committee member is in support of having the committee recommend innovative changes to Council.
- A committee member suggest the involvement of Surrey Farmers' Institute and Mayor Locke suggest the organization can apply to present at a Council-in-Committee meeting.
- Chair stated the need for a designated planner to support the agriculture industry and help steward farmers through processes at city hall.
- Multiple committee members expressed concerns regarding the lengthy process time to have building permits and agricultural related applications approved by the City.
- A committee member mentioned he is involved with the Vancouver Food Policy Council for an extended period advocating for local food initiatives. Vancouver implemented a local food action plan which addressed bureaucratic hurdles and enhanced internal capacity to support the local food movement. In Surrey, there is a lack of a clear vision for farming, necessitating a comprehensive plan to articulate agricultural goals and associated steps.
- A committee member mentioned the positive contributions this committee has added to the agriculture industry.
- Chair stated he responded to a news article that troubled him as a farmer, drafting his press release multiple times to ensure it conveyed his concerns without negativity. He further expressed regret if anyone took offense and accept feedback graciously. His proposal for a notice of motion stems from a long-held belief in fostering open dialogue among agricultural advisory groups, the Land Commission, and the ministry. He emphasized the need to avoid impractical regulations dictated solely by academics and advocate for collaboration to address challenges such as foreign workers in agriculture.

Mayor Locke left the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

**A. ADOPTIONS (Continued)**

**2. Adoption of the Minutes – March 12, 2024**

It was Moved by P. Harrison  
Seconded by Councillor Bains  
That the minutes of the Agricultural and  
Food Policy Committee meeting held March 12, 2024, be adopted.  
Carried

**B. DELEGATIONS**

This section had no items to consider.

## C. STAFF PRESENTATIONS

### 1. Development Application 7923-0267-00

Allison Barn, Planner

Address: 3300 - 176 Street

The Planner summarized the report dated May 7, 2024, regarding Development Application No. 7923-0267-00 which proposes a Development Variance Permit (DVP) to reduce the front yard setback of the General Agriculture Zone (A-1) from 30 metres to 17.95 metres in order to construct a farm building. The following information was highlighted:

- Applicant is proposing a DVP to reduce front yard setback from 30 metres to 17.95 metres in order to construct a farm building.
- The majority of the property is used for blueberry production, with the exception of an area near the south-west portion of the property where an existing driveway, shop and residential dwelling are located.
- The subject site faces a Class AO ditch along the frontage of the property adjacent to 176 Street (western property boundary).

In response to questions from the Committee, the Planner provided the following information:

- There is an approved fill placement area onsite. The applicant submitted a Notice of Intent to the ALC for the purposed placement of fill activity. The ALC has approved the fill placement activity.
- Intent is to store equipment for the blueberry farm production.
- There is no need for additional fill.

The Committee provided the following comments:

- Chair stated the committee saw this application regarding a duplex in 2015 and this time the applicant wants to put a farm building.
- A committee member expressed support of this application and stated it is not hindering any agricultural land.

It was

Moved by S. Keulen

Seconded by M. Schutzbank

That the Agricultural and Food Policy

Committee recommend that the General Manager of Planning and Development support Development Application 7923-0267-00.

Carried

Senior Planner mentioned that the zoning bylaw is under a review, including agricultural zones, and that these type of setback regulations that impact farm building may be adjusted. It was recommended that the Agricultural and Food Policy Committee put forward a recommendation to support staff in reviewing the current farm building setbacks to support the placement of farm buildings in line with provincial standards to reduce the need for a development variance permits.

It was Moved by Councillor Bains  
Seconded by P. Harrison  
That the Agricultural and Food Policy  
Committee recommend that the General Manager of Planning and Development  
direct staff to review the current farm building setbacks.  
Carried

## D. INFORMATION ITEMS

### 1. Food Charters and Food Strategies

Senior Planner provided a brief overview of the memo regarding Food Charters and Food Strategies. The following information was highlighted:

- On October 3, 2023, representatives from Seeds of Change Surrey and the Black, African, and Caribbean ("BAC") Advisory Committee presented to AFPC on food security in Surrey. The presentation discussed food security in Surrey and advocated for the development of a Surrey food charter and food strategy. AFPC passed a resolution requesting additional information on municipal food charters and food strategies.
- Surrey Agricultural Plan from 1999 was updated with an Agricultural Enhancement Strategy in 2013. There is no food charter in place yet and is being considered through a process of updating the Official Community Plan (OCP) and zoning bylaws.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Senior Planner provided the following information:

- The agriculture policies and designations in the OCP and zoning bylaw will be reviewed and updated by staff. This approach aims to maintain consistency and avoid conflict. An updated agriculture plan (if completed) could provide a policy lens that would provide input into the OCP and zoning bylaw. While avoiding advocacy for specific items due to cost considerations, this method mirrors practices in some other municipalities where updates to agricultural plans have been undertaken. Any request for an agricultural plan update would likely require consultant review focused on agriculture in the ongoing OCP review in Surrey. Currently input in agricultural policy in the OCP and zoning bylaw will primarily come from staff and this committee.

The Committee provided the following comments:

- A committee member stated the food security issue within the Black, African, and Caribbean community in Surrey is considered a private sector concern and not a public sector concern. They further stated the municipality does not control food affordability and taxing.
- A committee member expressed concerns regarding food waste on farms and request a system to be developed to combat this issue.
- A committee member expressed an option to provide a new farm plan to drive some of the OCP changes and it would be strategic to include advocacy on food affordability.
- A committee member mentioned Delta and Pitt Meadows have revised their agriculture plan recently.

- Chair request the Metro Vancouver Climate 2050 Agricultural Roadmap report to be distributed to committee members for review and provide feedback to allow staff to create a terms of reference in the agriculture plan.
- A committee member stated they would like to see the Surrey Farmers' Institute be involved in providing input to the curation of the agriculture plan.

It was

Moved by P. Harrison

Seconded by M. Schutzbank

That the Agricultural and Food Policy

Committee recommend that the General Manager of Planning and Development direct staff to report back to AFPC with a brief draft outline detailing possible key steps to update the Surrey Agricultural Plan, including: possible scope of work, process, timeline, estimated costs, partners or stakeholders, and potential outside sources of funding or grants, in order to solicit further consideration from AFPC.

Carried

#### E. INTEGRITY OF THE AGRICULTURAL LAND

- A farm posted a sign to inform the public to slow down for tractors.
- A committee member mentioned the traffic on 40th Avenue where drivers use it as a shortcut to bypass 32nd Avenue from 152 Street to 176 Street.
- A committee member expressed an ongoing concern regarding ranch trucking firms on 168 Street who ran a stop sign to pass a tractor.
- Multiple committee members expressed a concern regarding the shortage of truck parking and suggest this to be included in the review of the agriculture plan.
- A committee member expressed the concern on the longevity of farming which has a big barrier of entry due to the cost on obtaining farmland.
- A committee member expressed the concern to have the younger generations be involved in farming and the need to focus on a strategy to combat this.
- A committee member expressed a need to promote agriculture at Surrey City Hall.
- A committee member mentioned the Agriculture Water Infrastructure program was launched last year. The program received funding from the province of \$20 million dollars the previous year and another \$80 million dollar this year. The program is re-opening in early June and is an opportunity for Surrey to look into applying for funding to support the city's water infrastructure similar to other municipalities.

#### F. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Agricultural and Food Policy Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, June 11, 2024 with proposed location in Meeting Room 125 A and B at Surrey Operations Centre.

#### G. ADJOURNMENT

The Agricultural and Food Policy Committee adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

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Jennifer Ficocelli,  
City Clerk and Director Legislative Services

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Councillor Bose, Chairperson