

SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT

**AREA E – ELPHINSTONE
ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION**

Tuesday, April 29, 2025, 5:45 p.m.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AREA E ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
HELD IN THE CEDAR ROOM OF THE SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT OFFICES AT 1975
FIELD ROAD, SECHELT, B.C.

PRESENT:	Chair	Michael Sanderson
	Members	Arne Hermann Nara Brenchley Catherine Grey Clinton McDougall (virtual) Devin Arndt (virtual) Ashley St. Clair (virtual)
ALSO PRESENT:	Electoral Area E Director	Donna McMahon (Non-voting Board Liaison)
	SCRD Planning Staff	Ian Hall, GM, Planning & Development Jonathan Jackson, Manager, Planning Julie Clark, Senior Planner Sven Koberwitz, Senior Planner Genevieve Dixon, Office Asst.
	SCRD Staff	Sherry Reid, Corporate Officer Kristi Wiebe, Deputy Corp. Officer
	SCRD Recorders	Vicki Dobbyn, Office Asst. Jennifer Mackenzie, Office Asst.
	Public	2 (virtual)
REGRETS:	Members	Mary Degan
ABSENT:	Members	Lynda Chamberlin Laura Macdonald

VOLUNTEER HEALTH AND SAFETY BRIEFING

GM Hall gave a health and safety orientation supported by a PowerPoint presentation.

ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Election of the Chair was deferred to the next meeting.

Michael Sanderson was acclaimed as Vice Chair

CALL TO ORDER 5:45 p.m.

AGENDA

The agenda was adopted as presented.

MINUTES

The following minutes were received for information:

- Elphinstone (Area E) APC Minutes of November 26, 2024
- Egmont/Pender Harbour (Area A) APC Minutes of November 27, 2024
- Roberts Creek (Area D) APC Minutes of December 16, 2024
- West Howe Sound (Area F) APC Minutes of November 26, 2024

REPORTS**Rezoning Application for Lot D Chaster Road (BYL00052)**

Senior Planner Koberwitz introduced the application for 16 lots with reduced lot size to allow for 50% open space or park, and strata-septic system.

Key Points of Discussion:

- APC noted that a resident/neighbour of the subdivision to the west of the subject property, addressed the committee.
- Members indicated that they were pleased to see this application. It was comprehensive and provided considerable technical information and reports (Planning, Civil, Traffic, Geotechnical, Septic Assessment, Hydrogeology, Environmental and Tree Assessment) for the APC to review.
- The APC also noted that while MOTT ultimately has the final authority to approve the Subdivision application, members believe they also have a responsibility/obligation to provide referral comments to the SCRD Board on the Rezoning application that also address the proposed Subdivision as it relates to the OCP policy framework and development of the property in its neighbourhood context.
- Members identified the following **positive aspects** of this Rezoning Application:
 - It provides a necessary opportunity for higher density development in alignment with the Housing Needs Report.

- In accordance with the OCP Policy B-3.1 the Cluster Subdivision Design submitted with the rezoning application provides dedication of 50% (1.56 ha/3.85 ac) of the gross property area (3.21 ha/7.93 ac) for public use could be used to provide both community open space, recreation benefit, and protection of a considerable number of the existing trees on the property.
- The proposed smaller (700 m²) strata lots potentially provide greater market choice in the Regional District
- It is well-placed in relation to the elementary school.
- The traffic study showed that traffic will be light.

APC members identified the following **concerns** regarding this Rezoning Application:

- **Septic Field:**

Close proximity of the field in the SW corner to adjacent Grandview Heights properties causes concern for odour issues and impacts to neighbours' quality of life. Additional requirements should be considered, such as higher standards for design, proactive odour mitigation strategies, increased setback distance, and vegetative buffers.

Long term strata maintenance of shared septic field. Who becomes responsible if issues arise in the future? Ensure safeguards are in place. The APC suggests the SCRDC consider a rezoning condition requiring a maintenance bond/security from the applicant in a sufficient amount to address future maintenance issues should they arise with the responsible residential strata.

- **Environmental and Community Impacts of Site Clearing & Development:**

Loss of forest connectivity between NE of site and SW of site and public green space, as well as potential for site to be entirely cleared during construction would cause significant distress to neighbours and community members.

Impacts on forest may result in fragmented wildlife habitat. Is it possible to maintain larger, more connected swaths of forest and focus development on lower value ecological areas (i.e. alder stand to the northeast)?

Water retention, stormwater management, and downstream ecosystem impacts. Significant amount of water retention will be lost through forest clearing and drainage ditches to wetland will inevitably cause downstream impacts on sensitive wetland and creek. Impacts should be understood and mitigation required.

- **Parkland:**

Questions arose about what will happen with the parkland. Its designation is up to the SCRDC Board, and the SCRDC will need to determine its capacity to maintain a park. It's important how the park is developed, and whether vestiges of the

woodland will remain. It should be determined which trees should be retained. The entire open space should have a park dedication which will provide for greater public control over its use.

- **Strata Developments:**

They are infamous for low bid maintenance so it would be better to come under the SCRD.

- **Wildlife:**

Is it possible to have an ecological context for connectivity that takes wildlife into consideration?

- **Traffic:**

Chaster Road is very busy area for traffic, especially before and after school, and this should be taken into consideration because the development is close to the school.

- **Housing Construction:**

It isn't known if the developer is planning to build the houses or just sell the lots.

- **Road Layout:**

What is the rationale for punching the road through to Sunnyside? Road decisions are made by MOTT.

APC members identified the following **key opportunities and recommendations** that they urge staff and the Board to consider to strengthen support for this Rezoning Application and the associated Subdivision Application:

- **Preservation of Ecological Value:** Opportunities exist for the Tree Summary Report (See Note 2) to further guide site planning and lot layout to allow preservation of a greater area of woodland and high value ecological spaces. The report notes there are an estimated 350-400 trees on the property. The site survey provided identifies approximately 35 larger trees within this total. There is no indication in the Report whether the larger trees are significant and are candidates for retention. Further tree assessment is recommended to confirm if there are candidate trees that are significant and can be retained within either the dedicated open spaces or within individual lots.
- The **Tree Summary** (pp 107-114) is not an Arborist's Report, as it notes trees have not been measured, tagged or individually inspected. If trees are not measured, it is not possible to accurately calculate CRZ (Critical Root Zones) or evaluate viability for retention or preservation. A partial sheet of Survey within the whole document shows tree locations of trees over 25cm Diameter at Breast Height (DBH). This information should be used by the Arborist to provide a complete Report.

- **Public Trail Connectivity:** Proposed public space should provide a more connected trail network that ties into existing trail connections to the east and west of the property.
- **Water Conservation and Stormwater Management:** Opportunities for on-site water retention, conservation, and stormwater management through landscaping and water collection strategies. There is potential for SCRD to address ongoing regional water concerns through mandated requirements for this proposed new higher density zoning area.
- **Alignment with SCRD Policy Objectives:** Creation of a new higher-density zone by the SCRD offers a precedent-setting opportunity to embed broader SCRD goals, such as the SCRD Community Climate Action Plan (e.g. mandate Step 4 or 5 of the BC Energy Step Code, and Level 2 or higher of the BC Zero Carbon Step Code), biodiversity and habitat protection, community trails/public amenities. If there are opportunities in the new Zoning Bylaw to mandate requirements that align with these objectives, they should be explored by the SCRD now during the creation of a new higher density zone.
- **Community Amenity Contribution:** Can it be reviewed?
- **Current Trail between King and Sunnyside:** It would be good to maintain existing trails between King and Sunnyside.
- **Permeable Surfaces:** Consideration should be given to increasing the number of permeable surfaces in the development.
- **Lot Sizes:**
700 sq. metres is more of an urban size. Need a new regulatory bylaw to accommodate this size. 700 m² is the minimum considered in the OCP. There should be opportunities to revisit this minimum given the housing needs report and environmental issues. Sewage also informs limits on density.
- **Water Conservation:**
Is there any consideration for Low Water Usage Landscaping and on-site cisterns? Is mandated water collection possible? There is ability to introduce this in bylaw rezoning.
- **Building Scheme** can be developed like a registered covenant. The development does not create a precedent.
- **Development Permit** is required because riparian area encroaches on the lot.
- A group of 30 neighbouring families met to consider this application and give input to the developer. Their priorities are forest retention, trails, wild space, and wildlife. They have been vehemently opposed to the road going through the lot and

would prefer a cul de sac. Members suggest the layout be re-examined to create two cul-de-sacs: North from Chaster and South from Sunnyside with provision for future connection if MOTT determines at some future date that Traffic Warrants require a through road.

- Northeast corner is primarily alder. Is it possible to flip the plan so the alders come down instead of mature trees?
- Retaining trees is complicated due to climate change, so we need to be realistic about what we can retain and preserve.
- This development is an opportunity to reduce carbon emissions by requiring heat pumps for heating and cooling.
- Suggestion of buffer zone between Chaster Road and the two most northern lots, and a similar buffer between Grandview and the lot on the west side of septic field. This would preserve more forest. Applicant should consider looking at re-design to provide greater buffers, particularly from Grandview subdivision.
- Tree Summary should be highlighted. Consideration should be given to expanding into a full Arborist Report to identify significant trees to be retained and/or replaced.
- Timeline for rezoning is that there will be a public information meeting and then first and second reading. It is likely that the public information meeting will be in May or June, followed by first and second readings in the summer.
- A public open house will be required.
- If it is the SCRD Board's decision that this application will be referred again to the APC. If it is referred back to the APC it would likely be in September.
- Layout is still preliminary and subject to change.
- The reporting back mechanism for consultation to MOTT is that the application goes to first and second reading, and MOTT responds to the referral. Much of MOTT's decision-making relies on its long-term transportation plan that emphasizes connectivity.

Recommendation No. 1 *Rezoning Application for Lot D Chaster Road (BYL00052)*

THAT support for this application be general, subject to consideration of and further consultation on items identified in Key Points of Discussion, including but not exclusively related to:

- retention of trees, forested areas and trails in the public space
- stormwater management and downstream impacts

- septic system odour mitigation and wastewater management
- increased impacts of higher density development on neighbouring properties
- opportunities to advance broader SCRD objectives (e.g. climate, water management)
- road allowance
- redesign of lot layout to protect significant trees, provide increased buffers, trail connectivity and possible cul-de-sacs

Housing Needs Report; Official Community Plan (OCP) Renewal Project Scope and Timeline Update

Manager Jackson reviewed the Housing Needs Report and OCP Update in relation to the expectations of the APC and included the following points:

- These reports were distributed for information only.
- There is a legislative requirement to update the Housing Needs Report every five years.
- The OCP report covers policy implications, is based on the two pillars of housing and environment/climate change, and is informed by the integrated regional growth baseline strategy.
- The Planning Department will continue to send updates to the APCs for feedback, and there will be three milestone check-ins.
- By having one OCP, housing growth can be better planned and measured.
- It will allow planning to determine the type of housing the region needs.
- APCs can provide more insight into what is happening specifically in our local areas.
- Information will be available on the OCP website.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT Director's Report was deferred.

NEXT MEETING TBA

ADJOURNMENT 6:55 p.m.