

SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT

AREA A – Pender Harbour/Egmont ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION

Monday, May 5, 2025, 4:30pm

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

PRESENT:	Acting Chair	Gordon Littlejohn
	Members	Dennis Burnham Michelle Cunningham (virtual) Sean McAllister (virtual) Jay O’Keeffe
ALSO PRESENT:	Electoral Area A Director	Leonard Lee (Non-voting Board Liaison)
	Alternate Director	Christine Alexander (virtual)
	SCRD Recorder	Jennifer MacKenzie
	SCRD Staff	
	GM, Planning and Development	Ian Hall
	Corporate Officer	Sherry Reid
	Manager, Planning & Development	Jonathan Jackson
	Senior Planner	Julie Clark
ABSENT:	Members	Alan Skelley Jane McOuat Farrer Catherine McEachern Yovhan Burega Tom Silvey Bob Fielding

VOLUNTEER HEALTH AND SAFETY MEETING

GM Hall gave a Health and Safety orientation and Respectful Workplace presentation.

ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Election of Chair and Vice Chair deferred to next meeting.

Gordon Littlejohn was appointed Acting Chair for the purposes of this meeting.

CALL TO ORDER The meeting was called to order at 4:39 pm.

AGENDA The agenda was adopted as presented.

MINUTES

The following minutes were received for information:

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

REPORTS

Housing Needs Report (HNR), Official Community Plan (OCP) Renewal Project Scope and Timeline Update.

Manager Jackson reviewed the HNR 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 HNR 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 strategy.
- The Planning Department will continue to send updates to the APCs for feedback
- There will be three milestone check-ins:
 - The first check-in will likely be in September after the first round of public engagement.
- 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.
- As local context advisors, APCs can provide more insight into what is happening specifically in our local areas.

Key Points of Discussion

- The HNR is long and hard to read and clarity was needed on the percentage and/or number of housing units needed at the 20 year milestone;
- The number of units required at the 5 year milestone is 900+ units, and the number required at the 20 year milestone is 3000+ units;
- One OCP provides a lens as to where the areas are the same, and where they are different;
- One OCP will help determine the overall strategy for areas such as transportation, recreation, and protected areas;
- Different areas have different considerations, different concerns;
- As local context advisors, APC members have knowledge of their specific communities and concerns;
- One OCP can address housing needs across the different electoral areas;
- A question arose about whether the OCP is a “done deal”;
 - Yes, the Board has decided there is to be one OCP and one Zoning Bylaw for

all electoral areas;

- Current APC is not broad enough to handle the requests set out in the reports;
- A request was made to determine Area A "limits":
 - o Staff help will be required to define areas;
 - o Help required to define types of housing required;
 - o Varied needs: unhoused, seniors, affordable, and every other type
- The geography of Area A is complex:
 - o Staff help will be required for this complex discussion;
- Many younger families and/or individuals have moved to the Sunshine Coast within the last 5 years, from Vancouver / Lower Mainland due to housing costs, lack of affordability
 - o Tiny homes are of interest
 - o Too much existing red-tape re: zoning
 - o Zoning issues surrounding RV's, modular homes, and why tiny homes/modular homes cannot be built on acre lots
 - o There is a broad spectrum of housing needs
- We need dense development, and it makes sense to house people in the area, but more people means that a sewer system will be required;
- There has been a surprising drop in subsidized apartments;
- There is concern that we cannot afford rental units and that we need subsidized housing and tiny housing/units;
- A question was asked if there will be funding from the Province for housing for people who are dealing with addictions and mental health;
- The concern is that this is a big population who are not prepared for retirement and will require subsidized housing;
- A concern was raised that we cannot move ahead with tiny units until the Provincial Government agrees to provide funding;
- A concern was raised that it is pointless to talk about the 5-year plan unless there are guarantees on funding;
- A concern was raised there is no mention of the figures for second homes and/or short-term rentals in Madeira Park;
- There are currently 46 short-term rental units, with 1/3 available full-time (approximately 13-14 homes)
- Also missing is the percentage of homes owned by corporations and/or venture capitalists
- There is a concern that those entities are 'taking out' the housing market and common spaces;
- A question was asked about where is a "suitable area" for housing? Concerns include:
 - o Unstable soil
 - o Slopes
 - o Increased density may encroach on to agricultural land
- A question was asked about how the numbers are calculated re: local residents
- The APC will work through the issues as mandated, but the magnitude of work required was noted;
- Staff confirmed that the APC will have the full support of a team of staff, with direct

input from planning

- Area A is ready for density, but there is a concern about who pays;
- The previous plan was successful but dissolved;
- Comments re: OCP:
 - o Area A OCP is the newest on the Sunshine Coast;
 - o The oldest OCP is 29 years old;
 - o All plans have a shelf life;
- Roadblocks should first be identified, such as:
 - o Sewer
 - o Water
- Then formulate a plan for those roadblocks;
- A question was asked about “how does it work” when each APC is working separately on one OCP?
- A suggestion was made that perhaps there could be a workshop where all APC’s work together;
- Area A is a diverse group and should have its own plan, but the Director must back it;
- Pender Harbour is unique, with protected shoreline and lakes;
- A question was asked about if the one OCP is for the “Sunshine Coast” generally, or if it is an “Area A OCP”?
 - o It will be one OCP, with Area A uniqueness built in;
- A comment was made about the Cowichan Valley Regional District, which has one OCP but with multiple, local areas plans built into it – is that the goal here?
 - o Staff: yes; one OCP and one Zoning Bylaw, but with a mechanism for protecting local character, although that mechanism has not yet been defined;
- A concern was raised about how to bring all areas together, to harmonize the separate plans?
- The concern is that Area A is very different from the other areas that are closer to Sechelt and Gibsons;
- Will there be separate plans, but harmonized, to bring together the common parts?
- Most residents in Area A were vacationers who have stayed and retired;
- A concern was raised about there being too much piecemeal bidding for projects and that it will not be unitized for the community re: infrastructure;
- A question was asked about a harmonized plan:
 - o What portions are harmonized or localized?
 - o What is the formula for long-term planning:
 - Sewer
 - Emergency Health Services;
 - Hospital
 - Fire
 - More crew will be required, more training required
 - o It will be important to identify restrictions
- A concern was raised that this may not be doable, the timeline, cost, inability to meet needs, etc.; could be too restrictive;
- A concern was raised about administrative waste, multiple bylaws to consider, too

- many levels of governments to go through;
- More should be spent on infrastructure but the concern is that too much will be spent on administrative costs:
 - o Budgets should be small
 - o Taxes raised?
 - o The less administrative costs, the better
- Some residents do not want to see any change at all, would prefer to remain rural;
- More concerns:
 - o Generational divide;
 - o Zoning issues;
 - o Double bylaws;
 - o It is non-sustainable;
 - o Reduce administrative costs going forward;
- A comment was made about the challenge of incorporated versus unincorporated areas, the level of duplication will be unavoidable;
- Questions about the shíshálh Nation OCP:
 - o Where do we come together?
 - o Is there overlap?
 - o How do we become one OCP?
- shíshálh Nation has a Land Use Plan;
- The information about that plan is just flowing out now;
- Staff will report further once more information is known;
- There will be opportunities to support each other;
- shíshálh Nation was involved in the previous OCP and was very influential;
- It was agreed that Area A should actively engage with shíshálh Nation for this process;
- It was noted that the participants are not quite what they should be;
- There is concern about development into Crown land as there is not enough private land to develop on with water and sewer capabilities;
- Are there designated Agricultural Land Reserves in Area A?
 - o Some do exist.
- Comments about "getting it done":
 - o How big will it be?
 - o Where do we want density housing?
 - o Where do we want sewer?
- Goals:
 - o It will be a single, user-friendly document;
 - o Less redundancies;
 - o Written in language that is easy to understand;
 - o There will be a policy framework for where similarities and differences exist;
- Some would like to see a summary of the differences between Roberts Creek and Pender Harbour bylaws, for example;
- There is a May 15 Electoral Area Services Committee meeting to talk about future development of the Sunshine Coast;
- There is a background report which includes comparative analysis, OCP's and zoning, it is relatively short;

- The OCP 30 years ago changed the harbour into a residential area and the community required re-zoning;
 - o There is a concern that this cannot happen again;
- There is a concern that land cannot be purchased first but then have to wait for two years to re-zone to break ground, this does not work;
- There needs to be forethought for future use.

NEXT MEETING TBD

ADJOURNMENT 5:58 pm.