

SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT

**AREA E – ELPHINSTONE
ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION**

June 24, 2020

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AREA E ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
HELD ELECTRONICALLY VIA ZOOM

PRESENT:	Chair	Mary Degan
	Members	Bob Morris Nara Brenchley Anne Cochran Rick Horsley Karen Mahoney Urszula Dragowska
ALSO PRESENT:	Electoral Area E Director	Donna McMahon (Non-Voting Board Liaison)
	Recording Secretary	Diane Corbett
REGRETS:	Members	Rod Moorcroft Dougald Macdonald Mike Doyle

CALL TO ORDER 7:18 p.m.

AGENDA The agenda was adopted as presented.

MINUTES

Area E Minutes

The Area E APC minutes of May 27, 2020 were approved as circulated.

Minutes

The following minutes were received for information:

- Egmont/Pender Harbour (Area A) APC Minutes of May 27, 2020
- Roberts Creek (Area D) APC Minutes of May 19, 2020
- Planning and Community Development Committee Minutes of May 14, 2020

REPORTS

Provincial Referral 2412092 for Commercial General Use Application (Endless Biking Ltd)

The APC discussed the staff report regarding Provincial Referral 2412092 for Commercial General Use Application (Endless Biking Ltd) to provide adventure tourism (mountain bike tours, skills courses and training) on Sunshine Coast trails.

Points from discussion included:

- Is this potentially going to increase need for search and rescue? Would facilities be needed to deal with human waste?
- It seems like there is a lack of follow up or review by the Province regarding the regulation of trail use. Responsibilities of levels of government need to be clarified. It seems like the SCRD would be left with trail clean up and maintenance. SCRD does not have bylaw officers available to check on this. Who will check in on the proposed operation?
- Bike tours are already happening. This is the sort of tourism we want. Multiday tours potentially benefit the local community. It is the lifestyle we want to encourage.
- They can take groups to ride those trails now. What more are they asking for?
- The guided tours are expected to have a code of conduct and to be managed. Why would we deny them this opportunity? There are many trails.
- Concern: they say they want to use the trails, but nothing about maintaining the trails.
- Have trail-building days in which they can participate.
- Staff report was really good, with solid recommendations.
- Make a coordinated plan on trail maintenance.
- It is not a clear referral process. SCRD is not in a position to manage commercial operations.
- Test the new Sprockids Park management and maintenance model first; after that, make a decision.
- There are no resources for monitoring and enforcement of commercial operations. If they mention they'll contribute to building of trails here and put resources towards maintenance, it would make the proposal more attractive.
- What will be done with others wanting to do this in the future? There need be something in place to ensure this is done in a good way. You want to have your processes in place rather than proceeding and then developing them after the fact.
- Applicants need to be evaluated on the basis of criteria. Develop criteria.
- We don't have a presence in these remote areas; we don't have a provincial Recreation Officer on the coast.
- A great suggestion that needs coordination is on page 7 of the staff report:
"Work across disciplines, ministries, local governments, commercial recreation operators and others to develop an integrated planning, evaluation and enforcement program that:
 - *Plans for the long range view, with cumulative impact analysis tools;*
 - *Has limits (to the number of tenures, as well as number of customers per tenure);*
 - *Builds collaboration, responsibility, communication and stewardship for natural and cultural resources on Provincial Land;*
 - *Has appropriate tracking and consequences of misuse. "*
- Permit access with the understanding that they may need to get involved in a more coordinated stewardship program. Concern: turning these companies down flat isn't in our

community's best interest. One of the major attractions here are the biking trails. It would be short sighted to deny.

- The people who developed those trails (trails society, mountain bike society, etc.) should be involved in developing criteria. There should be some sort of coordinated collaboration with local trail builders, users, and stakeholders. It is our local groups building these trails; it would be good to have them involved in setting criteria.
- Why 10-30 years licence? Renew every two or three years. Shorten the timeframe and see how the project is working. Tenure could incrementally increase over time. Threat of not renewing if they aren't giving back in terms of maintenance and trail building.
- If the Province is making referrals, there should be a process that everyone understands, and a process involved in the community.
- This is a process that involves community values and community work being done. Having all the partners at the table is really important.
- There is more interest in using these remote places. Staff is not geared to handle these referrals. Suggest that staff ask other regional districts to get together, and have a broader conversation about getting a process in place, and talk to the Province saying they aren't equipped.
- Would there be a limit on the number of years that this would last?
- Recommend that there be a referral process put in place for future referrals; have clear delineation of groups involved in decision-making; and have clear criteria for the proponents to meet to move forward.
- It is fair to expect compensation from the Province to handle this.
- Where is MLA Nicholas Simons in all of this?
- The applicant wants to use established trails on the coast. It makes sense to recognize and be in contact with people here who built these trails.
- If it gets popular, maybe look at limiting numbers; then maybe these groups compete for licenses.
- This is the Province's decision; SCRDC needs to interact with the Province first. Tell the proponents that this could be a go, but processes aren't in place yet; to make sure that they are, we have to work with the Province.
- When a commercial use makes use of volunteer services (trail building; search and rescue), how do we deal with that? Who would you pay, if it were not free?
- Concern: want to see recreational use get diversified here. Would like to create criteria to make this happen.
- Put in a Recreation Officer for the Sunshine Coast and Powell River. They could do coordination and development. They could also follow up regarding contributions to trail maintenance.

The APC considered optional responses to the application referral that were provided by the Province and listed within the staff report. Debate arose between 'approval with conditions' (option 3) and 'refusal for reasons' (option 4).

By general consent, the APC combined options 3 and 4 to develop option 5, as follows.

Recommendation No. 1 *Provincial Referral 2412092 for Commercial General Use Application (Endless Biking Ltd)*

The APC recommends refusal of the project unless the conditions that we recommend are followed:

1. Create a standard process that brings together all levels of government involved and all groups that have ownership. Show clarity regarding the government processes to go through, and what governments and groups in the community are involved. At the local level, ensure a coordinated collaboration with stakeholders; e.g. local trails society, search and rescue.
2. Have clear criteria for proponents that are reflective of the group that comes together (as in 1.). Develop a process for these types of applications. For applicants, show clarity regarding what is involved in the process and what they get out of it.
3. Consider a shorter-term license of two to five years. Have guidelines to be met. These will fall under the mandate of a provincial Recreation Officer who is part of our area.
4. Make sure there is a dedicated Recreation Officer for our area, or the upper and lower Sunshine Coast. If we are going to have these referrals, we need to have a Recreation Officer for our area, so they have time to ensure conditions are being met, and that licensees are meeting the criteria. That dedicated role would have dedicated time for any of these referrals that come forward in the future.
5. These guided tours must meet standards. Guides should have search and rescue training. Ensure that any tours that are guided are connected with local search and rescue, and have plans for potential emergencies in the event of needing to get people out.
6. Reciprocity – As there would be the commercial use of volunteer resources (e.g. trail building and maintenance efforts, search and rescue), ensure the commercial user has to give back financially or with time from their group, made to groups that are doing the maintenance and support. Part of the duty of a Recreation Officer would be to ensure any reciprocity agreement is carried out.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director's report was received.

NEXT MEETING July 22, 2020

ADJOURNMENT 8:52 p.m.