

Status Report on the Farm Home Plate Proposal

Public Consultation Results &
Key Issues Identified by Public
February 24, 2009

Public Consultation

- Public Open House – December 10, 2008.
- 155 people signed in.
- Input received: 83 questionnaires & 14 e-mails or letters.
- Petition with 222 signatures including 62 residents from Maple Ridge. Of the 160 Pitt Meadows petition signers, 87 were agricultural lot owners/residents & 17 urban lot owners/residents.

Summary of Results(1)

- **Ownership:**

- Most respondents live on farm land (81%).
- Out of those who live on farmland, 56% operate a farm on the land they live on and 28% lease it out to someone else.

- **FHP Options:**

- Majority of respondents (67.5%) do not support either option of clustering of residential uses within a Farm Home Plate (FHP).
- Only 32.5 % support the grouping of residential uses.
- Out of those who support the proposal, the majority believe that grouping of residential uses should be allowed in any location of farmland that does not detract from farming.

- **Rebuilding of New Houses:**

- Majority of respondents (91%) maintain that new residences should be allowed in the same place.
- Majority of respondents (72%) do not support the proposed options to apply to vacant lots.

Summary of Results (2)

- FHP Size:
 - The majority (77.5%) do not support either option A or B. Among those who support the proposed options, a slight majority support the same size farm home plate for all size parcels.
- House Caps:
 - The majority of respondents (70%) do not support this concept. Among those who support the proposal, a slight majority (17%) support the house caps as presented: 600 m² (6458 ft²) for lots less than 5 ha and 1080m² (11,625 ft²) for lots larger than 5 ha.

Key Issues Raised

- The impact of becoming non-conforming and using existing foundations and septic systems by replacement residences.
- The impact on house insurance.
- The availability of mortgages.
- The potential reduction in land values.
- The impact on the future use of smaller agricultural parcels.

Outside Input on Key Issues

Staff received outside input from the following:

- Insurance Brokers Association of BC about insurance

Staff is awaiting information from the following:

- BC Appraisal Institute about the potential impact on land values
- Urban Development Institute about land values and mortgage availability
- Ministry of Agriculture about the economic feasibility of smaller agricultural parcels
- Fraser Health Authority on potential reuse of the old septic system in a case of total damage or reconstruction of a house

Initial Analysis

1. *Non-conformity (Legal Opinion):*

Council may override or grandfather the “75% rule”.

1. *Insurance (Insurance Brokers Association of BC):*

- Insurance Act requires owners to inform insurance brokers about bylaws compliance.
- ‘Bylaw extension policies’ available for non-conformity.
- Without extension policies, payouts under claims might be insufficient to rebuild.

3. *Economic Feasibility of Smaller Parcels for Agriculture (Ministry of Agriculture):*

- Small lots are often suitable for start-up farmers testing new technologies and/or soil based farming (e.g. free range poultry, organic farming or herb farming.)

Next Steps

- Follow up on contacts about key issues raised by the public.
- Analysis of all key issues.
- Consider and evaluate options to address key issues.
- Return to Council with a report about possible further steps.