
FW: Concerns/Feedback re: draft Comprehensive Zoning Bylaws

From PlanYourCowichan <PlanYourCowichan@cvrd.bc.ca>

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To legislativeservices <legislativeservices@cvrd.bc.ca>

From: Jenna Graczyk [REDACTED]

Sent: March 29, 2026 11:40 AM

To: jessemlinton@cvrd.bc.ca; PlanYourCowichan <planyourcowichan@cvrd.bc.ca>; Development Services <ds@cvrd.bc.ca>; Zoning <zoning@cvrd.bc.ca>; Public Hearings <publichearings@cvrd.bc.ca>

Subject: Concerns/Feedback re: draft Comprehensive Zoning Bylaws

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Hello, my name is Jenna Graczyk and my family and I are lifelong Saltair residents. We reside on Knudsen Rd, along with many other family households. I am writing to express some concerns re: the proposed changes in bylaws.

I currently reside in Area G - suburban residential 2a zone and was diligent in reviewing the rules prior to obtaining chickens. As per the current bylaw, we are allowed 12 poultry on parcels of 0.4 hectares or larger. With the proposed changes, my understanding is this would decrease to 6 hens and limit the possibility of free ranging our own property (as it states they must be completely enclosed within a secure run or building). I am having a hard time understanding the rationale for changing these rules. I totally understand limiting to smaller amounts on smaller properties; however **why the change to larger parcels of property? Have there been serious issues raised in our areas re: chickens that warrant this change? If so, what are these issues? I strongly recommend that the new bylaw takes larger properties (above 0.4h) into consideration and continues to allow 12 poultry, as per current bylaw in our area.**

What are people expected to do if these changes pass - kill 6 chickens that we love and cherish as pets? Also, if you understand the nature of chickens, their life cycles and egg laying cycles, it is completely unreasonable to expect 6 chickens to supply the adequate amount of eggs for some families, as they all lay at different ages and for different amounts of times. This is why it makes sense to have chickens of varying ages to continue to supply adequate eggs over the year and years to come. Are we expected to just kill chickens (which we wouldn't be allowed to do on our property anyways) as soon as they are no longer laying eggs to make room for new layers? This seems cruel and inhumane. I, along with other chicken owners, value the lives and quality of life of their chickens. Many chicken keepers stagger the ages of their chickens so that as some stop laying they can "retire" and still live a positive life. This would not be possible with only having 6 chickens. Which also brings me to the confined space - does this mean they cannot free range on our own property? **I do not agree that chickens should be restricted to enclosed runs/spaces on larger properties (0.4h). If properties are large enough, there is no reason why chickens shouldn't be allowed to free range as they do not pose any concerns/risks to neighbors. Free range chickens provide many benefits to the property and both the chickens and eggs are much healthier.**

I also wanted to note that I do not think the new bylaws are clear enough about other livestock. It seems like it is cracking down on chickens and bees only, but leaves other livestock open to interpretation. In our current bylaw, it specifically states "restricted agriculture" means the keeping of the following animals on parcels 0.4 hectares or larger: (a) not more than 2 hogs; (b) not more than 2 other farm animals for each 0.5 hectare of parcel area; and (c) not more than 12 rabbits or 12 poultry. I may have missed this detail in the new proposed bylaws; however, if it is not clear I can see there being way more issues with other livestock than chickens.

Also, I have concerns re: the maximum fence height in front yards. What happens if a property has to have a front yard garden (as that is the only location for sun and away from septic). We know there are many deer in our area and understandably need to plan accordingly for their possible destruction of plants. For example, we have 5 resident deer that regularly access our yard and it is a pleasure to have them as long as we can have garden and fruit trees fenced. The deer absolutely can and have jumped 4 ft fencing (1.2 m) and therefore fencing of 5-6 feet is much more appropriate. **I would like to see some rationale and explanation for limiting front yard fencing. If all setbacks and lines of sight are appropriate, why is this an issue? I imagine many areas of CVRD have deer or even elk and families should be allowed to enjoy the deer while also protecting their gardens and fruit trees.**

Overall, I am quite concerned about the blanket changes being proposed to all areas, disregarding current bylaws that seem to be working and trying to make all areas fit into one box. If the goal is to have consistent bylaws and rules across all areas of CVRD, there must still be recognition of the unique and diverse needs within each area. A one size fits all approach does not necessarily work and I am concerned that because we are a smaller community with any larger properties, our way of life is going to be greatly affected and our voices will not be heard equally. We are a small, quiet area that does not need the same rules and heavy handed changes being proposed. Please make sure that all small communities are being properly represented and not swept up with changes that bigger communities want or need.

In this day and age, we should be promoting households and families to be self sufficient, support gardening, and livestock. There should be a focus on food security and healthy home-grown or locally grown foods. With the rising cost of living and current political climate with the USA, it is important that we should be allowed and encouraged to create gardens (and secure them appropriately from deer) and raise chickens or other livestock to feed our families. If people are not interested or unable to grow their own food or raise chickens, they should have the opportunity to support local community members and purchase fresh eggs and food from neighbors. This would not be possible if people are only allowed 6 chickens and their gardens are being ravaged by deer. Plus, the focus should be on supporting neighbors and not creating a climate where neighbors need to report bylaw infractions. People aren't trying to be a farm - there is motivation to grow their own food, enjoy chicken keeping, and feed their family with fresh food and eggs from their own yard and hard work. These things should be supported and encouraged as a community/region instead of creating so many new barriers and restrictions that makes it harder.

I guess my biggest questions are:

- will we as citizens and tax payers get to vote on these proposed changes/bylaws?**
- What happens if these changes pass and we all of a sudden have a new set of rules to follow about a variety of things on our properties that have been following long standing previous rules - are we killing chickens, destroying gardens and fences, and so on to meet these new guidelines?**

- I live with a disability that limits my ability to attend community meetings, so this is the best way I can think of sharing my concerns. Please advise if there are other people I should be contacting as well.

Thank you
Jenna