

From: Rose Dickson [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 19, 2022 8:18 AM
To: northinfo
Subject: A5 zone request from Triple Rock

Dear Local Trust Committee,

We are writing to request that, as part of the farming regulations review, you include an option for an accessory dwelling in the A5 zone. This site-specific zone is part of the Triple Rock Land Cooperative (commonly known as CoHo Landing) affordable housing project and it covers approximately half of the split-zoned property that houses this 15-unit community.

Specifically, implementing this would require removing regulations 1 and 2 in Table 8 - Site Specific Regulations, A(5), of the Land Use Bylaw (page 29), which prohibit residential use in this zone. It is understood that if these were removed, a secondary dwelling, as an accessory use to the dwellings in the R3 zoned portion of the property, would thus be allowed as per new ALR regulations.

Currently, no dwellings are allowed in the A5 zone. The 15 dwellings permitted on the property are clustered in an area of approximately seven acres in the site-specific R3 zone.

Why?

An accessory dwelling, as per the new ALC regulations, could serve the following functions:

A Wwoofers cabin providing seasonal housing for farm help (we are using the term "farm help" to align with the ALC, although our agricultural activities are not commercial; rather, they are aimed at providing food for the 15 households that live on the property)

Year-round housing for farm help (via a work trade agreement)

Long term affordable rental housing provided by CoHo Landing

A serviced pad for a tiny home for a Denman community member at a modest fee

Long-term affordable membership-based housing, as per the current regulations that govern housing on the property (see "Affordability," below)

#1 and #2 above would meet ALC, Denman OCP, and Denman Farm Plan goals of supporting small-scale agriculture and local food security on Denman.

CoHo Landing has a 2-acre communal garden and orchard in the A5 zone, which has been expanded annually and provides fruit, vegetables, and herbs to TRLC members. A Wwoofer or employee would help with agricultural infrastructure (irrigation, fencing, compost bins, a pond, etc) and plant, maintain, and harvest crops, thus enhancing food security. This would help realize the vision of the Denman farm plan of a place "where we feed each other abundantly because farming is a viable and valued foundation of our sustainable community."

The CoHo Landing garden uses organic methods and does not use any chemical fertilizers, insecticides, or herbicides. It is watered via a combination of rainwater catchment and trickle feed from the CoHo Landing well. This is the only use of the well-water, as all homes rely on rainwater catchment.

#3, #4 and #5 would meet community goals for the provision of affordable housing, in a shovel-ready context that could be implemented without significant complexity.

CoHo Landing requests that the use of the accessory dwelling not be limited. Each of the five options above has value, and all have roughly the same environmental impact. Over the years, as the project and the community change, flexibility will be essential.

Sewage and water considerations

If the accessory dwelling is used for full-time, year-round housing, CoHo Landing would provide sewage and water in the same way it does for all homes on the project (rainwater catchment, composting toilets, modest VIHA-approved septic systems for each home).

If the accessory dwelling is used only seasonally (Wwoofers cabin, seasonal farm help), infrastructure could be more rustic (outhouse, use of the host's home for showers) as is common in Wwoofers situations.

Siting

The accessory dwelling could be sited anywhere in the A5 zone, or provisions could be included that it be close to the existing driveway, or close to the garden and orchard site, to minimize further clearing on ALR land.

Bringing all regulations into agreement

If an accessory dwelling is allowed in the LUB, the CoHo Landing housing agreement would need to be modified to reflect that. It is understood that CoHo Landing would be responsible for this work.

Affordability

If the unit is used as a Wwoofers cabin or farm help, rent will not be charged, and instead the dwelling will be used as part of a work trade. If the unit is used for long term housing, CoHo Landing is legally bound, via multiple legal instruments (see paragraph below) to provide affordable housing.

Currently, affordability is required and regulated by a housing agreement, the cooperative's Memorandum of Understanding, the Cooperative Rules of Association, and the Denman Island Land Use Bylaw. Affordability is entrenched via a limit on resale value of homes of *no more than depreciated replacement value of the home, less 10 - 15%, + the price of a co-op share*. As an example of what this actually means, a 2-br house at CoHo Landing sold in 2021 for \$230,000. Compare this to average prices on Denman and you will see that CoHo Landing lives up to its original goal of providing leasehold-type housing at attainable prices that are and will remain significantly lower than market rates.

CoHo Landing has an internal policy that states any rental on the property should not exceed 20% less than the average rent for a rental unit of similar size on the island.

Including this change as part of the farming regulations review would offer CoHo Landing the same flexible, but limited, options for housing as other properties in the ALR, with the added community benefit that any uses of this accessory dwelling will be required by regulations to remain affordable (less than market rate).

Regards,

Rose Dickson
Secretary and Director
On behalf of the Triple Rock Land Cooperative