

15 June 2026

Heather Miller

Contact by email only:

To: Stef Shortt, Deputy Corporate Officer, Bowen Island Municipality

cc: Mayor and Council

Re: RZ-2026-0014 (620 Laura Road) , the referral directed on 13 April 2026, and the process now proposed

Dear Ms. Shortt,

Thank you for confirming receipt of my submission, and for explaining that, under section 3.5 of the Municipal Correspondence Policy, it will be included when RZ-2026-0014 next comes before Council. I am writing on a related but distinct matter. Namely, the process itself, and in particular whether the direction Council gave on 13 April 2026 is being followed. This letter concerns procedure, not the merits of the application, and I would ask that it be placed before Council and answered on that basis.

1. The 13 April 2026 direction had two parts. On 13 April 2026, on item 7.3, Council resolved to refer RZ-2026-0014 to the Advisory Planning Commission (APC) and the Parks, Environment, Climate Action Advisory Committee (PECAAC) for a recommendation, and to direct staff to report back with the results of the referral (carried, Councillor Jurgensen opposed). The report-back was not incidental: it was the step by which the committees' recommendations were to come before Council before the application proceeded further.

2. The committees directed to review the application have not done so. The Advisory Planning Commission listed the Laura Road referral only as an information item on 6 May 2026, "to be discussed at an upcoming meeting," and made no recommendation. The Parks, Environment and Climate Action Advisory Committee has not had the application on an agenda at all neither its meeting of 10 April nor of 12 May 2026 included it. The 25 May 2026 staff report acknowledged that, given the current backlog in referrals, neither committee had yet conducted its review. Council nonetheless adopted Option 3 directing staff to re-refer the application, to prepare the amendment bylaw, and to give notice under section 467 of the Local Government Act that no public hearing would be held, folding the referral results into first reading rather than bringing them back as a distinct report-back. The one meeting at which the application was finally scheduled for substantive consideration, the Advisory Planning Commission of 3 June 2026 (item 4.1), was cancelled; the next Commission meeting is 15 July 2026. Your email of 15 June 2026 confirms that, as of today, committee review still has not occurred and the matter has not returned to Council.

3. The application that was referred is not the application now proceeding. The referral of 13 April was of an application that included two uses, the cidery and a ten-bedroom guest house. On 9 May 2026 the application was materially narrowed to the cidery use alone, with the registered owners (rather than the prospective purchasers) now the applicants. It is unclear whether the committees are to consider the original application or the revised one, and whether the revised application requires its own referral and report-back rather than proceeding on the April direction.

4. The public-hearing position has changed. In April, staff's report recommended not waiving a public hearing. On 25 May, Council instead directed notice under section 467 that none would be held. The lawful basis for waiving a public hearing is that the bylaw is consistent with the Official Community Plan, which is precisely the question my submission, and the concurrent OCP update, put in issue.

I would be grateful if Council and staff would, in writing:

1. confirm whether the report-back directed on 13 April 2026 will be honoured as a distinct step, that is, whether the APC and PECAAC recommendations will be brought before Council before first reading, rather than folded into it;
2. confirm that my submission and the evidence in it will be placed before APC and PECAAC for their referral review, and confirm when that review is now expected;
3. confirm whether the committees will review the original or the revised (cidery-only) application, and set out the basis on which a public hearing is proposed to be waived, given that consistency with the Official Community Plan is contested; and
4. place this letter before Council at its next meeting and provide a written response to the questions above before the application returns to Council; or, if you decline to do so, or consider it held under section 3.5, state that decision and your reasons in writing; and in either case circulate this letter to all members of Mayor and Council now, and acknowledge its receipt.

I am raising these matters now, while the referral is still outstanding, so that they can be addressed before the process advances rather than after. What Council and staff decide to do is, of course, for them; my purpose is to ensure the questions are on the record and answered.

Yours sincerely,

Heather Miller