



# Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee Minutes

Executive Boardroom  
City Hall  
14245 - 56 Avenue  
Surrey, B.C.  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2012  
Time: 8:56 a.m.  
File: 0540-20

**Present:**

Cllr. Linda Hepner - Chair  
D. Arnold  
M. Bose  
P. Harrison  
M. Hilmer  
J. Sandhar  
B. Sandhu  
S. VanKeulen

**Regrets:**

K. Thiara  
T. Pellett, Agricultural Land  
Commission

**Staff Present:**

R. Dubé, Engineering  
C. Stewart, Planning & Development  
M. Kischnick, Planning & Development  
L. Anderson, Legislative Services

**Guest Observers:**

Grant Rice

**Agency Representative:**

K. Zimmerman, Ministry of Agriculture

**Environmental Advisory  
Committee Representative:**

B. Stewart

The meeting was called to order and it was requested that the following item be added to the Agenda for discussion:

G.6 Water Use and Licenses

**A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

It was

Moved by M. Bose  
Seconded by P. Harrison  
That the Agriculture and Food Security  
Advisory Committee adopt the minutes of the January 12, 2012 meeting.  
Carried

**B. DELEGATIONS**

**C. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS**

**D. NEW BUSINESS**

- Proposed water main and modified access road with driveway crossings  
within an unopened road allowance**  
52 Avenue, West of 168 Street

Staff provided information on the proposed works and additional comments were as follows:

- The 52 Avenue City Road Allowance is currently used by the applicants to gain access to their lands for farming operations.
- The applicants fronting the unopened City Road Allowance (52 Avenue) within the ALR have proposed to extend a water main along 52 Avenue for domestic use. As part of that, a 3m wide access road is also required to allow the City to inspect and maintain the water main.
- These types of maintenance roads are typically closed to the public; however, the applicants would require a portion of the access road to remain open allowing access to their lands for harvesting, etc. Access to potable water was requested for crop cleaning and fertilizer mixing, etc., as most do not have water licenses and their homes are not close enough to access water.
- Currently, it is an unopened road right-of-way, a mud path, making it difficult for the farmers to access their land with their equipment most of the year. The applicants have been requesting improvement for access for a number of years.
- The applicants realize that under City by-laws, a 6 m wide paved rural road would be required for any residential buildings proposed on these lots. They would like to construct such a road now while subgrade work is being completed for the access road to save money in the long run. No applications for building permits have been made to date.
- Staff felt that the project would be worth doing as a whole as it is difficult to access the area in its current condition.
- The applicants have proposed to fund the 6m cross section upgrade of a portion of the access road that would serve as maintenance access for the water main, provide the applicants with access to their lands and would meet City road standards should any homes be constructed in the future. The road would then be maintained as a regular City road.
- It is anticipated that the cost of the water main and proposed road would be approximately \$200,000.
- Staff have had a discussion with DFO and received their approval in principle to the possibility of a minor relocation of the Red-Dashed-Coded A(O) watercourses on each side of the existing trail.
- The proposed upgrade would meet Building by-law requirements should future building permit applications be made.
- The application does not require Council approval.
- In discussions with City staff, ALC staff noted there may be some value in the application given the current poor access to these properties.
- Under legislation, any road opening has to be forwarded to the ALC for approval. As such, the Engineering Department is seeking comments from the Committee pertaining to the proposed water main and road within the City Road Allowance that would be reflected in the submission to the ALC.

The Committee commented as follows:

- In essence, the proposed road will provide access to five parcels of land.
- There is concern about the potential loss of agricultural land once road access is provided and houses are proposed for each lot.
- If it was just a gravel road for the water main, the City would gate it and would have to give the farmers keys to the gate to get on the site. Long term maintenance of the road would become an issue and would become the responsibility of the farmers.

- It is not an arterial or a feeder road, it is not required by the municipality and is not servicing any pump station. The water main could still go in there with a 3m access road. Farming would still be able to continue.

It was

Moved by M. Bose

Seconded by D. Arnold

That the Agriculture and Food Security

Advisory Committee does not support the proposed 6m paved rural standard road as there is no net benefit to agriculture and it raises the expectation of the surrounding lands for further development.

Carried with B. Sandhu and J. Sandhar opposed.

Comments continued:

- If there was a residence on each of these lots it would provide a greater opportunity for agriculture; you can't farm a five acre property from a distance, it's more likely to sit idle without proper access and residence.
- Having a gravel road would allow farm machinery access.
- A gravel road would require constant maintenance for potholes, etc.
- If you look at most of farm parcels in Surrey that have houses on the property, those are typically the ones that have invested further in machinery to improve the land substantially and make the land viable. There are a number of instances throughout Surrey where that has happened, where land that was sitting idle (swamp, etc.), money has been invested to build a house and provide a greater opportunity for agriculture. It is an improvement/benefit to agriculture. Whatever the reason, the agricultural land was not working in the first place, building the house increase agricultural opportunity.
- If it is our mandate is to improve agriculture, we shouldn't be creating an obstacle for the farmer.
- What is the allowable foot print size now for a farm house and how much of those lands do we lose to those houses?  
*Up to approximately 0.5 acre can be lost to the residential home plate according to ALC regulations*
- The only reason we are discussing the road options is because the municipality has decided they don't want any farm gravel roads there. So it is our own policy that is forcing these people to do this. We could recommend that a gravel road be allowed for farming services.
- Gravel roads require maintenance at a significant cost. Once maintenance becomes an issues (4 years or so), there will be a request to the City again to pave the road, at the City's cost.

B. Stewart stepped out of the meeting at 9:20 a.m.

**2. Proposed road extension within an unopened road allowance  
18623 - 18 Avenue**

Staff provided information on the proposed works and a very preliminary site plan. Comments were as follows:

- The proponents recently purchased the land (4.688 acres) and are proposing to construct a single family dwelling and accessory buildings on the site.
- Under Surrey's Building By-law, any new residential building must be accessible by a serviced road constructed to City standard. As such, a 6m wide paved rural cross-section is required.
- A road extension in the ALR must be approved by the ALC before proceeding. Therefore, staff are seeking comments from the Committee to attach to the ALC referral.

The Committee commented as follows:

- Placement of the house in the middle of the property is certainly not preferred and not within the new Provincial Guidelines.
- If the Provincial Guidelines were adopted by a local government, that would provide the certainty to not allow the house to be built in the centre of the property. However, further to the Committee's recommendation to adopt the Provincial Guidelines, staff are still working on crafting the by-law which requires further direction from the Committee before moving forward to Council.
- Regionally it was requested that it be a condition that construction on agricultural land be located at the front of the property so as to take up the least amount of agricultural land and not build in the middle of the property.
- Again, there is no net benefit to agriculture and it raises the expectations of the surrounding properties to extend a road and build a house and thereby eliminating those parcels of land for farms. The cost of the land outweighs the ability to farm.
- We must stress the loss of farmland, then as a committee we are being consistent.
- With the house situated appropriately, there would be no harm to the farmability of the land.
- In the interests of farming, the Committee is not supportive of the road extension, however if the ALC staff chooses to allow the extension of the road, in either case, the Committee's concerns are around the placement of the residential home plate having the least negative impact on farming and farming operations.

It was

Moved by P. Harrison

Seconded by S. Van Keulen

That the Agriculture and Food Security

Advisory Committee recommends that if the Agricultural Land Commission chooses to allow the road extension fronting 18571 and 18623 18 Avenue, consistency in accordance with the Provincial Guidelines, relative to the residential footprint, should be stipulated.

Carried with M. Bose opposed.

B. Stewart returned to the meeting at 9:42 a.m.

**E. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL**

**F. CORRESPONDENCE**

**G. INFORMATION ITEMS****1. City of Surrey Truck Parks A-1/ALR**

The status update relating to truck parking issues in the A-1/ALR zone, issued by the Manager, By-laws, was reviewed.

It was

Moved by S. Van Keulen

Seconded by P. Harrison

That the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee receive the City of Surrey Truck Parks A-1/ALR Summary as information.

Carried

Comments were as follows:

- The summary is very good, laid out very well and really helpful. However, there are still a few that have been identified by the Committee that do not appear on the summary (addresses provided to staff for follow-up).
- There is an expectation for the owners of the noted properties to remediate the land to its previous farmable state. Enforcement is key.
- In response to the question of what is being done to provide more legal truck parking, the following was noted:
  - There are many new temporary use truck parking spots that are underutilized (approx. 200-300) trying to move trucks to. One of the real difficulties is the ports and businesses with the ports; there is a particular defined protection (fenced, monitored, etc.) that the trucks have to have. This is why, in the past, they utilize agricultural land and look after the trucks themselves. We have to get them off the agriculture land and get them on to pieces of properties that work.
  - With BC's current and potential role as Canada's Asia Pacific gateway and the push with expansion in ports, building of roads, etc., Council has asked for a provincial/national policy for truck parking to address the predicted future increase of trucks in the region. The Committee will be updated with any development in this regard.

Concern was expressed with regard to the information provided and whether any of the information would be subject to s.90 of the *Community Charter*, as outlined in the memorandum from the City Clerk, dated January 27, 2012, pertaining to the rules and legislation for Committee, Board and Commission meetings. It was suggested that further clarification (preferably an example) regarding the legislation be provided by way of a delegation from the City Clerk, Deputy City Clerk and/or the City's Legal Council at the next Committee meeting.

**2. Proposed Development Variance Permit (DVP) for an Increase in Height for a Proposed Telecommunication Tower**

4121 King George Blvd.

File No. 7911-0141-00

The Committee reviewed the memo from Taryn Hayes, Area Planning-South Division, dated January 23, 2012, regarding the above subject line.

It was Moved by M. Bose  
 Seconded by P. Harrison  
 That the Agriculture and Food Security  
 Advisory Committee receive the memo from T. Hayes, Area Planning-South  
 Division, dated January 23, 2012, as information.

Carried

The Committee commented as follows:

- Under the *Agriculture Land Commission Act*, telecommunications equipment, buildings and installations are a permitted use in the ALR, as long as they do not exceed 100 m<sup>2</sup> for each parcel, of which the proposed development intends to comply with.
- An application has been submitted to allow for an increase in height of a proposed telecommunication tower to 45.7 m at the subject address.
- The City's Zoning By-law permits free-standing telecommunication towers as a permitted public use in all zones, as long as they do not exceed 12 m in height.
- As the proposed height is 45.7 m, a Development Variance Permit will be required.
- It is permitted as long as it doesn't exceed that area. The reason for the application is the height increase.
- There is concern with proliferation, can these companies not group their cell towers together?
- The cell tower is a non farm use. This is the wrong place, especially given that there is a parking lot in the government owned property across the freeway, which would not incur the same loss of agriculture land and use.
- As there is a development application, neighbouring properties will be advised and provided the opportunity to comment.

### 3. BC Ministry of Agriculture Farm Business Development Unit

Re: Family Farm Business Succession Planning Seminar - Managing Farm  
 Business Transitions

It was Moved by P. Harrison  
 Seconded by M. Bose  
 That the Agriculture and Food Security  
 Advisory Committee receive the correspondence from the BC Ministry of  
 Agriculture Farm Business Development Unit, as information.

Carried

### 4. Metro Vancouver

Re: Agriculture Awareness Grant 2012 Application Form

It was noted that Surrey in a non-profit and as such, there may be grant opportunities through the subject grant program for the various agriculture projects that the Committee is considering. Examples were suggested, including a bus tour and the Flavours of Surrey event.

It was Moved by M. Bose  
Seconded by D. Arnold  
That the Agriculture and Food Security  
Advisory Committee recommends to the G.M. Planning and Development that  
eligibility opportunities for a grant under the Metro Vancouver Agriculture  
Awareness Grant 2012, for Surrey agriculture projects, be explored.  
Carried

#### 5. Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) Update

A brief update from the EAC meeting of January 25, 2012 was provided noting the delegation to the EAC from Planning staff regarding the Anniedale-Tynehead NCP, with particular emphasis on ways in which the provisions of the Ecosystem Management Study have been incorporated into the NCP. Discussion focused on preservation of significant wildlife hubs and corridors within the NCP area and adjoining lands.

It was Moved by M. Bose  
Seconded by P. Harrison  
That the Agriculture and Food Security  
Advisory Committee receive the Environmental Advisory Committee update as  
information.  
Carried

#### 6. Water Use and Licenses

The Agenda was varied to review this item following Other Business.

### H. OTHER BUSINESS

The agenda was varied to add and discuss item H.7 first.

#### 7. Integrity of the Agriculture Land

The Chair requested that a new item, "Integrity of the Agriculture Land", be added to all future agendas to allow members the opportunity to share any information they may have pertaining to the integrity of agricultural lands. As such, the following was noted:

- (Location provided to staff) – For nearly three years there has been a line-up of trucks, including articulated dump trucks, bringing in fill that must be 40-50 feet by now. It must be massively over what was needed for the application.
  - The permit was for two years.
  - Reports do get submitted, staff will follow-up and confirm timing as well as the total amount applied for.

#### 1. Flavours of Surrey Update

Copies of the update from the recent Flavours of Surrey subcommittee meeting were provided on table and some potential ideas were discussed. Concerns

regarding the site location and the layout for the cooking stage and the farmers market were also expressed. Staff will be writing a report for Council's consideration regarding the budget, which is anticipated to be increased due to the anticipated one-time cost investment for particular items (ie. signage for advance advertising, etc.)

It was Moved by D. Arnold  
Seconded by M. Hilmer  
That the Agriculture and Food Security  
Advisory Committee receive the Flavours of Surrey update as information.  
Carried

## 2. AFSAC Terms of Reference

It was reported that staff are working on the Terms of Reference for the Committee that will reflect the change of name and mandate as it relates to food security.

## 3. 2012 AAC Work Plan

The current 2012 Work Plan was provided for review and/or update. Changes were suggested and staff reported that an update to the Work Plan, in a format that can be tracked, is currently being crafted. It is anticipated that the revised Work Plan will be provided at the next meeting.

It was Moved by M. Bose  
Seconded by P. Harrison  
That the Agriculture and Food Security  
Advisory Committee support the suggested updates to the 2012 Work Plan.  
Carried

C. Baron joined the meeting at 10:37 a.m.

## 6. Water Use and Licenses

Further to a recent workshop pertaining to irrigation, aimed at local governments, DFO and Ministry of Agriculture staff, an update was provided by those who were in attendance, K. Zimmerman, Ministry of Agriculture and C. Baron, Drainage and Environment Manager, Engineering. Comments were as follows:

- Irrigation and Water licenses are an important concern to the farming community.
- Improvements to the drainage systems in Surrey have resulted in new crops being planted. Often these crops require irrigation.
- A study was conducted in the past for Surrey looking at irrigation demands in the farming community. At the present time, the Serpentine and Nicomekl Rivers are over subscribed for water licenses.
- Often new farmers do not realize that there are no new licenses being granted in the area. Also there are many existing license holders who may not be using their license or not irrigating in the best manner. It has been suggested that it may be helpful to hold an information meeting for the farmers in Surrey, to



talk about the importance of getting a license and what are some of the opportunities farmers could be doing to get more use out of their water, e.g. a farm irrigation plan, etc.

- It may also be beneficial to review the existing water licenses to see if there is any available room to allow others onto the license.

P. Harrison left the meeting at 10:43 a.m.

- It may be best to go to the Blueberry Council to have the opportunity to speak to members there and get them involved. If the City was to put on a seminar, attendance may not be optimal. On the other hand, when the Blueberry Council is involved, there may be a greater turnout as they are in touch with their constituents.
- There are also a number of web tools available.
- Actually hoping to focus on Surrey farmers as a whole, which would extend outside of the blueberry farmers.
- A more effective way is to have the SHaRP students go out and be on the ground explaining to the farmers what the water licenses are. By calling a meeting, you won't get those that need to know. This is also an environmental issue that needs to be educated throughout the farming community.
- Most farmers that drop a pump in the ditch know that they need and don't have a license. We have to educate. Most of the blueberry farms already use irrigation.
- As part of the Food Strategy Policy, dyking and enhanced irrigation optimization should be included.

M. Hilmer left the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

#### I. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee will be held on **Thursday, March 1, 2012**, in **Parks' Boardroom #1**.

#### J. ADJOURNMENT

It was

Moved by D. Arnold

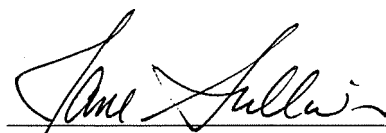
Seconded by M. Bose

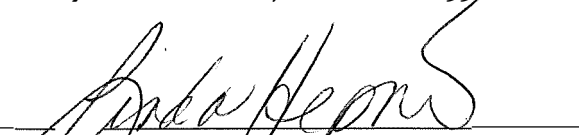
That the Agriculture and Food Security

Advisory Committee do now adjourn.

Carried

The Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

  
Jane Sullivan, City Clerk

  
Councillor Hepner, Chair  
Surrey Agriculture and Food Security  
Advisory Committee