

Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee Minutes

Executive Boardroom
City Hall
14245 - 56 Avenue
Surrey, B.C.
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2013
Time: 9:01 a.m.
File: 0540-20

Present:

Chairperson – Councillor Hepner
M. Bose
D. Arnold
P. Harrison
M. Hilmer
J. Sandhar
K. Thiara
S. VanKeulen

Regrets:

B. Sandhu
T. Pellett, Agricultural Land
Commission

Staff Present:

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

Environmental Advisory**Committee Representative:**

B. Stewart

Agency Representatives:

K. Zimmerman, Ministry of Agriculture

Guest Observers:

F. Scales
C. Innes
G. Rice
A. Wall
M. Koka, Aplin & Martin Consultants Ltd.

A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

It was

Moved by M. Bose

Seconded by J. Sandhar

That the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory

Committee adopt the minutes of the January 10, 2013 meeting.

Carried

B. DELEGATIONS**C. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS****D. NEW BUSINESS**

- Proposed Development Permit and Application to ALC
for Non-Farm Use
14601 – 40 Avenue
File No.: 7909-0260-00**

Taryn Hayes, Planner, was in attendance to review her memo, dated January 28, 2013, regarding the above subject line. Comments were as follows:

- The site, Peace Arch RV Park, is designated Agricultural in the OCP and is located within the ALR. It was originally developed as a Kampground of America site in 1983 to provide tourist accommodation for Expo '86. Approval from the ALC for a non-farm use was granted at that time and a DP was issued for 118 RV sites.

- Since 1983, the number of RV sites on the property has expanded from 118 to 257, without ALC or City approval.
- In 1995, the applicant made an application to the ALC for a non-farm use in order to expand the number of RV sites on the property, which was denied.
- The applicant is seeking a Development Permit and has submitted an ALC non-farm use application to permit the expansion of 119 new RV pads on the east portion of the site, currently used for storage. Approvals for sanitary, plumbing and electrical on the RV pads that were added without permits, is also being sought.
- The site is composed mainly of gravel RV pads separated by vegetated landscaping strips and mature trees. Site runoff and water percolation from the area's high water table collect in constructed drainage channels that border the site on three sides (south, east and west).
- Because the site was developed in 1983, it pre-dated Provincial requirements for watercourse setbacks. As a result, RV pads have been developed within the typical setback areas. A Habitat Balance Plan was approved by Surrey's Environmental Review Committee on September 19, 2012, which satisfies watercourse setback requirements.
- Through this application, Peace Arch RV Park proposes measures to address any potential impact on agricultural land by improving buffering, controlling invasive plant species and enhancing stormwater management practices.
- In response to several inquiries into potential development of new RV parks in Surrey, the City commissioned a study to determine whether there is a need for more RV sites in Surrey. The 'Recreational Vehicle Properties Market Study' report, prepared by Colliers International, suggests a need for additional RV sites for tourist use in Surrey. A contributing factor is that some of the pads have become occupied year round for residential purposes.

The Committee commented as follows:

- Approximately 50% of the tenants are there year-round. The permanent residential use should have been addressed through by-law enforcement.
- Unfortunately there appears to have been a lack of dialogue between the Engineering and Planning departments. Permits were issued for plumbing and electrical for many of the additional pads even though the application for non-farm use was denied. In addition, for the entire area that is now covered with gravel, approximately 40% was filled illegally.
- The ALC decision was to allow a certain amount of lot coverage, preserving the land balance for agriculture, to reduce the pressure on neighbouring farmland. By fully developing the land, the expectation is raised by neighbouring properties to do the same. The value of storing trailers is a huge income.
- There really shouldn't have been any confusion. When the ALC says no, that is a definite no, yet the expansion was still carried out. Therefore it is really difficult to legitimize this application.
- With respect to the proposed "benefits to agriculture", two points should be noted:
 - noxious weeds (including Japanese knotweed) have previously been found on the property, and the proposed benefit to agriculture was that the property owner was going to control the weeds. The *BC Weed Control Act* requires landowners to control noxious weeds on their properties, so this is something that should have already been occurring, regardless of the application. It is

- also very concerning that Japanese knotweed has been planted on the property as it is very invasive; and
 - some type of filtration/separation system was proposed to be installed which would prevent the leaching of oil and gasoline waste from the RVs into nearby agricultural ditches. The *BC Environmental Management Act* prohibits the discharge of waste to the environment without a permit, so this is also something that should have already been occurring, regardless of the application.
- Basically the entire perimeter of the property needs to be remediated for the riparian area.
- Although the applicant has noted a positive relationship with neighbouring farmers, the Ministry of Agriculture did receive a complaint about dust from the land preparation activities 3 -4 years ago.
- It is irrelevant what is there already, it shouldn't be. From the environmental part of it, the pads were there before the set back requirements were required. At the very least they should be taken out and vegetation planted to its original condition.
- This committee has been spending considerable effort to get trucks off land, the same applies with RVs.

It was

Moved by D. Arnold

Seconded M. Bose

That the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory

Committee recommends to the GM Planning and Development denial of Application No. 7909-0260-00 as the considerable expansion was undertaken illegally.

Carried

**2. ALR Exclusion of 6480 – 152 Street;
ALR Inclusion for portion of 19103 – 8 Avenue**

File No.: 7912-0304-00

Keith Broersma, Planner, provided a review of his memo, dated January 28, 2013, regarding the above subject line. Comments were as follows:

- The applicant is proposing to exclude the property from 6480 – 152 Street from the ALR, to rezone the site from A-1 to IB-1 (Business Park Industrial) and to develop an industrial subdivision. This parcel is not currently actively farmed, but there is a history of farming on the property.
- Information in 2000 indicates that the western 1/3 of the lot is suitable for non-soil based agriculture, and the remaining 2/3 of the lot would support a wide range of crops with drainage and irrigation.
- A recent agricultural capability assessment by Pottinger Gaherty Environmental Consultants Ltd., found improved agricultural capability classifications of the western and eastern portions of the property (surrounding land uses were noted.)
- The parcel is located immediately south of the East Newton Business Park NCP, and the applicant is proposing that the subject site be incorporated into the East Newton Business Park NCP.
- The total size of the parcel is 25.1 acres of which 6.1 acres is fully encumbered by Hyland Creek and a drainage easement (the non-riparian remainder of the site is 19.0 acres).

- The applicant is proposing to include the northerly portion of the property at 19103 – 8 Avenue into the ALR. The southerly portion of the property is being used as an active farm and a portion of the ALR inclusion area is being actively farmed as well. The remainder of the ALR inclusion area is forested and contains a number of watercourses (Little Campbell River/Campbell River).
- The total site area is 57.5 acres. The southerly 28.4 acres are in the ALR. The applicant is proposing to include the northerly portion of the site into the ALR. The total non-riparian area, 5m from top-of-bank, proposed for inclusion into the ALR is 24.5 acres.
- An agricultural capability assessment for the inclusion property also found improved agricultural capability classifications (surrounding land uses also noted).
- City Policy O-51, as it relates to soil capability rating of Class 1 -7 soil, compensation for land being excluded, and zoning to accommodate a use that can be provided at alternative sites in the City, was noted as parts of the Policy that are not being met for this application.

The Committee commented as follows:

- With respect to the riparian set back along Hyland Creek, the dyke on that property would be sufficient to support the required 5m setback 5m from top of bank).
- The parcels are relatively close in size and having two creeks across one property makes it a challenge for anyone to farm.
- According to existing policy, the application does not meet a two-to-one exclusion/inclusion, however it does meet a one-to-one exclusion/inclusion.
- Consistency in decisions is paramount. This is an interesting and good proposal. However, it is perplexing as it has been less than 50 years since the property was farmed and the fill was placed there before there were any fill policies (which under today's way of doing business, wouldn't work). There were houses and barns and it was actually a really good farm.
- The fact that the compensation is four acres more than a one-to-one trade is very good. The 8 Avenue land is better land because of what took place on the property at the end of its active agricultural life, however the red-coded streams on the property are concerning.
- It has always been surprising to find out the land was not in the ALR and never has been. Other than the limitations of the creeks, it should have been in the ALR in the first place, it is good farmable land.

The applicant (with the permission of the Chair) reported that there will be a new entrant dairy farm starting on February 23, 2013, for which the Committee expressed their support.

It was

Moved by J. Sandhar

Seconded D. Arnold

That the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee recommends to the GM Planning and Development support of Application No. 7912-0304-00 moving forward to the Agricultural Land Commission without any recommendations.

Carried

E. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL**F. CORRESPONDENCE****1. Fred Scales**

It was noted that the correspondence from Fred Scales, dated January 16, 2013, provided clarification of the application and will be included with the application going forward to the ALC.

It was Moved by M. Bose
Seconded P. Harrison
That the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory
Committee receive the correspondence from Fred Scales, dated January 16, 2013, as information.

Carried

**2. Kathleen Zimmerman
BC Ministry of Agriculture**

It was Moved by B. Stewart
Seconded D. Arnold
That the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory
Committee receive the e-correspondence from Kathleen Zimmerman, BC Ministry of
Agriculture, dated January 16, 2013, as information.

Carried

**3. Tony Pellett
Provincial Agricultural Land Commission**

It was Moved by D. Arnold
Seconded M. Bose
That the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory
Committee receive the e-correspondence from Tony Pellett, Provincial Agricultural
Land Commission, dated January 15, 2013, as information.

Carried

4. BC Ministry of Agriculture

Further information regarding the invitation and registration for the Ministry of Agriculture AAC Workshop, Wednesday, March 13, 2013, was provided. Committee members M. Bose and P. Harrison confirmed their attendance to the workshop on behalf of the Committee.

G. INFORMATION ITEMS**1. Delegation of Phil Harrison and Tony Beck
Coalition for a GE Free Surrey, December 6, 2012**

Further to the delegation received on December 6, 2012, requesting a resolution be passed opposing any further planting of genetically engineered (GE) crops in Surrey, the Committee, at their January 10, 2013, requested that further information be received from Dr. Thierry Vrain. A copy of Dr. Vrain's presentation material was reviewed for further consideration and comments were as follows:

- The additional information is very similar to that which was presented by the delegation in December. In his briefing he talks about the increase of pesticide use. I grow GMO and it reduces pesticide use.
- From a scientific point of view the issue is still wide open. The final word on this is not anywhere near a conclusion. It is ill advised to take an anti GMO stance at this point. Since there is a concern, maybe recommending GMO labeling is something the Committee can support. Surrey can't become a GMO free zone when farmers have a right to utilize GMO crops.
- Ultimately this is a higher level of government decision and a decision in isolation is perilous. Why would we disadvantage our own?
- It is the labeling in Canada that needs to be addressed. We should advocate for better extension services for agriculture and research and better labeling regulations for all products for everything.
- The information should be received, acknowledging that some research be given at a level higher than local government. Logistically, this is not a local government decision.
- Consumers have a right to know what they are eating. This information should be forwarded to the UBCM in order to provide a greater influence to the federal government.
- As noted previously, the Supreme Court of Canada has already struck down a local government's right to pass by-laws such as these.
- The federal government needs to undergo its own research in order to establish its own answers to use for extension services.

It was

Moved by M. Bose

Seconded B. Stewart

That, relative to GMOs, the Agriculture and

Food Security Advisory Committee recommends that Council take an advocacy role relating to labeling, extension services and research.

Carried

It was noted that the Chair will write to the delegation to thank them for their presentation and to inform them of the Committee's recommendation to Council with respect to their request.

H. INTEGRITY OF THE AGRICULTURE LAND

The following concerns were noted for staff to review:

- (Location provided to staff) – It was reported that the property owner has a business license, however the use has been non-farm use. Going through the ‘normal’ process has not worked. Legal and By-law staff are currently very involved with the ALC in this matter. The ALC allows farmers to build roads, but there are limitations and approvals needed from the City in order to bring in the materials to build the road for “farm use”.
- It was noted that a recent Google Map search resulted in the appearance of a bike path through certain agricultural lands in Surrey.

I. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) Update

An update from the EAC meeting of, January 30, 2013 was provided as follows:

- The EAC heard from two delegations concerning the proposed Coal Transfer Facility at Fraser Surrey Docks:
 - **Jim Crandles, Director, Planning and Development, Port Metro Vancouver** – Received the proposal from Fraser Surrey Docks in July 2012, and, in response to a question, Mr. Crandles could not give an estimate of when a decision will be made.
 - **Jeff Scott, President and CEO, Fraser Surrey Docks (FSD)** – Explained that the coal would travel to FSD by train from the USA, at which time it will be loaded into barges which will then be towed to Texada Island for loading into deep sea ships. It appears that the seemingly inefficient double-handling procedure is a temporary measure until such time as needed dredging of the Fraser River downstream from FSD is undertaken.

Mr. Scott noted that FSD has lost significant business over the past few years and they expect this project will allow them to create at least 50 jobs. Initial plans call for one train per day (135 cars), with train unloading and barge loading to be accomplished during the day shift. He also noted that FSD has not handled coal in the past, but they have handled several different bulk materials.

The major issues raised by the EAC focused on movement of the trains through Surrey, with dust control and train noise being the main concerns. The issue of delays to farm traffic was also raised. The dust issue is being addressed by the spraying of a dust suppression agent (“non-toxic, environmentally friendly polymer emulsions”) and the profiling of the topography of the coal within the cars.

- Waste Management Update – R. Costanza, Deputy Operations Manager, reported on the preliminary results of the changes to waste collection in the City. Based on the first three months only, it appears the switch to separate collection of “organic” material has increased the percentage of material diverted from the waste stream from the low 50s to 69% - very close to the 2015 target of 70%.

Next steps involve increased participation of multi-family residences and ICI (Institutional - Commercial - Industrial) in both recycling and organics collection.

The Committee noted that coal trains have travelled through Surrey in the past and that there had been a number of complaints received at that time from the local residents in South Surrey.

2. March Agenda Item Request

It was requested that the Committee receive a brief update at the March meeting on any request and subsequent responses to the proposed Kwantlen Polytechnic University regional study, by Kent Mullinex (similar to the study he did for Surrey).

J. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee will be held on **Thursday, March 14, 2013**, in the **Executive Boardroom**.

K. ADJOURNMENT

It was

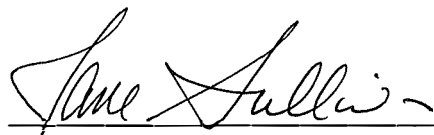
Moved by P. Harrison
Seconded by M. Hilmer

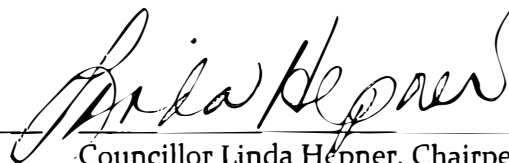
That the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory

Committee do now adjourn.

Carried

The Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee adjourned at 10:32 a.m.



Jane Sullivan, City Clerk

Councillor Linda Hepner, Chairperson

Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee