

Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee Minutes

2E - Community Room A
City Hall
13450 - 104 Avenue
Surrey, B.C.
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2014
Time: 9:00 a.m.
File: 0540-20

Present:

Councillor Hepner - Chair
M. Bose - Vice-Chair
K. Thiara
J. Sandhar
B. Sandhu
M. Hilmer
D. Arnold

Regrets:

P. Harrison
S. Van Keulen
S. Malhotra

**Environmental Sustainability Advisory
Committee Representative:**

B. Stewart

Ministry of Agriculture Representative:

O. Schmidt, Ministry of Agriculture

Guests:

N. Ensing

Staff Present:

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

Youth Representatives:

J. Gosal

The meeting was called to order and the Committee was requested to pass a motion to amend the Agenda to reflect the following changes:

Information Items: New item G.3 - ESAC Update

Other Business: New item I.1 - Ministry of Agriculture Verbal Update

It was Moved by B. Stewart
Seconded by M. Hilmer
That the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory
Committee Agenda of December 4, 2014, be amended as requested.
Carried

A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Before the adoption of minutes B. Stewart expressed concern that the Item G.1 ESAC verbal update portion of the minutes was expanded upon and went beyond the brief overview provided from the September 17, 2014 ESAC meeting.

The Chair thanked B. Stewart for his comments and called for the adoption of minutes.

It was Moved by M. Bose
Seconded by M. Hilmer
That the Agriculture and Food Security
Advisory Committee adopt the minutes of the October 2, 2014 meeting be adopted as
presented.
Carried

B. DELEGATIONS

C. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS**1. Plan Surrey 2013 Official Community Plan (OCP): Agriculture Development Permit Areas and Policy Changes**

File No.: 6880-23

Carla Stewart, Senior Planner, was in attendance to provide the Committee with an update and overview of the recent October 21, 2014 Council adopted "Plan Surrey 2013: Official Community Plan (OCP), Bylaw No. 18020", and the related Agriculture, Food and Farming Policy and Farm Protection Development Permit Area ("DPA") Guidelines. Staff provided an on-table package to update the Committee's policy manuals. The following comments were made:

- There are a number of items left to be completed including: staff training, COSMOS updates, the launch of implementation measures, public brochures and information sheets prepared and distributed, webpage updates, and an amendment to include additional Development Permit Areas.
- Two (2) main sections of the OCP relate to Agriculture policy: Theme E (Economy) and Theme F (Society and Culture). The objective of E3 is to support and enhance local agriculture and its necessary infrastructure. The objective of F5 is to improve access to healthy, local food (food securities).
- Land-use designations (intent, subdivision within ALR (Agricultural Land Reserve), subdivision outside ALR, uses, exclusions and non-ALR property) were outlined. When reviewing applications, AFSAC can point to these policies for proper guidelines and protocols. Limits of suburban designations were also outlined and identified.
- The Farm Protection Development Permit Area is the same as the DPA that existed in the old OCP with some specifics added for buffer and interface types. There are five (5) main categories including General, Single Family, Multiple Family, Non-Residential and Buffers.
- Submission requirements have not changed from the previous requirements. Applications need to be complete and comprehensive.
- Concerning the section on Agricultural-Urban Conflict Requirements, staff outlined three (3) areas which include:
 1. Minimum building setbacks between ALR buffer and building face;
 2. No dead-end streets unless for farm vehicle access; and
 3. Retain and enhance natural buffer features along urban side of ALR boundary.
- Single Family (Rear yard as parkland abutting the ALR):
 - Minimum building setback from the ALR boundary is 30 metres;
 - Zoning setbacks to be increased where possible to accommodate appropriate and effective rear yard space for buffers;
 - Minimum vegetated buffer width is 20 metres, particularly where there is already a natural area such as a riparian stream, ravine, wood-lot or wetland; and
 - Vegetated landscaped buffer is conveyed as public parkland.

- Single Family (Rear yard abutting the ALR):
 - Minimum building setback from the ALR boundary is 30 metres;
 - Zoning setbacks to be increased where possible, to accommodate appropriate and effective rear yard space for buffers;
 - Provide a minimum of 5 metres of rear yard space between the landscaped buffer and the rear face of a single family dwelling;
 - Minimum vegetated buffer width is 15 metres; and
 - Vegetated landscaped buffer remains under private ownership.
- Single Family (Rear yard under Strata Control abutting the ALR):
 - Minimum building setback from the ALR boundary is 30 metres;
 - Zoning setbacks to be increased where possible, to accommodate appropriate and effective rear yard space for buffers;
 - Minimum vegetated buffer width is 20 metres; and
 - Vegetated landscaped buffer maintained by Strata Corporation.
- Single Family (Setbacks and buffers – for properties with a road abutting the ALR):
 - Minimum building setbacks from the ALR boundary is 37.5 metres;
 - Zoning setbacks to be increased where possible to accommodate appropriate and effective rear yard space for buffers;
 - Undulating buffer width from a minimum of 7.5 metres to a maximum width of 10 is permitted; or straight buffer minimum of 10 metres; and
 - Vegetated buffer remains under private ownership.
- Multiple Family (Rear yard abutting the ALR):
 - Minimum building setback from the ALR boundary is 37.5 metres;
 - Minimum building setback as identified in each specific zone, shall be increased where possible to accommodate appropriate and effective rear yard space for vegetated buffers;
 - Provide a minimum of 3.5 metres of rear yard space between multiple family dwellings and landscaped buffers;
 - Minimum vegetated buffer width is 24 metres;
 - Minimum vegetated buffer width shall be increased proportionately with any approved density increase;
 - Buffer widths increased to accommodate additional densities shall also be developed in conjunctions with parkland or passive open space;
 - A community garden for the Strata's use may be included as part of the vegetated buffer area; and
 - Vegetated buffer maintained by a Strata Corporation.
- Non-Residential (for properties with a yard abutting the ALR):
 - Minimum building setback from the ALR boundary is 30 metres;
 - Minimum vegetated buffer width is 15 metres; and
 - Vegetated buffer remains under private ownership.
- Buffers were discussed with respect to general buffer design, installation and maintenance, development and building design, and parks and train design.

- Staff noted that hopefully these updated requirements and clearly laid out policies will help address some of the issues the AFSAC has come across with various applications. The Committee should now refer to the new OCP Guidelines and Policies. Information will be made available (online, etc.).

The Committee thanked C. Stewart and staff for their hard work on this comprehensive document, noting that the diagrams were helpful in understanding the presented and updated policies.

D. NEW BUSINESS

1. Proposed Subdivision and Rezoning

16990 Friesian Drive

File No.: 7914-0265-00; 6880-56

Donald Nip, Planner, was in attendance before the Committee to review the memo from Ron Gill, Acting Current Planning Manager - North, dated October 16, 2014, regarding the above subject line. The following was noted:

- The subject property is located in West Cloverdale and borders Highway No. 10 to the south. The southern half of the property, which is designated Agricultural in the OCP, is located entirely within the ALR.
- The Applicant is proposing to rezone the northern portion of the subject property from RA and A-1 to "Single Family Residential (RF)" to allow subdivision into five (5) single family RF lots and one (1) split-zoned (RF and A-1) lot. If approved, the proposal will complete the development within this block.
- The proposed split-zoned lot (Lot 6) will include the portion of the subject property that is located within the ALR.
- The proposed rezoning and subdivision complies with OCP in terms of use and density.
- Certain portions of this Application do not comply with Development Permit (DP) Guidelines in the OCP including minimum building setback from the ALR and landscape buffer size and setbacks. As it pertains to this Application, the Guidelines have not changed (under the current or previous OCP DPA requirements).
- A Restrictive Covenant (RC) will be registered on all of the RF-zoned lots to advise future lot owners of agricultural practices in the area.
- The building setbacks for proposed Lots 5 and 6 will be approximately 10.5 metres, which is consistent with the building setback established on the proposed lots directly to the east but it does not meet minimum 30 meter setback in Farm Protection DPA.

The Committee made the following comments:

- The site will complete the development for this block (ending in a cul-de-sac). It is contiguous with the existing subdivision to the east.
- There have been a number of issues from different owners in this subdivision with regard to adequate buffering - noise, smell, etc.

- Concern was expressed with regard to agricultural land remaining viable agriculture land by way of meeting the buffering requirements.
- It was noted by staff that with appropriate design a building and subdivision design layout could be prepared to meet the guidelines but would not be consistent with the properties to the east.
- It was noted by one of the AFSAC members that a change in layout pattern to meet the DPA requirement could create a disparity in the home designs and could potentially decrease the value of the homes being built.
- The Committee understands that it is necessary to complete the subdivision but is concerned with the lack of conformity to the Farm Protection Development Permit Guidelines, including the separation distance of residential buildings from the ALR edge and with the reduction in landscape buffering requirements established in the OCP. Discussion ensued with regard to making sure that the buffering stays as close to guidelines as possible. This will minimize the conflicts between urban and rural properties. The right to farm will be protected given that restrictive covenants will be placed on those properties.
- With a proposed setback of 10.5 metres for Lots 5 and 6, if a fence or barrier could be placed on the urban side of the buffer, along the residential side of the landscaping it would help to reduce encroachment into the buffer. Before approved, it would be important to ensure that the general design is consistent with the OCP development permit guidelines for Farm Protection.

It was

Moved by M. Bose

Seconded by J. Sandhar

That the Agriculture and Food Security

Advisory Committee recommend to the G.M. of Planning and Development that Application No. 7914-0265-00 be approved with consideration for design of an adequate landscaped buffer as part of the landscape plans which is generally consistent with Farm Protection Development permit Area requirements.

Carried

**2. Application for Road Opening of 59 Avenue west of 162A Street
16156 59 Avenue**

File No.: 7814-0277-00; Map 75; 5400-80

R. Dubé, Development Services Manager, was in attendance before the Committee to provide an overview of the proposed Road Opening Application, dated October 27, 2014. The following was noted:

- The owner of this site would like to provide legal road frontage to their property through a Transportation, Utility and Recreational Uses in the ALR application to the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) in order to construct a residential dwelling.
- A residential lot is required to have access by municipal road (6 metre-wide paved road with appropriate ditching). The existing road is a gravel road. If paved to municipal standards, it will be a 6-metre road which would raise the expectation to build homes (approximately six (6) in this area).

- This property was previously part of Application 7807-0293-00 which was rejected by the ALC. Now that the owners want to build a house, it triggers the need for the application to the ALC. The City would not have issue with opening roads through this section, but the ALC makes the final decision and requires the AFSAC comments prior to this Application being submitted to the ALC.

Discussion ensued with regard to this Application. In order to build houses, the road must be upgraded. If it is a contentious road-opening, Council will be made aware.

It was

Moved by M. Bose

Seconded by M. Hilmer

That the Agriculture and Food Security

Advisory Committee recommend to the G.M. of Planning and Development that Application No. 7814-0277-00 be supported based on existing City of Surrey Policy.

Carried

3. Development Variance Permit Adjacent to ALR

556 192 Street

File No.: 7914-0273-00; 6880-75

Daniel Sturgeon, Planning Technician, was in attendance to review the memo from Ron Hintsche, Current Planning Manager – South, dated November 25, 2014, regarding the above subject line. The following comments were made:

- The Applicant is proposing to increase the maximum setbacks of the A-1 Zone to permit an addition to an existing house (construct a 2-storey addition on the east side of the existing dwelling). The 5-acre property is designated "Agricultural" in the OCP. The property is not in the ALR; the ALR boundary is contiguous with the northern property line of the site.
- Aside from cosmetic changes, the Applicant is not able to do any expansions or changes without applying for a Development Variance Permit from the City as all existing structures on the site lie beyond the maximum 60-metre setback.
- A watercourse (Jenkins Creek) flows north through the western portion of the property. The site is heavily contoured and slopes upwards at the eastern boundary.
- It was noted that the property is part of bare-land strata and that staff have been informed by additional residents of the strata that additional applications (all non-conforming) for similar variance applications can be expected in the future.

From the Committee's perspective, this land parcel is not currently situated on productive soils, based on the general topography behind it (heavily treed and sloping).

It was Moved by M. Bose
Seconded by D. Arnold
That the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee recommend to the G.M. of Planning and Development that the maximum A-1 zone rear wall homeplate setback for the proposed development, Application No. 7914-0273-00, be increased from 50 metres to 98.5 metres to support the construction of a 2-storey addition to an existing single family house.

Carried

4. Proposed Rezoning from One-Acre Residential (RA) Zone to Half-Acre Residential (RH) Zone

9061 - 164 Street

File No.: 7914-0168-00; 6880-56

Leita Martin, Associate Planner, was in attendance to review the memo from Ron Gill, Acting Current Planning Manager - North, dated November 18, 2014, regarding the above subject line. The following was noted:

- The Applicant proposes to rezone from “One-Acre Residential (RA) Zone to Half-Acre Residential (RH) Zone” in order to subdivide into two (2) single family lots.
- Proposed Lot 1 is a panhandle lot, in conformance with the City Panhandle Policy. The subject lot fronts onto 164 Street, which abuts ALR land.
- The Applicant proposes a “no-build” Restrictive Covenant within 37.5 metres of the ALR boundary as per Farm Protection DPA guidelines. The existing house will remain within the no-build area; however any new construction would occur outside of the no-build area.
- A 10-metre landscape buffer along 164 Street (abutting the ALR) is proposed, as per Farm Protection DPA guidelines.

The Committee commented as follows:

- If approved, this Application could set precedents for additional subdivision of similar Acreage lots adjacent to the ALR boundary. Typically, maintaining one-acre lots has been a helpful strategy for preserving the buffer zone along the ALR.
- Discussion ensued with regard to the current panhandle policy, and staff indicated that the current Policy is in keeping with City of Surrey Panhandle Policy Guidelines.
- It was noted by some committee members that the development of panhandle lots, and driveways, may erode buffers adjacent to the ALR/Road edge.

It was Moved by B. Stewart
 Seconded by M. Hilmer
 That the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee recommend to the G.M. of Planning and Development that Application No.: 7914-0168-00 not be supported due to the Committees concerns over a general erosion of landscape buffer consistency along the ALR edge and a density increase from 1 Acre to ½ Acre panhandles lots.

Carried

with B. Singh opposed

**5. Proposed Application to Develop Land Within 300 Metres of the ALR
 7929, 8009, 8027 and 8055 152 Street
 File No.: 7914-0011-00; 6880-75**

Christopher Atkins, Planner, was in attendance to review the memo from Ron Gill, Acting Current Planning Manager – North, dated November 24, 2014, regarding the above subject line. The following comments were made:

- The Applicant is proposing to develop land within 300 metres of the ALR. A small portion will be re-designated Agricultural to Suburban. The Applicant proposes to consolidate three (3) A-1 zoned lots with a portion of the CP-G zoned golf course. The new lot comprises of land entirely outside the ALR. The rezoning is for portions of the site from A-1 to CP-G to RM-15 to allow for 56 townhouses (13.5 units per acre).
- Two (2) tributaries of Bear Creek traverse the site. A significant portion of the site will be set aside for riparian protection.
- The Farming Protection Development Permit Guidelines for Multiple-Family Development state that the minimum building setback from the Agricultural Land Reserve boundary is 37.5 metres, with a minimum vegetated buffer of 24 metres. The proposed development does not comply with this guideline and only provides a 7.5 building setback, and 3.0 meter landscape buffer. The application is proposing the reduction in building setback and landscape buffer size.
- It was noted that the existing golf course pre-dates the ALR. Guildford Golf Course and related facilities are within the ALR.
- The location and width available for the buffer reflect the need to re-locate the site access further south along 152 Street (for traffic safety purposes). The City's Transportation department is still in discussions as the slope of 152 Street is not the safest location for access. A new entrance will have to be developed as the existing entrance on 88 Avenue will be closed.
- The buffer on the southern edge (between townhouses backyard and ALR, reinforced by wooden fences along the rear of the units) is 3.05 metres.
- The golf course has demonstrated that under the current configuration they can meet the parking requirements. They are not proposing to further expand the parking lot.

The Committee commented as follows:

- The golf course is proposing this development under the assumption that the golf course will be in operation in perpetuity.
- As the golf course is within the ALR, discussion ensued with regard to the fact that at some point, ALR land that is not being used for farming *today* may be required at some point in the future. The buffering guidelines are put in place for the protection of agriculture land for today and in the future.
- Concern was expressed that this Application is a non-compliant to the City's setback and landscaping guidelines and policies, as the Farm Protection DPA requirements of both the Ministry of Agriculture and the City do not differentiate design requirements for golf course in the ALR.

It was

Moved by J. Sandhar

Seconded by M. Bose

That the Agriculture and Food Security

Advisory Committee recommend to the G.M. of Planning and Development that

Application No. 7914-0011-00 be sent back to staff to work with the applicant to

ensure generally conformity to Farm Protection DPA requirements for Multifamily

Interface building setbacks and Landscape buffers adjacent to the ALR edge.

Carried

E. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL

F. CORRESPONDENCE

1. Proposed 2015 Meeting Dates

File No.: 0540-20 AFSAC

The memo from the City Clerk, regarding proposed 2015 Meeting Dates, was reviewed.

It was

Moved by M. Hilmer

Seconded M. Bose

That the Agriculture and Food Security

Advisory Committee receive and adopt the Proposed 2015 Meeting Dates.

Carried

G. INFORMATION ITEMS

1. City of Surrey Comments on the Ministry of Agriculture's Proposed Bylaw Standards Regulating Medical Marihuana Production Facilities in the ALR, dated September 15, 2014

File No.: 6880-75;

The information regarding City of Surrey comments on the Ministry of Agriculture's Proposed Bylaw Standards Regulating Medical Marihuana Production Facilities in the ALR, dated September 15, 2014, was reviewed. Staff noted that these comments are an initial and general first response. With regard to timeline,

a report will be prepared by the Ministry of Agriculture within the next few months.

As discussed at the October 2, 2014 AFSAC meeting, the Committee noted that Medical Marijuana Production Facilities allows for 35% coverage of the lot in relation to lot size. If production facilities are going to be such a size, in order to get that 35% coverage, marijuana growers will begin to look for larger lots, which will push further into productive agriculture land. The Committee noted that this was not fully referenced in the City's response.

It was Moved by J. Sandhar
Seconded M. Bose
That the Agriculture and Food Security
Advisory Committee receive and adopt the information regarding City of Surrey
Comments on the Ministry of Agriculture's Proposed Bylaw Standards Regulating
Medical Marijuana Production Facilities in the ALR, dated September 15, 2014.
Carried

2. "Food with Thought" Initiative Update

Staff provided a brief verbal update with regard to the Food with Thought initiative. Tourism Surrey is in the process of conducting interviews with farmers and unique agricultural businesses operating locally, in order to market and publicize unique agro-tourism opportunities within Surrey. If any Committee members are interested in advertising their products, or know of farmers who are interested in marketing their farm products, or would like additional information, they can contact Tourism Surrey Staff. Publication is expected on the Tourism Surrey webpage and Food with Thought Blog site in the New Year.

3. Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee (ESAC) Update

An update from the ESAC meeting of November 26, 2014 was provided as follows:

- a) Fergus Creek Watershed Biodiversity Preserve
 - Staff presented an update on what was formerly known as "Fergus Creek Watershed Park". This land is located between Highway 99 and 168 Street, close to 12 Avenue.
 - Following extensive consultation with stakeholders, original plans for 'active amenities' such as disc golf were scrapped. No dogs will be allowed, either on or off leash. The focus will now be on the ecology of the site. The primary feature is old-field habitat.
 - Parts of the property including riparian areas are degraded at present. The possibility of P15 projects are being explored, where developers of upstream properties can trade restoration work at this site for concessions on their development sites.
 - As heard previously at the AFSAC, this is one of the sites in Surrey where the Pacific Water Shrew has been identified. The City will have to demonstrate that "effective protection" measures are being taken to protect the shrews' habitat.

- b) Tree Canopy Status Report
- Staff presented ESAC with the City of Surrey Tree Canopy Status Report. The tree canopy continues to shrink, and is doing so at an accelerating rate. By way of illustration, Surrey's tree canopy coverage was 33% in 2001, 30% in 2009, and 27.17% in 2013.
 - There is a target included in the Sustainability Charter of 40% tree canopy coverage by the year 2058, which clearly presents serious challenges. Some research suggests an urban tree canopy of 40% is indicative of an environmentally friendly city. Surrey is currently reconsidering the 40% target, which was never adopted by Council. (Note that these percentages refer to all lands *outside* the ALR).
 - One suggestion that staff believes would likely slow the decline in canopy would be to emphasize *infill* development over *greenfield* development, although it was noted that the sustainability objectives of increasing density and increasing tree canopy can conflict directly with each other.
 - Another indicator of the challenges to overall tree canopy coverage is the contrast between existing average coverage for various land uses and the average in new developments.
 - Using 2009 figures, the average for Residential - Single Family in South Surrey was 48%; in new developments, 8%. For the entire city, the numbers are 24% on average 3% in new developments. The same trend is seen city-wide in Residential - Multi Family.
 - The study provides a number of recommendations for reversing the trend and increasing tree canopy over the next 50 years, with a focus on trees on private property. It was noted that there were 22 recommendations.

B. Stewart expressed his gratitude to the Committee for the opportunity to sit on the AFSAC for the past 8 (eight) years. The Committee expressed their sincere appreciation for the dedicated support and advice given over the years, and extended their very best wishes.

H. INTEGRITY OF THE AGRICULTURE LAND

I. OTHER BUSINESS

1. O. Schmidt, Ministry of Agriculture - Verbal Update

- For the past several months there has been no Ministry of Agriculture Regional Agrologist on the Committee. Dieter Geesing has been recently hired and will begin work with the Ministry on January 5, 2015. Originally from Germany, he has a wide variety of international experience and background in both plant and soil science. The Ministry anticipates the addition of his knowledge and expertise in this field, as well what he can bring to the AFSAC. Dieter Geesing will be introduced at the January 15, 2015 AFSAC meeting.
- Invites will be coming to the AFSAC shortly regarding a Provincial Agricultural Advisory Committee workshop in 2015.

J. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee to be held on Thursday, January 15, 2015, in City Hall, 2E - Community Room A.

K. ADJOURNMENT

It was

Moved by M. Bose


Seconded by D. Arnold

That the Agriculture and Food Security

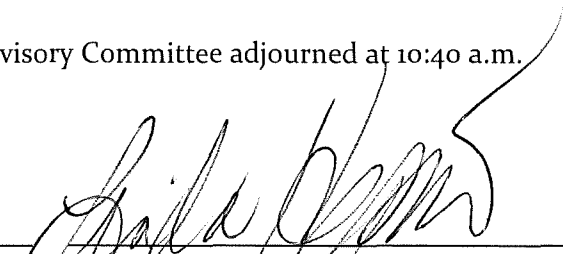
Advisory Committee do now adjourn.

Carried

The Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee adjourned at 10:40 a.m.



Jane Sullivan, City Clerk



Councillor Linda Hepner, Chairperson
Agriculture and Food Security Advisory
Committee