

# *Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee Minutes*

2E - Community Room A  
City Hall  
13450 - 104 Avenue  
Surrey, B.C.  
THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2015  
Time: 9:00 a.m.  
File: 0540-20

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**Present:**

Councillor Starchuk - Chair  
M. Bose - Vice-Chair  
H. Dhillon  
G. Hahn  
P. Harrison  
M. Hilmer  
J. Sandhar  
B. Sandhu  
B. Seed

**Environmental Advisory****Committee Representative:**

S. VanKeulen

**Agency Representative:**

D. Geesing

**Regrets:**

D. Arnold

**Staff Present:**

M. Kischnick, Planning & Development  
C. Stewart, Planning & Development  
R. Dube, Engineering  
C. Bejtovic, Legislative Services

**Youth Representative:**

J. Gosal

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**A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

1. The Committee is requested to pass a motion adopting the minutes of March 5, 2015.

It was

Moved by M. Bose

Seconded by P. Harrison

That the minutes of the Agriculture and  
Food Security Advisory Committee held March 5, 2015 be adopted.

Carried

**B. DELEGATIONS****C. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS**

1. **Appointment of Co-Chair to the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee for the 2015 year.**

It was

Moved by P. Harrison

Seconded by B. Sandhu

That the Agriculture and Food Security  
Advisory Committee appoint Mike Bose as Vice-Chair for the 2015 calendar year.

Carried

**Appointment of representative to the Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee for the 2015 year.**

It was Moved by M. Bose  
Seconded by P. Harrison  
That the Agriculture and Food Security  
Advisory Committee appoint Stan Van Keulen as the Agriculture and Food  
Security Representative to the Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee  
for the 2015 calendar year.

Carried

**2. Southwest BC Bio-Region Food System Design Project**

The Committee discussed the Southwest BC Bio-Region Food System Design Project, as presented by K. Mullinix of KPU, at the meeting of March 5, 2015.

The following comments were made:

- The Committee commented that the project should include agricultural commodities and groups. For the study to have a meaningful result, it should involve as wide a stakeholder group as possible. Disappointment was expressed that the project seemed so limited.
- Most of the communities involved in the project are non-agricultural communities. The Committee feels that the City of Surrey should not support the project as they had no input thus far and will not have input on the final report. Concern was expressed over the number of errors in previous reports and that it would not be in the City's best interests to endorse the project.
- It was noted by a Committee member that KPU has brought this project before the Committee in the past, at which time KPU indicated that the City would not have input into the findings of the final report.
- D. Geesing noted that the methodology used by KPU's Food Systems facility has been critiqued in the past, and the Ministry of Agriculture has concerns, especially in terms of stakeholder involvement. The input of a large part of the agricultural community and local governments in the Fraser Valley is not there which casts doubt on the project. The Ministry of Agriculture does acknowledge the work but will not say they endorse the project.

It was Moved by M. Bose  
Seconded by B. Sandhu  
That the Agriculture and Food Security  
Advisory Committee recommend to Council that the Southwest BC Bio-Region  
Food System Design Project not be endorsed by the City of Surrey.

Carried

**D. NEW BUSINESS**

1. **Application to vary the maximum allowable building setbacks of the *Farm Residential Footprint* under the General Agriculture (A-1) Zone to accommodate construction of a new single family dwelling for the property located at 16507 40 Avenue.**

File: 15-0071

The following comments were made:

- The subject property is located in the ALR, is 2 hectares in size, and is currently used as a commercial blueberry farm.
- The applicant is asking to vary the maximum residential setback from 50 metres to 90 metres to accommodate the construction of a new single family dwelling; and to vary the maximum allowable depth of the farm residential footprint from 60 metres to 100 metres from the front lot line.
- The proposed location of the house is in an unused area not part of the agricultural land. There is currently no residential dwelling on the property but one is permitted.
- The property is located within the flood plain and will require fill. A geotechnical site assessment has been conducted. The applicant proposes a fill (soil deposition) area of 1,256 square meters, which is within the allowable limit.
- The applicant's rationale for the siting of the house is that the lot is too narrow to build within the remaining allowable setback due to existing farm storage buildings. Removal and replacement of these storage buildings would cause financial hardship. The proposed siting is in line with adjacent residential properties.

It was

Moved by S. Van Keulen

Seconded by M. Hilmer

That the Agriculture and Food Security

Advisory Committee recommend that the G.M. of Planning and Development support the application to vary the maximum allowable building setback and increase to the *Farm Residential Footprint* setback under the General Agriculture (A-1) Zone to accommodate construction of a new single family dwelling for the property located at 16507 40 Avenue.

Carried

2. **Application for non-farm use to allow for the redevelopment and expansion of the existing abattoir.**

File: 15-0020-00

The following comments were made:

- This is a provincially licensed abattoir dealing with different kinds of animals. Abattoir services in BC are quite limited.
- The applicant would like to redevelop the abattoir, remove the existing structure, build a larger facility, and get a license for beef only. The building would be within the industrial zoned area. There are existing connections to sewer and water.
- To the north is an industrial area with an arterial road. The barns to the east of the facility will be retained and used for a short term holding area and quarantine of sick animals.

### Discussion

D. Geesing advised that the ALC regulations support applications such as this provided that 50% of the animals are raised on the lot. In this case the ALC allowed for a 3,000 square foot expansion of the existing abattoir in 1994, and custom killing beyond 50% of the animals raised on the lot rule, provided that any custom killing beyond the 50% was from neighbours.

The committee discussed the need for the clarification on what defines “neighbours”, and that the applicant should provide an exit or closure plan for clean up in the event the business shuts down.

The Committee agreed that the abattoir would be of great value to the agricultural community as many “neighbouring” dairy farmers have animals that need to be dealt with. It was agreed that there should be an exit strategy, and a plan that if the operation ceases the uses on the lot should then be conformed to those permitted in the ALR, and the leasehold erased.

BC Food Processors Association has worked with the government to upgrade abattoir facilities in BC to Federal from Provincial; this will allow the transport of meat products beyond the Provincial boundaries. Promoting and encouraging processing is part of the Agricultural Plan for the City of Surrey, and would be less of a footprint if not shipping to Alberta.

It was  
Moved by M. Bose  
Seconded by J. Sandhar  
That the Agricultural and Food Security  
Advisory Committee recommend that the G.M. of Planning and Development support the application for non-farm use to the ALC to allow for the redevelopment and expansion of the existing abattoir, with a requirement for 50% local animal product.

Carried

### **3. Subdivision proposal of property located at 18226 20 Avenue.** File: 14-0349-00

The following comments were made:

- The subject site is located outside of the ALR. The applicant proposes to subdivide the subject property into four lots and a "park" lot under the One-Acre Residential Zone. The proposed lot area will range from 1.3 acres to 1.5 acres.
- A development variance permit will be required to relax the minimum lot size requirement in the Subdivision and Development Procedures Bylaw to support septic disposal systems on each proposed lot less than 2 acres.
- The applicant is providing a 5% park contribution along the south boundary of the site, 10 meters wide, which will supplement and enhance the City's greenbelt.

### Discussion

It was noted that additional runoff may impact the ALR and assurances are needed that there will not be substantial additional runoff.

It was Moved by M. Hilmer  
Seconded by P. Harrison  
That the Agriculture and Food Security  
Advisory Committee recommend the G.M. of Planning and Development support the application for subdivision and the development variance permit to the minimum lot size requirement for septic systems for the property located at 18226 20 Avenue.

Carried

4. **Application to increase the maximum setback of the A-1 Zone Farm Residential Footprint to permit construction of an additional single family dwelling.**

The following comments were made:

- An application initially came in December 2013; it was not supported at that time due to the location of the proposed home and the loss of agricultural lands. This is a revised version of the original proposal.
- The applicants now propose to increase the maximum setback of the A-1 Zone from 50 metres to 67 metres and increase the maximum setback of the Farm Residential Footprint from 60 metres to 71 metres in order to facilitate construction of a new single family dwelling.
- The existing dwelling would be retained and used as a farm worker residence. The existing septic field would be decommissioned and replaced by a new septic field.
- The siting of the proposed house removes less of the site in agricultural production. A 1/4 acre blueberry patch would be removed; the area of the existing septic field will be reclaimed for farming. The existing well currently used for irrigation will be retained.

Discussion

It was noted that a second dwelling may require ALC non-farm use approval if there is any doubt of the need for the dwelling for full-time, bona fide farm operations; however, the proposal does meet Surrey's A-1 Zone requirements for possible second dwelling on lots greater than 10 Acres, and with farm status. It was noted however that the ALC Regulations indicate that local government bylaws should not necessarily be the basis for making a determination about the necessity for farm help.

The Committee discussed the justification for accommodations for farm workers on a blueberry farm of this size. They indicated that a blueberry farm of this size, even in the off season, could necessitate full-time workers, as there are many equipment maintenance requirements. The ALC should be contacted to ascertain if there is specific criteria available for calculating how many employees are required for certain size farms based on the agricultural operation of that farm.

Staff noted that zoning bylaw refers to the size and farm classification when speaking of an additional dwelling; and that a second dwelling must be used for farm use. It was suggested the ALC staff be consulted for clarification regarding non-farm use dwellings.

Concern was expressed about the future potential for the dwelling to be used as rental property, which would contravene the ALC Act Regulations and Policies. Staff suggested that ALC Regulations and Policies be noted on any future building permits to ensure the applicant is aware that the dwelling is necessary for full-time, bona fide farm operations. This would explicitly indicate that any future use of the dwelling must conform to the ALC and ALR regulations.

It was

Moved by M. Bose

Seconded by P. Harrison

That the Agriculture and Food Security

Advisory Committee recommend the G.M. of Planning and Development support this application to increase the maximum setback of the A-1 Zone Farm Residential Footprint to permit construction of an additional single family dwelling; and to get clarification from the ALC on the rules and regulations around second dwellings in the ALR and the requirement to specify it is only for farm workers.

Carried

**E. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL**

**F. CORRESPONDENCE**

1. **Letter from Pacific Land Resource Group requesting to appear as a delegation before the Committee to present their application and request support for an exclusion of property at 5228 King George Boulevard.**

Pacific Land Group is requesting to appear as a delegation to present their application rather than having the application presented by a City of Surrey Planner on their behalf.

The Committee noted that applicants have not previously been permitted to appear as delegations on their own behalf and this may undermine City staff whose purpose it is to present the facts of the proposals on behalf of the applicant.

Staff stated that normal practise allows the applicant to be present at the meeting but the Planner presents the development proposal. The applicant's rationale for the application is typically appended to the Planner memo for the Committee. Specific questions may be asked of the owner or their representative, who may attend the AFSAC meetings, regarding the specific rationale, but the applicant never addresses the Committee directly, unless authorized by the AFSAC chair. Allowing the applicant to present their own individual applications would put the Committee in a position to act in a different way than what is mandated, and may bias the facts of the presentation.

Concern was expressed that allowing this type of delegation may set an unwanted precedent. As experts in the field of agriculture, members of this Committee have the knowledge to provide Council with reasonable advice so they can make an informed decision.

It was Moved by P. Harrison  
Seconded by J. Sandhar  
That the Agriculture and Food Security  
Advisory Committee not support the request by Pacific Land Resource Group to  
appear as a delegation before the Committee to present their application.  
Carried

**G. INFORMATION ITEMS****H. OTHER BUSINESS**

1. **AFSAC 2015 Work Plan**  
Quarterly Committee update and priority review.
  - Discussion was held around the relation of the Agriculture Plan to the regional food system and the potential for a broader framework to look at different aspects. Staff noted that the Work Plan does not stem from the Agriculture Plan but has been derived over time based on specific areas of interest to the Committee. It was indicated that it may be useful to

determine where the gaps are between what Surrey is doing and what the Region is doing.

- It was noted by a Committee member that “food security” is more about the production, growing, processing, finding access to market; it is not so much about the consumer's side of the issue. The Committee is trying to protect the home plate, protect the land, so we have less of a mandate for urban food security.
- Councillor Starchuk requested members bring their top three items for discussion at the next meeting.
- Concern was expressed about border usage for washing vegetables and the affect this may have on vegetable farming in Surrey. The question arose whether processers/packers are permitted to use the municipal border for that purpose. Unless there is clean water for the farms, farmers are not able to sell to retailers. Staff advised that this practise is permitted; the Plan talks about water use, rules and regulations.
- It was noted that runoff is going into ditches used for irrigation purposes; this affects the food safety aspect of farming. When audited, there are questions pertaining to samples and monitoring.

M. Bose discussed his trip to New Zealand and the similarities in farming practices.

#### I. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee is scheduled for Thursday, **May 14, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. in 2E Community Room A.**

#### J. ADJOURNMENT

It was

Moved by P. Harrison


Seconded by M. Bose

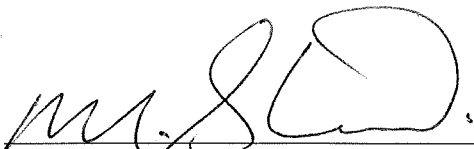
That the Agriculture and Food Security

Advisory Committee meeting do now adjourn.

Carried

The Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee adjourned at 11:07 a.m.

  
Jane Sullivan, City Clerk

  
Councillor Michael Starchuk, Chair