

Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee Minutes

Present:

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

Agency Representative:

D. Geesing
Regrets:
M. Hilmer
S. VanKeulen

Staff Present:

M. Kischnick, Planning & Development
C. Stewart, Planning & Development
E. Cody, Project Supervisor, Engineering
C. Bejtovic, Legislative Services

A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. The committee is requested to pass a motion adopting the minutes of June 4, 2015.

It was

Moved by M. Bose

Seconded by D. Arnold

That the minutes of the Agriculture and

Food Security Advisory Committee meeting held June 4, 2015 be adopted.

Carried

B. DELEGATIONS

C. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS

1. **Work Plan**

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

2. **New Coast Realty - AFSAC Response to Article**

The following comments were made:

- Councillor Starchuk will draft a letter to New Coast Realty and to the agent responsible for the article, outlining the inaccuracies in the article and their misrepresentation of how the ALR functions within the City of Surrey. The draft letter will be brought to the Committee for comment.

D. NEW BUSINESS**1. Application for lot line adjustment subdivision to resolve a building encroachment on a property line**

File: 15-0120-00 (E. MacGregor)

File: 6880-75

The following comments were made:

- The subject site consists of two properties, 17690 and 17720 12 Avenue, both of which are designated Agricultural in the OCP, zoned A-1 General Agriculture, and located within the ALR.
- The existing house was constructed in the 1960's on the property line between the two parcels. In 2007, the owner registered an easement to allow legal access to the house prior to learning about lot line adjustment opportunities. The adjustment would move .5 acre (.203 hectare) from the property at 17690 12 Avenue to the property at 17720 12 Avenue, correctly siting the house.
- The adjustment would not impact the existing farming operations on either property.

Discussion

- The entire property line would not be moved, only that portion around the house. The house is located to the east of the junction of Sam Hill Creek and a drainage ditch. The existing driveway is located on the former Great Northern Railway bed that runs parallel to the ditch.
- Staff stated that the applicant simply wishes to correct the encroachment and has no desire to construct additional buildings.

It was

Moved by M. Bose

Seconded by P. Harrison

That the Agriculture and Food Security

Advisory Committee recommend that the GM of Planning and Development support application 15-0120-00 for lot line adjustment subdivision to resolve a building encroachment on a property line.

Carried**2. Rezoning a Subdivision adjacent to the ALR**

File: 14-0365-00 (S. Long)

File: 6880-75

The following comments were made:

- The subject property is a 1.6 hectare (4 acre) lot on the south side of 88 Avenue across from the ALR in the Fleetwood Town Centre area. It is a suburban residential lot with an existing house which will be removed.

- The applicant proposes to rezone the subject site to a Comprehensive Development Zone in order to subdivide into ten small suburban lots ranging from 1/4 acre to 1/2 acre in size.
- Lots 1 and 2 are located immediately across from the ALR. A ten meter wide landscape buffer is proposed on lots 1 and 2, and a two meter wide front yard space between the buffer and the house.
- The building setback on lots 1 and 2 is 12 meters, which exceeds development permit requirements. The house will be sited 39 meters from the ALR boundary, which also exceeds Development Permit Area requirements.
- A Restrictive Covenant is proposed to inform future homeowners of the potential farm operations on the adjacent agricultural lands.

Discussion

- Staff noted that the two meter setback from the buffer would be to the front porch of the dwelling. The lots at the front are much deeper and have much more usable yard space.
- Staff also noted that the Restrictive Covenant will be included as a condition for rezoning for Landscape Buffer.

It was Moved by P. Harrison
 Seconded by J. Sandhar
 That the Agriculture and Food Security
 Advisory Committee recommend that the GM of Planning and Development
 support application 14-0365-00 to rezone a subdivision adjacent to the ALR.
Carried

3. **Application for Farm Road Opening of 160 Street** File: 5400-80 (16000) (C. Elder)

The following comments were made:

- The owners of 5742 160 Street would like to provide road access to the property in order to utilize the site for an ornamental nursery operation. The subject lot consists of 2 hectares of ALR land; no residential or commercial structures are proposed by the owner.
- The owner will obtain a Provincial Highway Permit in order to complete additional works subject to Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure requirements, including the construction of an eastbound left turn bay off of Highway 10.

H. Dhillon arrived at 9:07 a.m.

Discussion

- Knowing how low the land is, the Committee questioned how much of the land the applicant is planning to fill to create the nursery. Staff will obtain further information and report back to the Committee.
- It was noted that approval has not yet been received by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure for the left turn bay off of eastbound Highway 10.

It was Moved by M. Bose
Seconded by P. Harrison
That the Agriculture and Food Security
Advisory Committee recommend that the GM of Planning and Development send application 5400-80 (16000) back to staff to obtain further information.

Carried

E. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL**F. CORRESPONDENCE****G. INFORMATION ITEMS**

1. **Duplexes in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)**
(M. Kischnick)
File: 6880-75

The following comments were made:

- The Planning and Development Department has created a guide intended to provide information and an overview on duplex non-farm use application process in the ALR.
- Discussion was held around the rationale for not allowing a duplex if it is within the allowable footprint. Staff noted that it is the ALC that determines non-farm uses within the ALR.
- The potential for holding a town hall meeting was discussed to invite input from the public regarding duplex regulations in the ALR. It was noted that there would be a public hearing if a proposed change to the zoning bylaw was to be considered, and that the Hearing process would provide the opportunity for the public to comment.
- The Agricultural Land Commission Acts/Orders and regulations identify duplex uses as a Non-farm use. Concern was expressed by one of the Committee members that a zoning bylaw amendment of this nature could create hardship.

- Staff advised that the bylaw amendment is to more clearly define the ALC regulations in the zoning bylaw and identify the appropriate non-farm use application process. All Committee and Council meeting minutes are published on the City of Surrey web site and in that way the public is kept informed. Stakeholders and residents can then start discussions and prepare comments if a future bylaw amendment goes to public hearing.
- It was noted that, regardless whether or not duplexes are removed from the Zoning bylaw, the City does not have jurisdiction to approve duplexes in the ALR without ALC approval. It was noted that the City recently submitted three applications for duplexes to the ALC; and that building permits for these cannot be approved by the City unless the ALC resolves that they are permitted for Farm Help.
- Amending the bylaw will prevent confusion over what Surrey's zoning bylaw allows and what ALC regulations permit, and will give clear direction on the process. It is not whether a duplex is or is not permitted; it is about the process to get there; only the ALC can approve.
- Staff will invite a representative from the ALC to speak to the September meeting of AFSAC and define the *ALC Act*, specifically around the issue of farm use and non-farm use, and to have a conversation around bylaw standards. Those discussions will be part of the public record for interested parties to stay informed.

H. INTEGRITY OF THE AGRICULTURE LAND

1. Truck Parking

There are numerous semi-trucks parked on a property on the south side of Highway 10 in the vicinity of 156 Street (address provided by staff). The property is zoned Highway Commercial; parking trucks would be considered industrial use. The trucks are parked on the City right-of-way. Staff will contact Bylaw Enforcement.

2. Fill Deposition

Discussion was held regarding fill being deposited on a particular property (staff provided address) and whether or not approval was obtained to do so. It was noted that there is a 100 meter setback for the Pacific Water Shrew in the vicinity of these properties.

3. Fines for Trucks

A truck and trailer has been observed parked at 152 Street and 64 Avenue (not a truck route) on a regular basis with no justification and is not being ticketed. Other trucks that must access farms via 64 Avenue regularly get ticketed. Staff will discuss with Bylaw Enforcement.

4. SPCA Facility

In response to an inquiry at the last AFSAC meeting, staff advised that in June 2011 AFSAC received an application for non-farm use for SPCA site to allow for keeping of some animals. The Committee did not support the application at that time. The application subsequently went to Council in July 2011 where Council forwarded the application to the ALC for consideration. The ALC considered and approved the proposed uses with conditions, including:

- only existing buildings could be used;
- no expansion of footprint of buildings would be permitted; and
- the property would need to be fenced.

Several building permits have since been approved which conform to additions or updates of existing structures. There have also been electrical applications for improvements on the lighting; however, there are no specific design guidelines in place for lighting.

5. Fire at Mansonville Plastics

At the time of this fire, authorities were unable to contact property owners along the Nikomekl River to advise them to stop irrigation. Discussion ensued regarding the devastating effect on farms and all forms of agriculture if they were made to stop irrigation, especially in this heat wave.

Precautions need to be taken to contain toxic runoff when industrial development is permitted near ALR lands. Some jurisdictions have small retention ponds with a slide gate to stop runoff from leaving the property. It was suggested to explore the feasibility of obtaining retro fittings through the Ministry of Environment for future developments.

This fire event could have been devastating for the Serpentine and Nikomekl Rivers. There is concern about metals being present in irrigation water and why industrial areas are connected to water supply.

The Ministry of Agriculture encourages farmers to obtain premises ID so they are more easily identified and informed in case of an emergency, to prevent their irrigating with toxic water. Those farms that have premises ID have greatly benefited. Beyond the imminent fire situation, it is a concern that chemicals could be leaching into the water supply.

It has been suggested in the past that British Columbia Agriculture Council (BCAC) start issuing premises ID for bona fide farmers. A Committee member advised that there may be funding available through the Provincial Government.

From a business perspective, this type of event could wipe out a farm. With enough education and information sharing, eventually farmers will understand the importance of this type of registry and its role in saving their livelihood.

I. OTHER BUSINESS

1. The Flavours of Surrey is scheduled for July 18 and 19. Volunteers are to meet at the farm on Friday July 17 at 1:00 p.m. to set up the straw maze. Volunteers are still required for the agriculture booth.
2. A Committee member inquired about the allowable amount of fill for construction of a primary dwelling. The bylaw states that the farm home plate is 3,000 square meters; however, only 2,000 square meters of fill is allowed. Staff advised that 2,000 square meters of fill is what the City has authorization to permit; anything more than that requires an ALC application. The zoning bylaw states that anything within the ALR must comply with the *ALC Act*.


J. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee will be held on September 3, 2015, at 9:00 a.m.

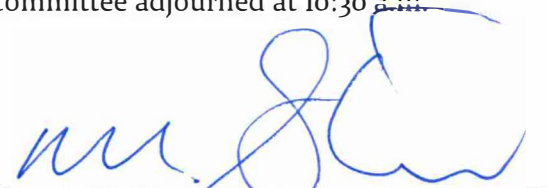
K. ADJOURNMENT

It was Moved by M. Bose
Seconded by P. Harrison
That the Agriculture and Food Security
Advisory Committee meeting do now adjourn.
Carried

The Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee adjourned at 10:30 a.m.



Jane Sullivan, City Clerk



Councillor Mike Starchuk, Chair