

# Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee Minutes

1E - Committee Room B  
City Hall  
13450 - 104 Avenue  
Surrey, B.C.  
THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 2016  
Time: 9:04 a.m.  
File: 0540-20

**Present:**

Councillor Starchuk, Chair  
B. Sandhu  
B. Seed  
D. Arnold  
G. Hahn  
H. Dhillon  
J. Sandhar  
M. Bose  
P. Harrison  
S. VanKeulen

**Agency Representative:**

D. Geesing

**Regrets:**

M. Hilmer

**Staff Present:**

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

## A. ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

Councillor Starchuk was appointed Chair of the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee by Mayor and Council on December 15, 2014

It is in order for the Committee to elect a Vice-Chair for the 2016 calendar year.

It was

Moved by P. Harrison

Seconded by D. Arnold

That the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee (AFSAC) appoint Mike Bose as the Vice-Chair for the 2016 calendar year.

Carried

It was

Moved by D. Arnold

Seconded by P. Harrison

That in the absence of the Chair, the 2016 adopted AFSAC schedule of meeting dates will be upheld with the newly elected Vice-Chair leading the meeting.

Carried

## B. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. The committee is requested to pass a motion adopting the minutes of December 3, 2015.

Before the motion was put, Item B.1. of the December 3, 2015 minutes was amended to reflect the following wording:

The Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee (AFSAC):

1. Support building on the Metro Vancouver Regional Food Strategy,
2. Receive Food Action Collation (FAC) report as information; and,
3. Encourage coordination between AFSAC, FAC and other City of Surrey Departments.

It was

Moved by M. Bose

Seconded by P. Harrison

That the minutes of the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee meeting held December 3, 2015 be adopted as amended.

Carried

### C. DELEGATIONS

1. **Nicole Ensing, Surrey Urban Farmers Market (SUFM)**  
File: 0250-20

In attendance before Committee to provide a presentation on the Surrey Urban Farmers Market

The following comments were made:

- The delegation provided a brief overview of the history of the Surrey Urban Farmers Market (SUFM) and noted that the market was incorporated in 2008 as a farmers' market to serve the City Centre area with the mission to support and celebrate local farmers, food producers, and artisans for the benefit of the community.
- The delegation provided an overview of the 2015 program as follows:
  - The SUFM is open Wednesdays from June to October from 1 pm to 6 pm in City Centre.
  - New programming was brought in and the publicity was great, there were several media and news appearances.
  - Challenges with the City Centre location included customer turnout. There was a decrease as compared to the previous site at the recreation centre. There were a lot of people who complained about parking; the most convenient parking location is the pay parking directly under the plaza the alternatives were not widely communicated and many indicated that the new site was too far to easily walk to.
  - The City Centre location posed a few difficulties regarding setup and there was lack of onsite storage. The setup itself is a challenge because the lights in the plaza need to be covered.

- The SUFM conducted an online survey as well as handed out printed copies at the Fusion Festival in order to gather data on the user demographics and shopping preferences. There were 383 responses received. The age range of attendees is 19-60 with the biggest category mix being ages 19 - 35. Overall there is a very loyal customer base of biweekly shoppers who appreciated the vendors, fresh food and overall atmosphere. The least favourable feedback received was regarding the overall size of the market wishing it was larger (on average there are 15 to 30 vendors each week), lack of parking and that the prices were too high.
- The delegation noted that there is a nutrition program the SUFM has partnered with whereby individuals who belong to the Program have the ability to purchase healthy local fruits, vegetables, dairy and meat at discounted prices.
- Financial stability and staffing are a challenge as they are a volunteer organization; total vendor sales for the 2015 season were \$89,000.
- It was found that most shoppers came in the early time of the market even though people (in the survey) said they wanted it to be open later. There are approximately 100 market members; the purchase price is \$10 per year; members receive additional discounts.
- SUFM has decided to move the market back to recreation centre location and setting the opening to be earlier in the day; market hours will be determined at the AGM.
- In response to a question from the Committee, the delegation noted a lot of farmers like the market and come because it is a Wednesday market and that it would not be financially sustainable on a Saturday because there is already too much competition within the Lower Mainland.

It was

Moved by M. Bose

Seconded by B. Seed

That the Agriculture and Food Security

Advisory Committee (AFSAC) support the efforts of Surrey Urban Farmers Market and will continue to offer input and guidance, from an agricultural perspective, as requested.

#### D. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS

## E. NEW BUSINESS

1. **Subdivision proposal of property located at 18319 - 20 Avenue**  
**Ryan Gilmore, Planning Technician**  
File: 6880-75; 7915-0069-00

The following comments were made:

- The Applicant is proposing to subdivide the property into four lots under the One-Acre Residential Zone (RA); the proposed new lots are one acre in size and contingent on Council's approval of a Development Variance Permit (DVP).
- The site is located outside of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR); approximately 110 metres (363 ft.) from the boundary
- There is a similar application, south/east of the current Application before the Committee that received preliminary approval from Council in May 2015.

Discussion

- In response to a question from the Committee regarding sanitary sewer provisions, staff noted that there is no Neighbourhood Concept Plan (NCP) planned for this Rural designated area.
- Conceptually there is a plan for servicing with a sanitary sewer in the long term; however, at this time the sanitary sewers will not be extended. Staff clarified that the Subdivision and Development Procedures Bylaw No. 8830 calls for properties created through a subdivision to be at minimum 2 acres (0.81 hectares) in order to be serviced by septic disposal systems.
- In May 2015 a Development Permit (DP) was approved allowing for lots ranging from 1.3 to 1.5 acres with the road surrounding and being punched through.
- Staff clarified that there are engineering concerns with 1 acre lots and septic fields however the technology is available and if someone wanted to build something to treat the effluent it can be done. The issue is the long-term, historically as Fraser Health has supported 2 acres as a good size.
- The Applicant submitted proposed servicing information for engineering review. There are engineering concerns for less than 2 acres, with the proposed application the smallest one is 1.04. Engineering would support three lots because if the field fails it can be replaced.
- From a farming perspective, if there was a failure, the residents are far away enough to cause little concern; however, if irrigation water is impacted, then there would be significant concerns to farming.

- The Committee expressed concern regarding the precedent it sets for changing the rules that 4 lots can be made out of something that should be two (2). It was difficult to make an assessment based on the current information, it would be helpful to have more context associated with the proposal and the overall development concept for neighbouring lands.
- The Committee inquired whether a covenant could be added to the title so that perspective homeowners knew to expect farm operation noise and dust since the homes will be located within 300 metres from the ALR; it would be advisable to have some language advising that farming activities will occur on an ongoing basis.

At the request of the Chair, M. Koka, Alpin & Martin Consultants Ltd. (Agent on behalf of the Applicant) made the following comments regarding the proposed septic systems:

- The Applicant has retained the services of MSR Solutions Inc., a water and wastewater engineering solutions firm, and they have presented three possible solutions to address the septic concerns as follows:
  1. Standard off the shelf septic system which would support and address water quality and agricultural lands adjacent to the subject site. Purchasers would be advised that there are some maintenance expectations for the systems;
  2. Initial treatment and a wetland to deal with the nitrates to ensure that the particulate does not leach into the ground water system and get into agricultural land; or
  3. Circulating Sand Septic Field.
- The Applicant is open to working with staff and will work with engineering on the detailed engineering design of the application.
- The proposal is that every lot would get their own septic field and backup (if required in the future).

#### Discussion Continued

- Staff clarified that in order for the system to be a community facility, it would need to be stratified or a legal agreement be established, as one neighbour might not want to pay.
- With the increased density, and additional storm water runoff, pre and post development management guidelines for storm-sewer runoff will be required.
- In response to a question from the Committee, staff clarified that the floor plans for the proposed development have not yet been finalized; at this stage the building envelopes have only been established. The size of homes will be limited to the maximum footprint of the One-Acre Residential Zone (RA).

- The septic field selected for the development would be suitable based on the size of the home (RA). The design of the septic field solution and specifications will be on file with the City of Surrey attached to the property. In the event the homeowners came in at a later date looking to do an addition to the house it is reviewed again and a certified plan checker signs off. Installers and designers sign off on the systems and the plan checkers marry the building envelope and size to the septic field.
- Staff clarified that the size of the houses is not proposed to be limited; the building lot will limit the septic field which will limit the size of the house.
- The Committee noted that applicant is looking for four lots and the proposal should be reduced to 3 lots based on the fact that septic fields will be required.

It was

Moved by M. Bose

Seconded by S. VanKeulen

That the Agriculture and Food Security

Advisory Committee (AFSAC) recommends to the General Manager, Planning and Development that the Committee accepts the proposal of 4 lots with hesitation and that reducing the number of lots to 3 would be preferred.

2. **Subdivision proposal of property located at 18386 - 20 Avenue**  
**Ryan Gilmore, Planning Technician**  
File: 6880-75; 7915-0240-00

The following comments were made:

- The Applicant is proposing to subdivide the subject property into four lots and create a "park lot" under the One-Arce Residential Zone (RA).
- The proposed site is located close to ALR in southern and eastern boundaries, a City owned greenbelt, which runs along the southern boundary of the site separates the property from the ALR.
- Park lot about 7 metres wide to increase the buffer by further enhancing the City's greenbelt and the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (BCS) corridor which runs along the south and eastern boundaries of the site.
- The southern boundary achieves 146 feet of distance between the boundary and ALR.
- The Applicant is proposing 7.5 metres landscaping buffering along the eastern boundary of the site which will be protected by restrictive covenant.

- The proposed application does not conform to the Subdivision and Development Procedures Bylaw No. 8830, requiring a minimum lot size of 2 acres for properties serviced by septic disposal systems created through subdivision.
- Staff noted that in May 2015 a similar Development Application on a nearby property received preliminary approval. The development was a 4-lot subdivision with sizes ranging from 1.3 acres to 1.5 acres and required a DVP in order to permit lots less than 2 acres with septic disposal systems.

### Discussion

- The Committee noted that the City should consider developing a Local Area Plan (LAP) to decide what is best for the area. The subject site is at a steeper grade and there are organic farms located below and that the proposed development will result in a negative impact on agriculture.
- The Committee requested additional detail on the overall layout and a context plan for the area.
- Staff clarified that the proposal will need to conform to the DP guidelines for both Farm Protection and Steep Slopes; the buffer proposed is 7.5 metres because the road is separating the suburban lot from the ALR. The designation is RA and the proposal for dwelling size and setback will need to meet the zoning requirements.
- The area is designated as rural in the Official Community Plan (OCP), there is a Neighbourhood Concept Plan (NCP) to the north of this area (Redwood Heights NCP) but this area will remain rural for the long-term. The long-term plan is to maintain as rural and the establishment of an NCP is not on the city radar; however, there could be a plan done for the remainder as rural if Council directs.
- The Committee asked whether or not the slope of the land coming in to agricultural land was considered and asked staff to come back to AFSAC with their concept plan/vision for the area, particularly with detail regarding how the septic field will be laid out with additional provisions added by way of restrictive covenant in terms of septic field "fail-safe" measures using the highest degree of safety.
- Staff noted that restrictive covenants and specific building guidelines can be placed on title.
- The Committee expressed concern that this side of the street is very different from the other side. This side abuts on the ALR and there is the ALR interface. It was discussed that there are a lot of farming activities that will happen in the ALR that people who are building may not appreciate.

- The Committee requested that staff ensure the proposed site takes into account that there are 3 parcels across the slope and noted that the potential negative impacts on the agricultural land could be immense if there is a septic failure.
- Staff clarified that the subject site is also located in an area of steep slopes and that the septic and the Development Permit (DP) for Hazard Lands will need to address steep sloping terrain issues and septic field requirements. There are set guidelines in place and it is part of the requirements for applications.

The Chair clarified that AFSAC has a mandate to address the septic field and how it impacts ALR lands and farms, and not the geotechnical issues associated with the slope or terrain.

It was

Moved by S. VanKeulen

Seconded by M. Bose

That the Agriculture and Food Security

Advisory Committee (AFSAC) recommends that the General Manager, Planning and Development request that Council refer this Application back to Planning Staff to provide a more comprehensive context plan for the Rural designated area.

Carried

### 3. **Road Allowance located south and adjacent to 8415 - 188 Street**

Avril Wright, Property Agent

File: 6880-75

In attendance before the committee to seek feedback from the Committee on disposition of the road closure application

The following comments were made:

- The owner of the property located at 8415 - 188 Street applied to the City to close a 9,900 ft<sup>2</sup> portion of the unopened 33 feet wide 84 Avenue allowance located south of and adjacent to 8415 - 188 Street for the purpose of consolidating the lands to build a new home on the property.
- The property at 8415 - 188 Street is a 0.69 acre parcel that has been improved with an older, one-storey home and a detached garage.
- Staff noted that the proposed road closure area and adjacent property are zoned as General Agriculture (A-1) and are designated as "Agricultural" within the Official Community Plan (OCP) and are also located in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).
- There is a well on the property and an open road that is deemed a flanking road with a setback requirement of 25 feet. The applicant wants to keep an existing garage on the property. Would like to purchase the road, and the result is an additional 48 feet in width to the building envelope of the proposed new home.



- Realty Services staff made inquiries with the adjacent neighbour located at 8307 -188 Street, south of the proposed road closure, who expressed concern that the road was being closed to build a house. In order to alleviate concerns staff suggested consideration be given to negotiating a road allowance; the property owner indicated that he would consider that option and would respond in writing; to-date no correspondence has been received.
- The proposed closure was circulated to all potentially concerned City Departments for review and there were no objections to the proposal; as the road closure land is located in the ALR, it was recommended that the AFSAC be consulted.

### Discussion

- In response to a question from the Committee, staff clarified that road closure requests are referred to all departments and that the Engineering Department has no issue with the proposed closure of road allowance.

A committee member noted that it would be more beneficial to include the Road ROW into the farmed property to the south, rather than to include it in the lands to the north which are intended to accommodate a residential building. From an agricultural perspective sale of the ROW to the Southern Property would be more beneficial from an agricultural perspective.

- The vice-chair noted that he was supportive of closing of any road that is not being used as a road allowance which could be farmed, and that it is up to the City and the land owners to come to an agreement on what to do with the land, as it is beneficial to agriculture to reduce the possibility of future roads in the ALR.

It was

Moved by M. Bose

Seconded by S. VanKeulen

That the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee (AFSAC) recommends to the General Manager, Engineering Development that the proposed road closure be supported as it is beneficial to agriculture.

Carried

Before the Chair called for Item E.4 - Development Variance Permit No. 7914-0242-00 to be presented, H. Dhillon declared a conflict of interest noting that he had previous involvement in the site having conducted the geotechnical engineering and therefore would not be participating in either the general discussion or voting.

4. **Development Variance Permit No. 7914-0242-00**  
Stephanie Long, Planner  
File: 7914-0242-00

The following comments were made:

- The subject site is 16327 No. 10 Hwy (56 Avenue). It is located on HWY 10 in ALR, bounded on all sides by Class AO watercourses that run along the south, west and north portions of the site.
- Staff clarified that the site is currently not being farmed and falls within an area defined as pacific water shrew habitat.
- The Applicant is requesting a Development Variance Permit (DVP) to increase the maximum setback for a single family dwelling in an A-1 Zone from 50 metres to 60 metres as well as increase the maximum depth of the farm residential footprint from 60 metres to 70 metres to build a house.
- The driveway area is proposed to be included in the farm residential footprint; proposed site access would come from 2 lots to the west. The access will come from 16237 to the privately owned parcel; this would involve negotiating access easements and a properly issued access.

#### Discussion

- The Committee noted that the site was farmed successfully until the Ministry bought the property for HWY 10 widening and at that time AFSAC recommended that there be a consolidation.
- Staff clarified that the proposed variance was brought forward to the AFSAC due to the request for a 10 metre reduction off the front and that the homeowners would be limited, through soil deposition bylaw and ALC policy to 2,000 m<sup>2</sup> of fill for residential purposes.
- The Committee expressed concerned that the owner purchased the property well aware of the challenges and that the request before the AFSAC yields no net benefit to agriculture. It was further discussed that the proposal sets a precedent and that unless access off the highway can be negotiated construction of the house is ill-conceived.

It was

Moved by M. Bose

Seconded by D. Arnold

That the Agriculture and Food Security

Advisory Committee (AFSAC) recommends to the General Manager, Planning and Development that Council not endorse Development Variance Permit

No. 7914-0242-00 as there is no net gain to agriculture; especially due to the proposed access to the site and because a dwelling can be placed on the property in accordance with the existing zoning requirements.

Carried

With H. Dhillon abstaining

**F. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL****G. CORRESPONDENCE****1. Delegation Request - Sarah Rush, Msc. RD, Friend of Hazelmere and Campbell Valley (FHCV)**

Requesting to appear as a delegation to provide a brief presentation on "How Shrinking Agricultural Land Availability Impacts Food Security"  
File: 6880-75

The following comments were made:

- The Committee noted that the delegation request and topic was unclear as to its intent. It was suggested that the delegation be referred to first speak directly with an AFSAC committee member to gain a better understanding of the Committee and the mandate.
- On behalf of the Committee, D. Geesing volunteered to contact Ms. Rush to clarify her delegation request and will report back at the next AFSAC.

It was

Moved by M. Bose

Seconded by P. Harrison

That the Agriculture and Food Security

Advisory Committee (AFSAC) recommends that D. Geesing, Agency Representative, contact Ms. Rush, on behalf of the Committee, and explain the AFSAC Terms of Reference and Mandate as related to the delegation request.

Carried

**H. INFORMATION ITEMS****1. Sustainability Charter Update**

File: 0512-02

The following comments were made:

- The Committee noted that it was disappointing that "agriculture" only showed up in three spaces within the report and in all cases it was in the context of economics. Agriculture could have been touched on in a few other areas in the report in greater detail and been listed in a more positive light.

It was

Moved by M. Bose

Seconded by P. Harrison

That the Agriculture and Food Security

Advisory Committee (AFSAC) receive the Sustainability Charter Update as information.

Carried

**I. INTEGRITY OF THE AGRICULTURE LAND****1. Food Safety & Supply Chain Management**

File: N/A - Verbal Update

It was discussed that there have been a lot articles recently regarding Agricultural Food Security and Food Safety and noted that there is a lot of negative connotations regarding poultry and supply management; it seems that the trend is to embark down the road toward incubator farming.

The Committee noted that it is an opportune time to recognize the importance of food security, considering the low value of the Canadian Dollar.

**J. OTHER BUSINESS****1. Metro Vancouver Food Action Plan**

Carla Stewart, Senior Planner

File: 0450-01

In attendance before the Committee to seek feedback from the Committee on the "Regional Food System Action Plan - Draft"

The following comments were made:

- Staff noted that Metro Vancouver is in the stage of collecting information and that the final draft will be prepared for Council review shortly.
- Metro Vancouver has extended the deadline for comments and feedback to early February; members of the Committee are invited to forward any further comments or concerns.

**2. 18th Annual Pacific Agriculture Show - Tradex Exhibition Centre (Abbotsford Airport - January 28 - 30, 2016)**

File: N/A - Verbal Update

The shows will platform the latest and most innovative equipment and technology for agriculture as well as feature the following: horticulture course, dairy expo, agricultural and municipal biogas forum.

**3. Septic Field Failures**

File: N/A - Verbal Update

When septic fields fail they can have significant impact on farming, if there is any activity that results in discharge in the drainage ditches water, especially for most vegetable crops, leaf spinach and romaine will be contaminated. Such contamination can, and does, cause problems from a food safety perspective and surrounding farmers can be held directly accountable even though the run off is not due to their operation.

4. **Corporation of Delta - Agricultural Marketing**

File: N/A - Verbal Update

A member of the Committee noted that Delta has videos on local agriculture and noted that this might be something the AFSAC would consider in the future as a marketing tool in terms of social agriculture.

Committee members were directed to visit the following link:

<http://delta.ca/environment-sustainability/agriculture/delta-farmers>

K. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee will be held on **February 5, 2016**, at 9:00 a.m. in **2E Community Meeting Room A**.

L. **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 Committee adjourned at 11:06 a.m.

  
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Jane Sullivan, City Clerk

  
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Councillor Mike Starchuk, Chair