

# *Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee Minutes*

**Present:**

Councillor Starchuk, Chair  
M. Bose, Vice-Chair  
D. Arnold  
G. Hahn  
H. Dhillon  
J. Sandhar  
P. Harrison  
S. VanKeulen

**Agency Representative:**

D. Geesing

**Regrets:**

J. Zelazny  
M. Hilmer  
B. Sandhu  
T. Pellett

**Staff Present:**

C. Lumsden, Planning & Development  
C. Stewart, Planning & Development  
J. Koch-Schulte, Planning & Development  
M. Kischnick, Planning & Development  
R. Dube, Engineering  
S. Godwin, Engineering  
C. Eagles, Legislative Services

**A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

1. The committee will be requested to pass a motion adopting the minutes of June 2, 2016.

It was

Moved by M. Bose

Seconded by G. Hahn

That the minutes of the Agriculture and

Food Security Advisory Committee meeting held June 2, 2016 be adopted as presented.

Carried

**B. DELEGATIONS**

1. **Surrey's Proposed Sensitive Ecosystem Protection Measures**  
Stephen Godwin, Environment Manager, Engineering and  
Carla Stewart, Senior Planner, Planning and Development

The following comments were made:

The City of Surrey has a large area of natural capital that includes forests, wetlands, and greenspaces that provides value to the City. The City has policies and a duty to manage safe conveyance of water within the watercourses and requires maintenance access to maintain these watercourses. The City's storm drain systems discharge into natural watercourses; thus, the City ensures their highest care to protecting our ecosystem. The liabilities to the protection of Surrey's ecosystem include:

- **Slope Stability, Erosion and Tree Failures:** The ditches and stream banks erode and often cause slope instability, causing tree failures and debris. When there are reduced setbacks for streams or narrow riparian areas, these worsen the erosion and undermining of trees, causing further tree failures.

- **Drainage Maintenance Access:** Safe drainage access is required for streamflow conveyance, City maintenance, and major and minor capital works. Access must be outside of the protected fisheries setback areas on geotechnically stable ground.
- **Hazard Tree Management:** Native trees grow taller than 30 metres and the width of many riparian areas are too narrow. Trees may fall across an entire riparian area targeting both sides of the greenspace.
- **Encroachments:** Small lots often encroach on adjacent riparian areas to obtain more usable yard space. Narrow riparian areas are often enveloped within the adjacent private property due to their apparent insignificance.
- **Invasive Plants:** Degraded sites are prime locations for invasive plants to grow. Narrow riparian areas do not allow for interior forest habitat and are more susceptible to invasive species invasion, which is costly to maintain.
- **Beavers:** Beavers are present throughout the City. Beavers will move into creeks and stop running water to create their own pond to defend off other predators. Their dams can raise water one metre in 24 hours above high water mark, which can cause flooding to adjacent homes and infrastructures and cause the City flooding liabilities. There is often not enough time for the City to respond to flooding.
- **Trails and Public Access:** Trails are not permitted within fisheries setback areas and do not allow for public access and use of riparian areas. The City faces difficulties if using setbacks only managed by the Riparian Areas Regulation (RAR).
- **Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (BCS) Wildlife Movement:** Riparian areas are natural dispersal corridors for wildlife. Narrow riparian areas reduce gravel recruitment necessary for salmon spawning and storm water conveyance measures. The wider the wildlife corridor is, the more functional and resilient it is. Over time, the City is acquiring the Green Infrastructure Network lands.
- **Species at Risk:** Federal and Provincial species at risk such as the Pacific Water Shrew, Salish Sucker, Oregon Forest Snail, and the Red-legged frog, are dependent on riparian areas. Under the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA), landowners must demonstrate effective protection; although, the *Act* does not give terms of reference as to what is effective protection of wildlife species.
- **Streamside Protection:** The Federal *Fisheries Act* and the Riparian Areas Regulation were using the same benchmark for protecting fish until 2013, when the *Fisheries Act* changed to "no serious harm to fish", resulting in no variances to the Riparian Areas Regulation.

- On March 31, 2006, under the Riparian Areas Regulations, Local Government must meet or beat the Riparian Areas Regulation requirements. Within the City of Surrey, as an interim process, a detailed Riparian Areas Regulation assessment with peer review was conducted. It focused on not causing harmful alteration damage destruction to fish habitat. This enables the City to demonstrate that the Riparian Areas Regulations are being adhered to.
- The Riparian Areas Regulation (RAR) implements the following measures to protect Streamside Protection and Enhancement Area: Such as hazardous trees, wind-throw, slope stability, protection of trees, preventing encroachment, erosion and sediment control, storm water management and floodplain concerns. The Riparian Areas Regulation only protects fish habitat and its setbacks are from high water mark (not top-of-bank) which may not get development out of the ravine. The RAR-only approach fails to consider other riparian and liability considerations that the City of Surrey has. It also delays the City's development approval process due to individual referrals of each value and liability to determine the ultimate streamside setback. Typically, the City requires a larger setback to protect Streamside Protection and Enhancement Area.
- Staff received direction from Council to develop a streamlined, transparent approval process while managing the City of Surrey's values and liabilities. This includes establishing a clear understanding of the required setbacks and a site development potential. The City would like to add Sensitive Ecosystem Development Permit Area Guidelines to fill the Official Community Plan (OCP) placeholder and protect the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Green Infrastructure Network habitat and Federal Species at Risk.
- The available protection options include the *Local Government Act*, Development Permit Areas and Zoning Bylaw, and/or the Community Charter Bylaws (create additional bylaws).

The Development Permit proposed for sensitive ecosystems has two Development Permit Areas:

#### Green Infrastructure Network (GIN)

- Defined by using information in the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy including the Green Infrastructure Network and used to identify the City's values and assets. It identifies corridors sites and hubs, and sets out requirements to manage biodiversity.

### Streamside

- Defined by stream types and classifications, determined by using zoning bylaw, and submitted and illustrated in a Development Permit Application as the *Streamside Protection Area*. A streamside setback area is determined by a Qualified Environmental Professional using the setbacks from the top of bank. Provided there is no loss in the total size of the streamside setback area, the minimum distance from the top of bank may be flexed or reduced by no more than 5 metres or 3 metres and increased by no more than 10 metres. This allows some modest flexibility in the setback area while protecting for the values associated with streamside areas.
- Development Variance Permits can request for proposed reductions to the *Streamside Protection Area* beyond the Zoning Bylaw setbacks and Flex Allowance. A Streamside Impact Mitigation Plan is required with a Development Variance Permit application. Under a Development Variance Permit application, Council is also involved, and it would require increased permit fees and additional time and costs in comparison if no Development Variance Permit is required.
- A comparison was completed with other local government municipalities on setbacks from watercourses. Surrey proposed setbacks are within those of other local governments in Metro Vancouver.
- The Tree Protection Bylaw and Soil Conservation and Protection Bylaw needs to adjust mapping to include Development Permit Application maps. For the Tree Bylaw amendments, it is proposed that penalty fees also need to be adjusted to include vegetated areas cleared and not just single tree within Development Permit Areas such as steep slope DPAs and Sensitive Ecosystem DPA's.

The next steps are to review stakeholder feedback and prepare a report to Council with recommendations to: Amend the OCP to add Sensitive Ecosystem Development Permit Areas, amend the Zoning Bylaw to include the Streamside Protection and to identify upcoming amendments to the Tree Protection Bylaw and Soil Conservation and Protection Bylaw and to adjust internal documents and finalize the internal process.

### C. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS

**D. NEW BUSINESS****1. Development Variance Permit 7916-0182-00**

Christopher Lumsden, Planning Technician

File: 6880-75; 7916-0182-00

The following comments were made:

- The subject property is 2.79 hectares (6.89 acres) in size and located at 16236 – 50 Avenue. The property is designated Agricultural in the Official Community Plan (OCP), zoned General Agriculture Zone (A-1), and located within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). The site currently produces carrots and is classified as farmland under the *Assessment Act*.
- The applicant is requesting to relax the required rear yard setback for a farm building, permitted under Section B.1 and B.9(C) in the General Agriculture Zone (A-1), from 15 metres (50 ft.) to 11.18 metres (37 ft.) to accommodate the construction of an addition to an existing farm building.
- The proposed addition is located in an area of the property already subject to the application of pre-fill soils from the construction of the existing farm building under Permit No. 11-024004. A 1,129 square metre (12,152 sq. ft.) farm accessory building, used for the bulk storage of carrots, was constructed on the site under Permit No. 13-022022-01.

Members have no issues with allowing the setback but would prefer to see the properties consolidated as it appears to be used as one.

It was

Moved by S. VanKeulen

Seconded by M. Bose

That the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee recommend to the General Manager of Planning and Development to support Development Application No. 7916-0182-00.

Carried**2. Development Variance Permit 7916-0155-00**

Christopher Lumsden, Planning Technician

File: 6880-75; 7916-0155-00

The following comments were made:

- The subject property is 8.05 hectares (19.88 acres) in size and is located at 9055 – 176 Street. The property is designated Agricultural in the Official Community Plan (OCP), zoned General Agriculture Zone (A-1), and located within the Agriculture Land Reserve (ALR). There are four existing farm buildings, a private gravel road connecting the farm building to 176 Street, and no existing house on the subject property. The site was previously used as a tree nursery but currently produces blueberries, and is classified as farmland under the *Assessment Act*.

- The applicant is requesting to vary the maximum allowable setback from the front lot line for a single family dwelling in the General Agriculture Zone (A-1) from 50 metres (164 ft.) to 176 metres (1,889 ft.). The applicant is also requesting to vary the maximum allowable depth of the farm residential footprint from the front lot line in the General Agriculture Zone (A-1) from 60 metres (197 ft.) to 176 metres (1,889 ft.).

It was Moved by S. VanKeulen  
 Seconded by M. Bose  
 That the Agriculture and Food Security  
 Advisory Committee recommend to the General Manager of Planning and  
 Development to support Development Application No. 7916-0155-00.  
Carried

### 3. Development Variance Permit 7916-0114-00

John Koch-Schulte, Planner

File: 6880-75; 7916-16-0114

The following comments were made:

- The subject property is 1.96 hectares (4.85 acres) in size and is located at 8366 – 192 Street. The property is designated Agricultural in the Official Community Plan (OCP), zoned General Agriculture Zone (A-1), and located within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). The site is classified as farmland under the *Assessment Act* and was recently used for horses.
- The applicant is requesting to vary the maximum allowable setback from the front lot line for a single family dwelling in the General Agriculture Zone (A-1) from 50 metres (164 ft.) to 100 metres (330 ft.). The applicant is also requesting to vary the maximum allowable depth of the farm residential footprint from the front lot line in the General Agriculture Zone (A-1) from 60 metres (197 ft.) to 110 metres (361 ft.).
- There is an existing dwelling and barn on the northwest portion of the subject property, which are proposed to be removed to facilitate construction of the dwelling and two septic fields. Three small shelters on the eastern portion of the site will be retained as chicken and goat shelters. The applicant proposes to raise chickens and goats on the eastern portion of the property.

It was Moved by H. Dhillon  
 Seconded by P. Harrison  
 That the Agriculture and Food Security  
 Advisory Committee recommend to the General Manager of Planning and  
 Development to support Development Application No. 7916-0114-00.  
Carried

*S. VanKeulen left the meeting at 10:45 a.m.*

4. **SILGA Resolution R15**  
Carla Stewart, Senior Planner

Staff provided members with a R15 *Meat to Table* (Clearwater) from the 2016 Safety and Environmental Resolutions by SILGA (Southern Interior Local Government Association). Staff are requesting AFSAC's general opinion on slaughter houses in the lower-mainland.

Committee members indicated that in general they support efforts that help small-scale producers but overall there should not be too many slaughter operations.

E. **ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL**

F. **CORRESPONDENCE**

G. **INFORMATION ITEMS**

H. **INTEGRITY OF THE AGRICULTURE LAND**

I. **OTHER BUSINESS**

1. **Verbal Updates**

J. **NEXT MEETING**


The next meeting of the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee will be held on Thursday, September 1, 2016, at 9:00 a.m. in 2E Community Room A.

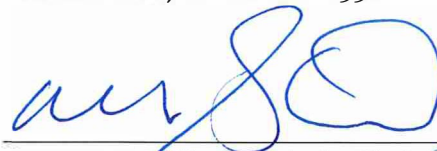
K. **ADJOURNMENT**

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 10:55 a.m.

  
Jane Sullivan, City Clerk

  
Councillor Mike Starchuk, Chair