

Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee - Minutes

2E - Community Room B
City Hall
13450 - 104 Avenue
Surrey, B.C.
THURSDAY, MAY 4, 2017
Time: 9:00 a.m.

Present:

Councillor Starchuk, Chair
M. Bose, Vice-Chair
B. Sandhu
G. Hahn
H. Dhillon
J. Zelazny
M. Hilmer
P. Harrison
R. Brar
S. VanKeulen

Agency Representative:

D. Geesing

Regrets:

D. Arnold
J. Sandhar
T. Pellet (non-voting agency
representative)

Staff Present:

C. Lumsden, Planning & Development
C. Stewart, Planning & Development
D. McLeod, Engineering
H. Chan, Planning & Development
M. Brown, Engineering
M. Kischnick, Planning & Development
R. Dube, Engineering
L. Blake, Legislative Services

A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. The minutes of the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee meeting, held April 6, 2017, to be adopted.

It was

Moved by M. Bose

Seconded by G. Hahn

That the minutes of the Agriculture and

Food Security Advisory Committee meeting held April 6, 2017, be amended to correct the first bullet point of Item D.1 on Page 3 to read as:

"Under Section 23(1) of the ALC Act, the restrictions on use of agricultural land in the ALR do not apply to land that, on December 21, 1972, was, by separate certificate of title issued under the Land Registry Act, R.S.B.C. 1960, c. 208, less than 2 acres in area. As per the regulation, the subject properties are exempt from the restrictions on uses in the ALR. The applicants have provided documentation supporting their claim which has been found acceptable by Planning Staff. However, the use of the land is still regulated by Surrey's A-1 Zone."

amended.

And that the minutes be adopted as

Carried

B. DELEGATIONS

C. STAFF PRESENTATIONS

1. **2016 Irrigation Season Progress Update**
File No. 4300-01

Staff provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the progress during the 2016 irrigation season, such as the establishment of the South Nicomekl Irrigation Stakeholder Committee. Staff is requesting feedback regarding improvements that can be made to the current irrigation water consumption report process. In response to questions from the Committee, staff provided the following information:

- Properties that were not included in the original Drainage and Irrigation Specified Area improvement bylaw could be added at a later date.
- Irrigation demand is related to rainfall amounts. During wetter years demand for irrigation is lower. During wetter years demand increases but river levels are lower which reduces the amount of water available for irrigation.
- Very few changes have occurred in the land use of the irrigation system area, therefore it is not anticipated that land use would be affecting water usage.
- The difference in the cost per acre is based on service areas. A larger area typically has a less expensive per acre service cost.
- The ditches located in the Erickson area are Class A fisheries watercourses, and have specific requirements for cleaning. Staff can investigate a cleaning schedule, although it may not be possible to clean the entire ditch in one year.
- The percentage of water used throughout the irrigation season is based on the amount that is available within the water license.
- Staff have not yet found a correlation between water use and the surrounding farms, such as the crops that are being grown. The irrigation areas are being monitored to determine any possible correlations.

Discussion ensued, and the Committee noted the following comments:

- The Erickson ditch requires cleaning.
- While the monthly updates indicating the amount of water consumption can be helpful, it may also cause customers to use more water than they may need, if there is a perception that the levels are low.
- Water consumption signage is a useful educational tool for customers who do not attend drainage or water use meetings.

The Committee requested that staff monitor the drawing of water from licensed versus unlicensed properties, especially during seasons of heavy water consumption.

D. NEW BUSINESS

E. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL

F. CORRESPONDENCE

G. INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee (ESAC) Update
File No. N/A (Verbal)

The Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee (ESAC) representative provided the following update:

- The Surrey Green City Award nomination form is now available online at: <https://www.surrey.ca/community/8995.aspx>
- The ESAC discussed the elimination of Styrofoam for serving food at public events, and a summary of Party for the Planet.
- ESAC members will be participating in a tour of the Organic Bio-Fuel Plant in Port Kells on May 9, 2017 at 3:00 p.m. AFSAC members who are interested in attending the tour can contact Councillor Starchuk for details.

2. Development Variance Permit No. 7917-0090-00
5253 – 168 Street
Christopher Lumsden, Planning Technician
File No. 6880-75

Staff summarized the report dated April 25, 2017, regarding a Development Variance Permit (DVP) that has been received to vary the minimum south side yard setback requirement of the A-1 Zone, to permit the construction of a farm structure (loading platform) on a lot located in the Agriculture Land Reserve (ALR).

In response to questions from the Committee, staff provided the following information:

- It is the current owner of the property who is seeking the DVP.
- The DVP pertains to an open loading platform. An enclosed platform would not be supported by staff.

- The existing structure is approximately 6,000 square feet.
- Should Council deny the DVP, the applicant would be required to remove the loading dock. It is anticipated that the applicant would submit a revised proposal.
- There are outstanding inspections remaining for the building, and the existing fill would have to be remediated prior to final approval for the building.

Discussion ensued, and the Committee noted the following comments:

- The required 50 metre setback is designed to reduce impact on neighbouring properties. All projects in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) should remain respectful of neighbouring properties.
- The applicant appears to amend plans frequently, and not all amendments seem to be consistent with the proposed vision for the farming operation.
- Concerns were expressed for the percentage of the lot that has been covered in structures. The size of the buildings is incongruent with the size of the land or the farm's operation.
- Concerns were expressed regarding the waste water the structure could emit, and the potential impacts the waste water could have on neighbouring properties.
- The business plan has been poorly presented and it appears that the business needs do not exist to support the application.

It was

Moved by M. Bose

Seconded by G. Hahn

That the Agriculture and Food Security

Advisory Committee recommend to the General Manager of Planning and Development to deny Development Variance Permit No. 7917-0106-00 for 5253 - 168 Street.

Carried

3. **Project No. 7916-0711-00**
Helen Chan, Planner
File No. 6880-75

Staff summarized the report dated April 25, 2017, advising that the applicant is seeking comments and input with respect to proposed variances in the A-1 Zone for a single family dwelling with respect to the farm residential footprint, setbacks and building height. Staff highlighted and provided additional information for consideration by the Committee:

- The proposed variances are for a lot that is not yet in existence and will be created upon successful subdivision of an existing application.

- Staff's calculation of the area of the farm residential footprint is significantly larger than the applicant's calculation.
- J & L Beef and Sunrise Poultry, which process meat without having live animals on site, is located on the adjacent property to the south.

In response to questions from the Committee, staff provided the following information:

- It is not clear if the neighbouring property has a Metro Vancouver Air Quality certificate.
- Staff do not anticipate that the rear and north side yards could be farmed, and therefore should be included in the home plate.
- The "Farm Residential Footprint" calculation includes: driveways and residential related landscaping directly adjacent to the footprint of a residential dwelling.
- The Ministry of Agriculture September 2011 "Ministry of Agriculture discussion paper regarding Residential Uses in the ALR" provides Local Governments circumstances when setback variances to the siting of the farm residential footprint may or may not have merit as part of Appendix A, as incorporated in the Ministry's Guide for Bylaw Development in Farming Areas. The circumstances where variance may have merit generally address unique lot constraint situations, such as:
 - Clustering of farm residential use(s) with farm buildings;
 - Septic disposal system location;
 - Panhandle' lots;
 - Easements, steep slopes, or watercourse constraints;
 - Floodplain or other hazardous area constraints; and,
 - Parcels with private roads.

Staff indicated that: Part 2 – Section 7.1 of the 'Ministry Discussion Paper on Residential Uses in the ALR', outlines that:

"The siting of residential uses on agricultural land can negatively affect long-term agricultural potential. Residential uses can alienate arable land, and can restrict the placement of future farm buildings, confined livestock areas, and make the cropping and the utilization of machinery more difficult and inefficient. This can make it more difficult and often more expensive for existing and future farmers to expand their operations." For instance, a residence placed at the rear of the lot may not be justified based on adjacent farm use and could for instance prevent propane cannons from

being used to protect the blueberries on the surrounding lots, (which require a 200 meter separation distance to residences).

Discussion ensued, and the Committee noted the following comments:

- The requested height variance is not of concern to the AFSAC.
- It is not anticipated that the increased distance from the meat processing plant would decrease odour impacts on the residential structure; however, implementing the house at the furthest point from the meat processing plant could reduce the perception of odors. Furthermore, siting the house at the rear of the property, in the middle of surrounding farmland, could incur further nuisances from farming activity both in terms of smells and standard farm practices such as blueberry cannons.
- Relocating the house due to the presence of the meat processing plant may not be an acceptable circumstance, as the owner of the property should have been aware of the presence of the plant prior to purchasing the property.
- Implementing the house in the proposed location could have a negative impact on the usability of the farmland, as the grouping of residents along roads helps to discourage the spread of large residences into surrounding agricultural areas.
- The residential footprint requirements for the property should be enforced.
- It was suggested that the driveway would likely not be used for farm use because of the impact of heavy machinery on the driveway, and should be included in the footprint requirement as is indicated in the Zoning Bylaw definition of Farm Residential Footprint.
- There are no physical constraints that would not allow the house to be implemented in the most appropriate location. Siting the house on the east property line would be a more favourable proposal.
- The proposal appears to be a residential plan first, with agriculture as a second use for the property.

It was

Moved by M. Bose

Seconded by P. Harrison

That the Agriculture and Food Security

Advisory Committee recommend to the General Manager of Planning and Development to deny the variances requested for Project No. 7916-0711-00 located at 6629 - 176 Street.

Carried

with H. Dhillon opposed

4. **Road Dedication on 52 Street from 7929 – 152 Street in the ALR (On-Table)**
 Team Lead, Capital Planning & Programming
 File No. 6880-75

Staff summarized the on-table report dated May 3, 2017, advising that staff is seeking the Committee's comments related to the road dedication requirements along 152 Street triggered by this development application. The City must apply to the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) for Transportation/Utility Non-Farm Use in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) for road dedication from 7929 152 Street (Guildford Golf and Country Club). This dedication will provide the ultimate 30 metre wide Arterial road section from the current 27 metre road at no cost to the City.

In response to questions from the Committee, staff provided the following information:

- The proposed location for the bus stop was selected because Coast Mountain Bus Company generally implements bus stops on the far side of an intersection, and not on steep grades.
- The new traffic signal will not be located at 80th Avenue due to the steep grade.
- The proposed dedication would be outside of the existing fence line at Guildford Golf Course located at 7929 152nd Street.
- A left-hand turn lane could be implemented at a later date, especially if the land returns to agricultural use.

The Committee noted that the dedication could remove agricultural land from the Agricultural Land Reserve, with no benefits provided to agriculture. It was suggested that the City could invest the equivalent value of the land and invest that into agriculture.

Staff noted that the dedication requirement is mostly required for ultimate grading and is beyond the current fence line.

It was

Moved by M. Bose
 Seconded by B. Sandhu
 That the Agriculture and Food Security

Advisory Committee recommend that Council refer Application No. 7914-0011-00 to the Land Commission for approval.

Carried

H. INTEGRITY OF THE AGRICULTURE LAND

I. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Verbal Updates

D. Geesing advised that Climate Leadership Funds have become available, and could be utilized for a workshop.

J. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee will be held on Thursday, June 1, 2017, at 9:00 a.m. in 2E Community Room B.

K. ADJOURNMENT

It was

Moved by M. Bose


Seconded by J. Zelazny

That the Agriculture and Food Security

Advisory Committee meeting do now adjourn.

Carried

The Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee adjourned at 11:06 a.m.



Jane Sullivan, City Clerk



Councillor Mike Starchuk, Chair