



City of Richmond
Urban Development Division

Report to Committee

To: Planning Committee

to Planning - June 21, 2005.
Date: May 27, 2005

From: Holger Burke
Acting Director of Development

File: AG 04-286476

RE: AGRICULTURAL LAND RESERVE APPEAL APPLICATION BY LITT FARMS LTD. FOR SUBDIVISION AT 14420 CAMBIE ROAD

Staff Recommendation

That authorization for Litt Farms Ltd. to apply to the Agricultural Land Commission for Subdivision of 14420 Cambie Road, be denied.

Holger Burke
Acting Director of Development

HB:jl
Att. 4

FOR ORIGINATING DIVISION USE ONLY
CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER <i>ACT</i>

Staff Report

Origin

Litt Farms Ltd. has made an Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) Application for Subdivision of 14420 Cambie Road (**Attachment 1**). The property owner wishes to create two equal-sized lots that may be transferred to two family members. The proposed subdivision is illustrated in **Attachment 2**.

Findings Of Fact

Item	Existing	Proposed
Owner	Litt Farms Ltd.	No change
Applicant	Litt Farms Ltd.	No change
Site Size	29.8 ha (73.6 acres)	Subdivision into two 14.9 ha (36.8 acres) lots
Land Uses	Agricultural	No change
OCP Designation	Agricultural	No change
ALR Designation	In the ALR	No change
Zoning	AG1	No change
Heritage	The north portion of the property is a "Heritage Archeological Site"	No change

Site Context

The site context is as follows:

North and East:	Agricultural lands (zoned AG1)
South:	Highway 91 and Green Acres Golf Course (zoned AG2)
West:	Mikasa Golf Centre (zoned AG2) and Agricultural land (zoned AG1)

Related Policies & Studies

Zoning Bylaw

The Zoning Bylaw specifies that the minimum lot size for the AG1 zone is 2 ha (4.9 acres).

Agricultural Viability Strategy

The City's Agricultural Viability Strategy (AVS), adopted in 2003, contains policies and objectives to minimize subdivision within the ALR on the premise that agricultural viability is jeopardized as lot sizes become smaller. If subdivision is considered, there should be a benefit to agriculture (e.g. diversification, expansion, etc.).

Staff Comments

The proposal is contrary to policies in the AVS that encourage retention of large farm parcels to maintain agricultural viability.

Agricultural Advisory Committee Comments

The application was presented to the Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) on May 12, 2005. The AAC was divided on the application, noting the following:

- For field crops, it is more desirable to farm larger parcels of land;
- Larger parcels may be farmed more efficiently due to less infrastructure and capital costs;
- Smaller parcels may, however, offer more diversity and opportunity for the average farmer because land costs are high;
- If one of the sons does not want to farm his property, he may request to subdivide the property further or sell it to someone (e.g. a speculator) who also will not farm the property; and
- It is common for properties to have joint names on title; subdivision should not be used as a way of settling family estates.

The AAC passed the following resolution, with 4 members in favour, 1 opposed, and 1 abstained:

"That 14420 Cambie Road remain as one parcel."

Analysis

The property owner has owned the property since 1981 and currently farms the property for blueberries, corn and other ground crops. The purpose of the proposed subdivision is to create two equal-sized parcels that may be transferred to two sons. A letter from the applicant outlining their plan is included in **Attachment 3**. It is noted that one son would continue to farm his share of property, while it appears that the other son would not be keen to farm.

In 1992, an application was made by the property owner to subdivide the property for the same purposes (to give the newly created properties to the two sons). The Report to Council that was presented in 1992 is included as **Attachment 4**. The application was denied by Council at that time.

Staff and the AAC are sympathetic to the desire for the farmer to subdivide his parcel and bequeath each half to his two sons. However, the following issues are noted:

- Subdivision is generally not supported in the ALR as current policies encourage keeping existing farm parcels in larger formats to maintain agricultural and economic viability;
- This current application does not differ in intent from the application that was denied in 1992. The owner still wishes to create two parcels of lands for his sons;
- There are no demonstrated benefits to agriculture in this application, as one half will likely be farmed but the future of the other half is uncertain; and
- Approval of a subdivision application will set a precedent and lead to more future requests of subdivision of other parcels in the ALR.

Role of the Agricultural Land Commission

Should Council approve this application, Staff will forward the application to the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC). ALC Staff will then review the application and formulate a recommendation for consideration by the 3-member ALC Lower Mainland Panel. The subdivision of the lot will only occur once the Panel grants approval.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

The application is contrary to the City's policies that do not support subdivision of land in the ALR unless there is a benefit to agriculture.

In order to maintain the integrity of the ALR, it is recommended that this application be denied.

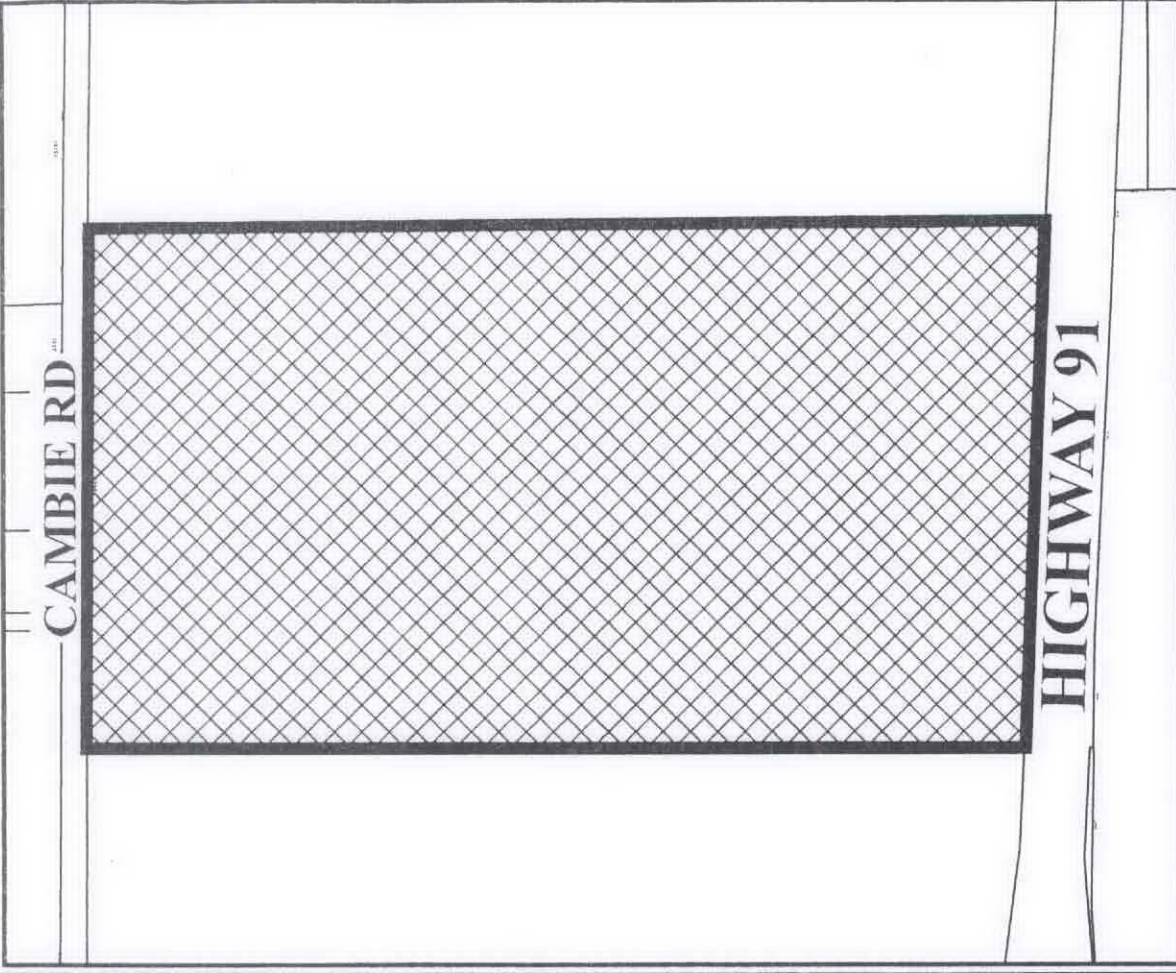


Janet Lee
Planner 2

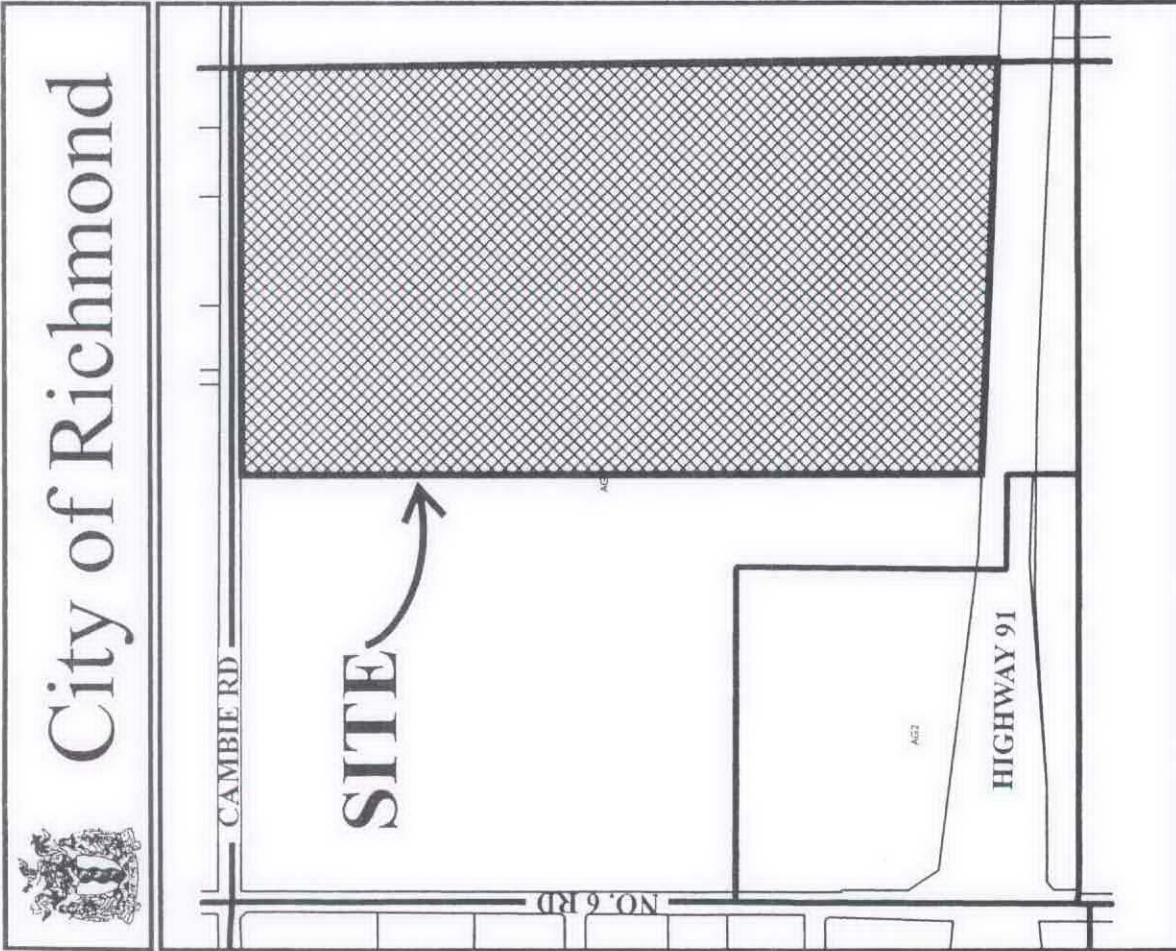
JL:cas

List of Attachments:

- Attachment 1: Location Map
- Attachment 2: Sketch of Proposed Subdivision
- Attachment 3: Letter from Applicant
- Attachment 4: Report to Council dated February 17, 1992

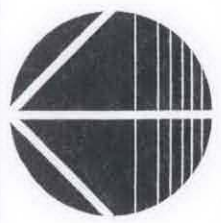


Original Date: 11/29/04
 Revision Date:
 Note: Dimensions are in METRES



AG 04-286476

City of Richmond



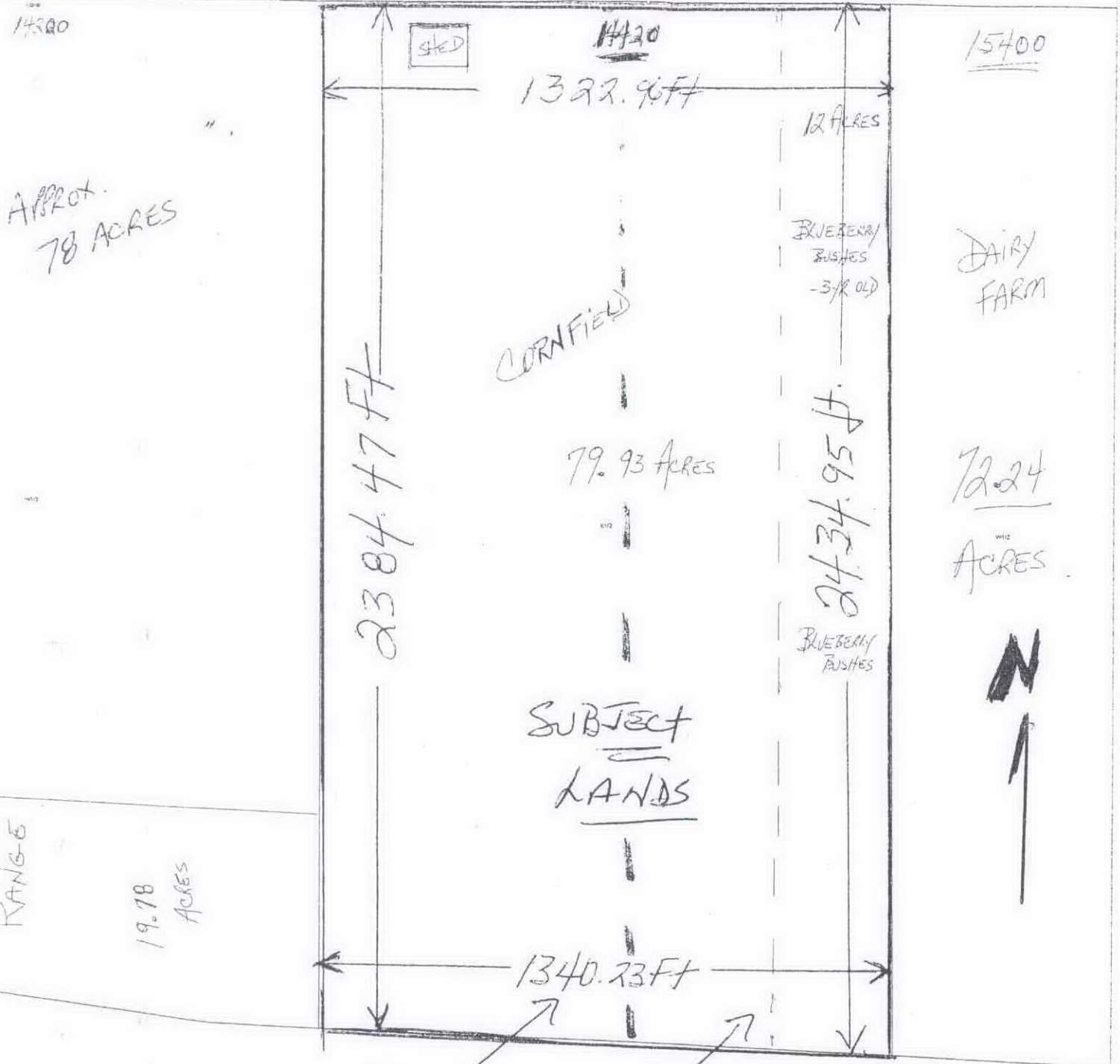
ONING MAP
33-5-5

2.59
ACRES
HOUSE +
FIELD

3A
MIXED
FARM

40.47 ACRES
DAIRY FARM
15191

CAMBIE RD



APPROX.
78 ACRES

RANGE
19.18
ACRES

COURSE
81.70
ACRES

CORNFIELD

79.93 ACRES

SUBJECT
LANDS

BLUEBERRY
BUSHES
- 3/4 OLD

DAIRY
FARM

72.24
ACRES

BLUEBERRY
BUSHES



HIGHWAY 91

PURPOSE: DIVIDE INTO
2 EQUAL SIZED
PARCELS

FILE COPY
AG 04-286496

To:
Agriculture Land Commission
Rm#133-4940 Canada Way
Burnaby, BC.

From:
Litt Farms Ltd.

Subject:
Sub – Division
14420 Cambie Rd.
Richmond, BC
73.933 Acres

Dear Sirs:

Please find attached application to sub – divide subject lands into two (2) equal parcels within the A.L.R. (approx. 39 acres each). No other changes are contemplated.

Background

Lands were acquired in May, 1981 by Nahar and his wife Nihal Litt. Lands were farmed periodically and presently approx. 12 acres is in 2-5 yr blueberry bushes and the remaining leased out annually. Lessor currently has been growing corn silage. Old house on the property burned down several years ago.

Principals of the Company, Nahar (77 yrs old) and Nihal Litt (78 yrs old) are retired. Mr. and Mrs. Litt have two sons who will inherit the lands upon the principals demise. Son, Kasar Litt (50 yrs old) is presently farming the blueberries and would like to increase his farming activities, by growing other cash crops, broccoli, brussel sprouts etc. but is restrained by his brother Terry Litt (48 yrs old), who is not interested in any farming activity whatsoever. In fact as both are to inherit the total parcel, Terry is restricting Kasar from increasing his farming activities until the issue of who gets what is decided legally.

Surrounding Properties

East: 15400 Cambie Rd. – 72.24 acres, Dairy Farm

South: Hwy. #91 – Beyond Hwy. #91, Greenacres Golf Course

West: 14200 Cambie Rd.- approx. 78 acres parcel.

- 19 acres - Golf Driving Range
- 3 acres – Greenhouse Nursery
- 56 acres – Farming / Fallow Land

North: 15191 Cambie Rd. – 40.47 acres, Dairy Farm

14731 Cambie Rd. – 3 acres , Mixed Farming

14551 Cambie Rd. – 2.59 acres, Nice house and green field



ENTERED

Benefit to A.L.R.

Increased productive agricultural activity on at least half of the lands. The other half to be leased out for periodic farming activity.

Benefit to Family

As concerned Indo – Canadian parents, the future of the lands is legally settled.

Please direct all communication to our daughter and son-in-law, Lakhvir and Mohinder Grewal (fluent in English) as our agent – Authorization form attached.

Awaiting your favourable reply.

Sincerely Yours,
Litt Farms Ltd.

Nahar Singh LITT
Nahar S. Litt

NIHAL K. LITT
Nihal Litt

Enclosures

- Application by Land Owner
- Zoning Map – 33-5-5
- Aerial Photograph
- Tax Report – Surrounding Properties
- B.C. Company Summary
- Title Search – Subject Property
- \$600 – Application Fee

CITY OF RICHMOND
REPORT TO COMMITTEE

DATE: February 17, 1992
TO: Planning and Development Services Committee
FROM: " , David McLellan
Manager - Urban Development
RE: APPLICATION BY NAHAR S. LITT FOR A LAND COMMISSION APPEAL
(SUBDIVISION) AT 14420 CAMBIE ROAD
FILE: LCA 92-026

(037)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That Nahar S. Litt not be authorized to apply to the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission for permission to subdivide 14420 Cambie Road.

ENDORSED BY
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE
ON March 12, 1992 (RTC# 054)
OPPOSED BY none

STAFF REPORT

February 17, 1992

- 2 -

LCA 92-026

BACKGROUND

The subject 29 ha (73 ac.) site is located on the south side of Cambie Road, just east of No. 6 Road.

The proposal is to subdivide the site in half in order that the owner can give a lot to each of his two sons.

FINDINGS OF FACT

The site is in the East Richmond Plan Area and is designated for Agricultural use.

The site is being used as a strawberry farm.

Adjacent land uses include:

To the north, farm land;

To the east, farm land;

To the south, Highway 91; and

To the west, farm land and a golf driving range.

STAFF COMMENTS

None of the other Departments contacted object to this application.

ANALYSIS

The Land Commission Act does not specify a minimum lot size for farm lands in the Agricultural Land Reserve, but it seems prudent to keep farm parcels as large as possible in order to enhance farm viability. Subdivision should be supported only when valid mitigating circumstances exist.

The applicant wishes to subdivide his farm property in order to give a lot to each of his two sons. This is not a defensible reason from a farm land protection perspective.

There are no technical concerns with this application.

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CONCLUSIONS

Staff cannot support this proposal for subdivision.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Undetermined.



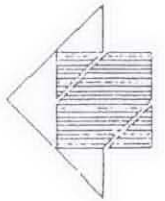
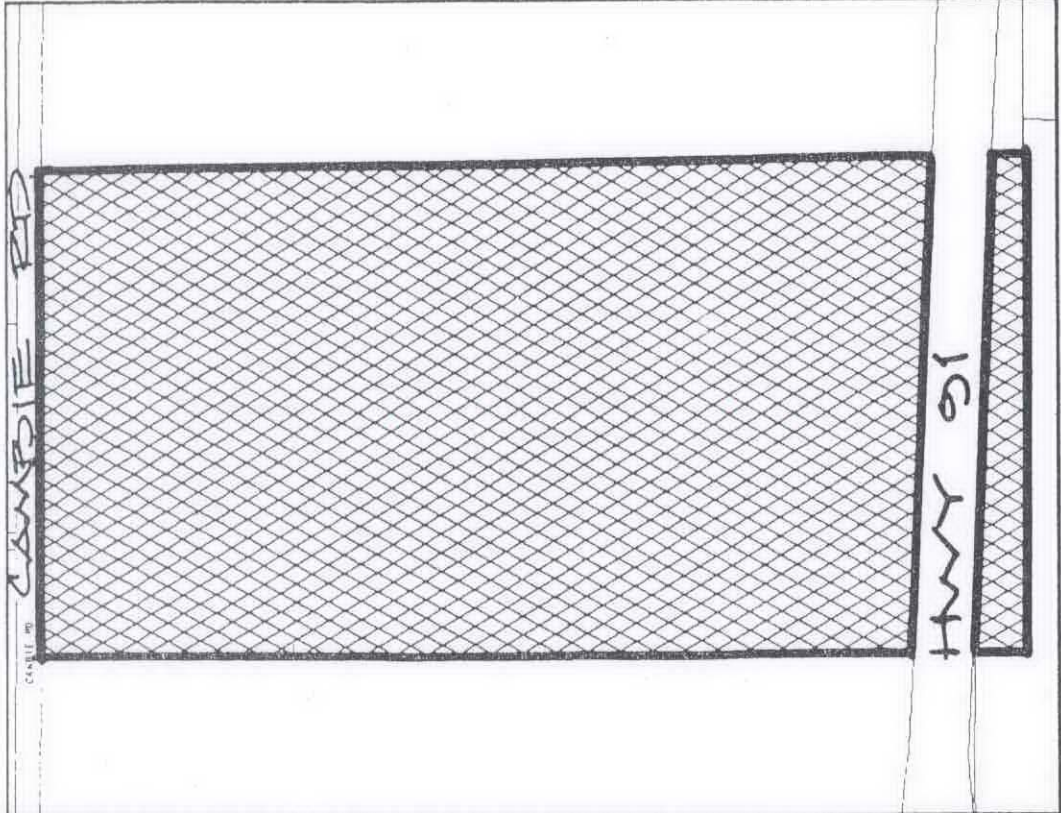
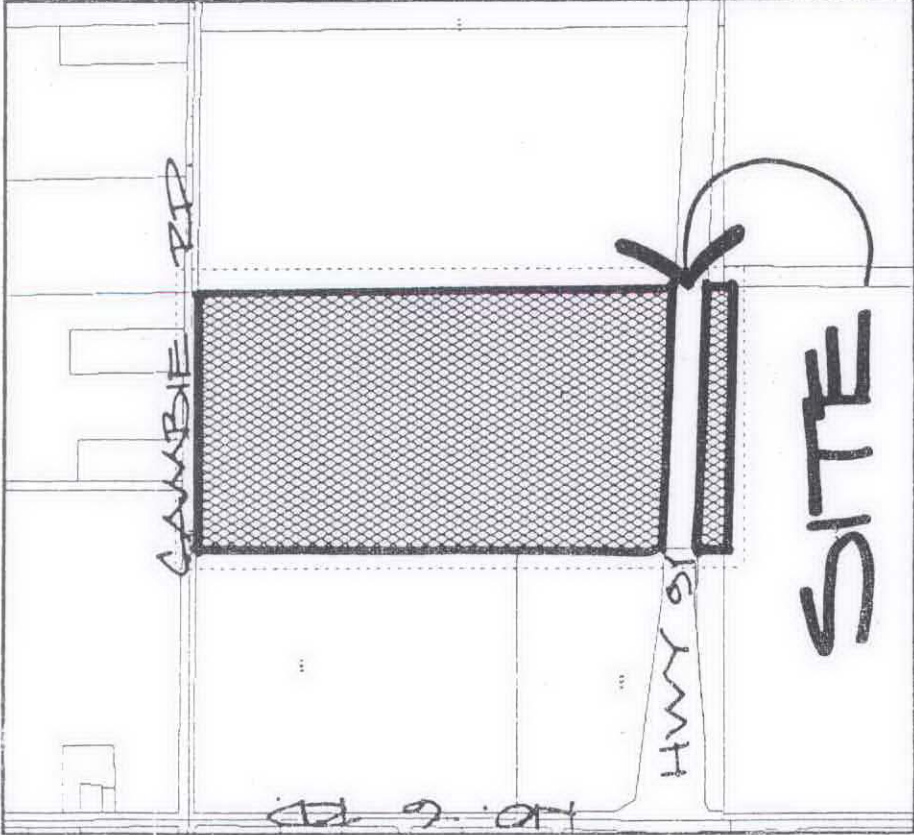
David McLellan
Manager - Urban Development

IC/tw

4254K



City of Richmond



LCA 92-026

Original Date: 01/30/92

Revision Date:

NOTE: All Dimensions are in METRES