



To: Richmond City Council
From: Councillor Harold Steves
Planning Committee
Re: **AGRICULTURAL GOODS PRODUCED PER YEAR ON RICHMOND FARMLAND**

Date: October 17, 2007
File: 03-0925-09-01/2007-
Vol 01

The Planning Committee, at its meeting held on Tuesday, October 16, 2007, considered the attached letter, and recommends as follows:

Committee Recommendation

That:

- (1) *a letter be written to the Minister responsible, the Hon. Rick Thorpe, Ministry of Small Business and Revenue, over the Mayor's signature:*
 - (a) *indicating the City's support for small farms;*
 - (b) *requesting clarification of the issue of the farm status evaluation criteria;*
 - (c) *requesting information regarding fairness when considering larger and smaller farm holdings;*
 - (d) *recognizing that urban agriculture is viable and is a significant contributor to the economy;*
 - (e) *providing information on the number of properties, both small and large, in the City that maintain farm status;*
 - (f) *questioning the basis by which B.C. Assessment discerns the monetary value of farm production;*
- (2) *a copy of the letter be forwarded to all B.C. MLAs, including Hon. Linda Reid, John Yap, and Hon. Olga Ilich, MLA, requesting their support, and asking each MLA to bring the letter forward to appropriate Ministries; and*
- (3) *a copy of the letter be forwarded to Marilyn Sanborn, Senior Appraiser, at B.C. Assessment – Abbotsford Branch.*

Councillor Harold Steves, Chair
Planning Committee

Attach.

TO: MAYOR & COUNCIL
 FROM: CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

Re: Joe Ereeg for information

		INT
	DW	
✓	GJ	<i>[Signature]</i>
	KY	
	DB	
	WB	

September 23, 2007

Oct 5/07 BS

Dear Mayor Malcolm Brodie & City of Richmond Councilors,

0925-09-01

In 1988 our family (Stan and Janice Bourne and 4 sons) moved to Richmond and happily settled into our home at 8480 Garden City Road. As time went on our property taxes reached a level we could not afford. After 8 eventful years our family relocated to 660 NO. 6 Road. The main reason we chose this location was the fact it was in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). We felt if we could secure farm status, then we would never be taxed out of our home. Farm status was granted on our property in 1996. For the past 11 years we have complied with the regulations that enabled us to maintain our farm status through our egg laying chickens.

The B.C. Assessment Authority came to inspect our farm this spring. We were given every indication from Marilyn Sanborn that we were complying with their regulations. On July 17, 2007 a letter arrived at our door from the BC Assessment Authority informing us that in order to keep our farm status we are being required to now produce \$10,000.00 worth of agricultural goods per year rather than the precious \$2,500.00 for one year. From what was explained to us, it seems it is not that your own 2 acres it has to be 2 acres in production to qualify for the \$2500.00. If you do not have the 2 acres in production you must make \$10,000.00. One suggestion to qualify is to allow the chickens to roam free all over our property, if we did this we would not have any chickens with the large coyote population in our area. Before we fenced a large area for the chickens the coyotes were killing up to 12 per night, at \$6.95 per bird, this is not an option.

If one had a suspicious side to their nature you might wonder if there was a 'hidden agenda' at work in regard to small farms in our province. We would appreciate it if you could look into this situation and help us resolve our dilemma. The farm status issue is not unique to our property and is happening to many of our neighbors as well. You want us to stay farm and stay in the ALR but it is becoming more and more difficult to be a farm. Your catch phrase, 'Richmond Garden City by Nature' does not seem to ring true on our cases. You and your council have publicly stated your support of free range eggs for Richmond. We could use your support, and would welcome anyone to come to our farm and see some truly happy chickens.

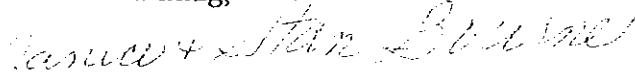


Would Councilor Steves please put on us the Planning Committee agenda?

We are currently circulating a petition to our valued customers to enlist their support and will forward all signed petitions to your attention.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter, I look forward to your response.

Yours in farming,



Stan and Janice Bourne
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Richmond BC V6W 1C8
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Email: jbourne@shaw.ca

cc: Harold Steves
cc: Linda Reid, M.P.