

Report to Committee

Re:	Application by Thrangu Monastery for an Agricultural Land Reserve Non-Farm			
From:	Wayne Craig Director of Development	File:	AG 16-745803	
То:	Planning Committee	Date:	June 27, 2017	

Staff Recommendation

Use at 8160 No. 5 Road

That authorization for Thrangu Monastery to make a non-farm use application to the Agricultural Land Commission to allow for a non-farm use at the westerly 110 m of 8160 No. 5 Road for religious statues and an accessory parking lot be approved.

Wayne Craig) Director of Development

WC:acr Att. 9

REPORT CONCURRENCE
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Staff Report

Origin

Thrangu Monastery Association has applied to the City of Richmond for permission to apply to the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) for a non-farm use for the property at 8160 No. 5 Road (Attachment 1). Thrangu Monastery currently also owns the adjacent property to the north (8140 No. 5 Road) where the temple is located. Both properties are located in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). The purpose of this application is to rezone the front westerly 110 m portion from "Agriculture (AG1)" to "Assembly (ASY)" and to maintain the remaining easterly portion as "Agriculture (AG1)". The rezoning would allow the Monastery to add landscaping and religious statues that are accessory to the monastery building on the adjacent site, to construct a produce stand to sell products grown on the property, to formalize the existing overflow parking lot, and to continue farming at the rear. This non-farm use application would also facilitate the consolidation of the properties at 8160 and 8140 No. 5 Road as shown in Attachment 2.

The current ALR non-farm use application is the first process required for this proposal, which requires endorsement by City Council before it is forwarded to the ALC for their consideration. If the application is approved by Council and the ALC, the applicant may apply for a rezoning application. If the owners decide to change the use on the property including an addition to the existing monastery or the construction of another building, another non-farm use application will be required, which must comply with the Richmond Zoning Bylaw including parking and loading requirements. The new application will again be reviewed by staff and the Agricultural Advisory Committee, and must be endorsed by City Council before ALC decision.

Findings of Fact

The subject property at 8160 No. 5 Road has an area of 1.0 ha. The westerly 4,207.5 m² is proposed to be rezoned to "Assembly (ASY)" and the remaining 5,592.5 m² is to remain as "Agriculture (AG1)". A Development Application Data Sheet providing details about the development proposal is contained in Attachment 3.

Previous Non-Farm Use Approval

Thrangu Monastery Association submitted a previous application (AG 13-629877) that was endorsed by City Council in December 2013 for the subject site at 8160 No. 5 Road. The application was for a similar non-farm use to allow for the westerly 93 m to be used for an educational institution (Montessori farm school), outdoor religious statue displays and on-site parking, and for the consolidation of 8140 and 8160 No. 5 Road. This ALC application was withdrawn in March 2015 because the applicant no longer wished to include the school. No decision was made by the ALC.

Current Uses

The westerly 50 m portion of the subject property consists of an existing paved area, which is used as an informal overflow parking for the adjacent monastery on special occasions as well as

for special events occurring at neighbouring institutions. A farm building (barn) and a shed are located behind the paved area to support agricultural activities and storage.

In accordance with a farm plan (Attachment 4) that was developed in 2013, the project agrologist has confirmed that this farm plan has since been implemented. Six greenhouses were upgraded and are being used for the cultivation of fruit, vegetable and flowers. A mixed fruit-tree orchard is also maintained on the easterly portions of both properties. A full-time gardener has been responsible for all farm-activity for the past two years with assistance from congregation volunteers.

Proposal

As part of the non-farm use application, the applicant proposes to beautify the front 110 m of the property with landscaping and a display of eight (8) religious statues known as stupas at a height of 3.91 m, and to construct a one-storey building for selling produce grown on the site and seed germination with an area of 53.5 m^2 as shown in Attachment 5. The Association is also proposing to develop an accessory parking lot with 54 spaces, which includes the required five (5) parking spaces for the roadside stand and the other 49 spaces will supply sufficient parking stalls for overflow parking for large monastery events and special events at adjacent community institutions. The existing barn will remain on the property and the small shed will be removed.

At 8140 No. 5 Road, the Thrangu Monastery is located within the front 110 m of the parcel, which is currently zoned "Assembly (ASY)". The remaining "backlands" portion of the site is being farmed and is currently zoned "Agriculture (AG1)". Thrangu Monastery has been implementing the farm plan that was required when the front portion of the site was rezoned to ASY (RZ 04-279819). The proposed consolidation of 8140 and 8160 No. 5 Road will result in a total area of 1.91 ha with 1.1 ha dedicated to agricultural use and 0.81 ha to institutional use.

The property at 8160 No. 5 Road was acquired by Thrangu Monastery Association to facilitate future expansion of the monastery; however, this remains a long-term objective and no proposals for temple expansion have been made to the City.

Required Processes

This non-farm use application requires the approval of both City Council and the ALC prior to consideration of other City approvals such as rezoning and building permits. If rezoning approval is granted, the Monastery may deposit plans at the Land Title Office for consolidation of the two properties.

Surrounding Development

The subject site is surrounded by properties contained in the ALR:

To the North: 8140 No. 5 Road, with an existing monastery (also owned by Thrangu Monastery) and parking on the westerly portion of the site, and a fruit orchard on the remaining portion on a split zoned parcel To the East: BC Muslim Association zoned "Assembly (ASY)"

To the South: Vedic Cultural Society of BC zoned "Assembly (ASY)" on the westerly 91.44 m portion and Agriculture (AG1)" on the remaining portion.

To the West: Across No. 5 Road, AG1 zoned properties in the ALR

Related Policies & Studies

2041 Official Community (OCP)

A portion of the subject site is designated for "Agriculture" in the 2041 Official Community Plan (OCP), which permits primarily farming, food production and supporting activities, including those activities permitted in the ALR. The other portion is designated for "Community Institutional", which is intended for institutions engaged in religious, educational or cultural activities, and may include other uses as permitted under Official Community Plan policies.

The proposal is consistent with the East Richmond McLennan Sub-Area Plan, which designates the front portion of the site as "Agriculture" to preserve the agricultural lands in the area, and the rear portion of the site as "Agricultural, Institutional, and Public" to establish community facilities and services in the area.

No. 5 Road Backlands Policy

The subject site is located in the No. 5 Road Backlands Policy Area as shown in Attachment 6. The City of Richmond Policy is supported by the ALC and allows for Community Institutional uses on the westerly 110 m ("Frontlands") of the properties located on the east side of No. 5 Road between Blundell Road and Steveston Highway (the area outlined in bold lines on the No. 5 Road Backlands Policy Area Map), if the remaining portions ("Backlands") are actively farmed. The proposed non-farm use application outlined in this report complies with this Policy.

Richmond Agricultural Viability Strategy

The Agricultural Viability Strategy (AVS) was developed in partnership with the Richmond Farmers Institute to establish a long-range strategy for improving the viability of farmlands within the City. One of the objectives of the AVS is to maximize the agricultural land available for agricultural production including lands within the No. 5 Road Backlands Policy Area. To achieve this, the Strategy recommends reviewing the feasibility of amalgamating smaller lots to larger ones wherever possible as consolidated farm parcels could be farmed by the owners, sold as farmland or leased to farmers in the future. The proposed non-farm use includes the consolidation of parcels.

Flood Plain Designation and Protection Bylaw 8004

In accordance with the City's Flood Plain Designation and Protection Bylaw 8204, a flood plain covenant identifying a minimum flood construction level of 2.6 m was secured and registered on

title in 2007 for the property at 8140 No. 5 Road as required under RZ 04-279819. Once the properties are consolidated, this covenant will also apply to 8160 No. 5 Road.

Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) Advice

The proposed non-farm use was reviewed by the City's Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC), who asked about potential drainage impacts to the agricultural lands resulting from the proposed paving at the front of the property. The AAC approved the following motion (Attachment 7 – Excerpt of November 2, 2016 AAC draft meeting minutes):

The AAC supports the proposal subject to ensuring that a drainage plan is implemented for the agricultural portion of the site, as approved by the City.

In response to the AAC's comment regarding a drainage plan for the agricultural portion of the property, the project agrologist has provided a memo to staff to confirm that the current drainage is appropriate for agriculture as described in previous farm plans and that the addition of a drain line to No. 5 Road is not necessary (Attachment 8).

Analysis

Zoning – Agricultural (AG1) and Assembly (ASY)

The property at 8160 No. 5 Road is currently zoned Agriculture (AG1). The AG1 zone does not allow for community institutional uses. If the non-farm use application is approved by City Council and the Agricultural Land Commission, the applicant will submit an application to rezone the westerly 110 m portion of the site to the "Assembly (ASY)" zone to allow for the proposed community institutional use of the garden and statuary, and permit the farm stand on a site-specific basis and further secured through a legal agreement.

The applicant is aware that no buildings or structures, except those approved within this application and as shown on Attachment 5, will be permitted until Council adopts a bylaw to rezone the front portion of the property to the "Assembly - ASY" Zone is completed. Should the applicant wish to further develop the property with additional institutional uses or structures other than currently proposed, a second non-farm use application would be required.

Farm Consolidation

The Backlands Policy encourages the consolidation of the parcels within the Policy area to increase farming viability by providing options for larger-scale agricultural operations. The proposed consolidation would benefit overall farming operations on both properties including irrigation improvements and resulting reduction of overall operation costs. No unified or permanent irrigation system currently exists for the orchards and greenhouses on the properties. Outdoor water taps have been built on 8140 No. 5 Road, but it is not financially feasible for the Association to build taps connecting to the City's water supply at 8160 No. 5 Road. With the proposed consolidation, the Monastery will install irrigation pipes for a unified irrigation system between the two properties.

Larger farm parcels provide more options for agricultural activities and may increase the profitability of farm operations.

Farm Access Road

The No. 5 Road Backlands Policy requires that when considering development proposals for ALR non-farm use and rezoning applications in the No. 5 Road Backlands Policy area, the City requires the applicant to register a statutory right-of-way on title for a future farm access road along the eastern edge of the property along the Backlands, to the satisfaction of the Director of Development. The future farm access road would facilitate connections between the agricultural backland portions of properties within the policy area. The applicant will provide a 4 m right-of-way along the eastern edge of 8140 and 8160 No. 5 Road as shown on the preliminary consolidation plan (Attachment 2), as a condition of the future rezoning.

Adjacency and Streetscape

The applicant proposes a 3 m landscape buffer between the proposed Assembly (ASY) zone and Agriculture (AG1) zone on the non-agricultural land similar to the existing buffer at 8160 No. 5 Road as shown on the site plan. This will create a consistent landscaping feature on the proposed consolidated property. The Official Community Plan encourages an appropriate landscaped setback on the non-agricultural lands through the rezoning process for institutional uses.

The proposed produce stand is designed to complement the existing Monastery at 8140 No. 5 Road. The same colour, material and design of proposed building will make the building appear to be accessory to the Monastery. Landscaping colours and materials are also identical to the main building providing a both a visual and physical connection for pedestrians and vehicles between the two properties. The decorative gate will also continue along the frontage of the two properties providing an improvement to the community institutional streetscape along No. 5 Road.

Environmentally Sensitive Area Designation

A small portion of both 8140 and 8160 No. 5 Road at the east of the properties is designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA). The applicant has no current plans to remove the ESA on either lots. However, the Association have been farming for over two years on the property and staff note that the owner would be exempt from ESA Development Permit if they wished to clear the ESA for farming purposes in the future.

Engineering and Transportation

Engineering and Transportation staff have no objections to the ALR non-farm use application. A 4 m dedication along the subject site's entire No. 5 Road frontage will be required at the rezoning process, and is consistent with the dedication provided at 8140 No. 5 Road, as shown on the preliminary consolidation plan (Attachment 2). All remaining technical and servicing

issues, including any required upgrades, will be addressed through the forthcoming rezoning application.

Next Steps

If this non-farm use application is approved by City Council and the ALC, a rezoning application will be processed by staff, to address all remaining legal and technical components of the proposal. The following will be reviewed at the rezoning application process:

- More detailed building plans;
- Technical and servicing details, finalization of engineering and transportation requirements including land dedication and infrastructure upgrades;
- Review details of anticipated special events and a parking management plan;
- Secure an appropriate legal agreement and bond to ensure that the backlands will only be utilized for farm activities; and
- The consolidation of 8140 and 8160 No. 5 Road that will result in a 1.91 ha parcel with 1.1 ha dedicated to agricultural use and 0.81 ha to institutional use.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

The following ALR non-farm uses are being proposed through this application:

- Outdoor religious statue display and landscaping; and
- 54 stalls parking lot to accommodate the proposed produce stand, to provide surplus parking for the Monastery, and to accommodate overflow parking from adjacent community institutions along No. 5 Road.

The proposed non-farm use application is consistent with the Richmond OCP and ALC policies. Staff recommends that the ALR appeal application by Thrangu Monastery Association to rezone the westerly portion of the site to Assembly (ASY) be endorsed and forwarded to the Agricultural Land Commission.

Ada Chan Russell Planner ^{*}

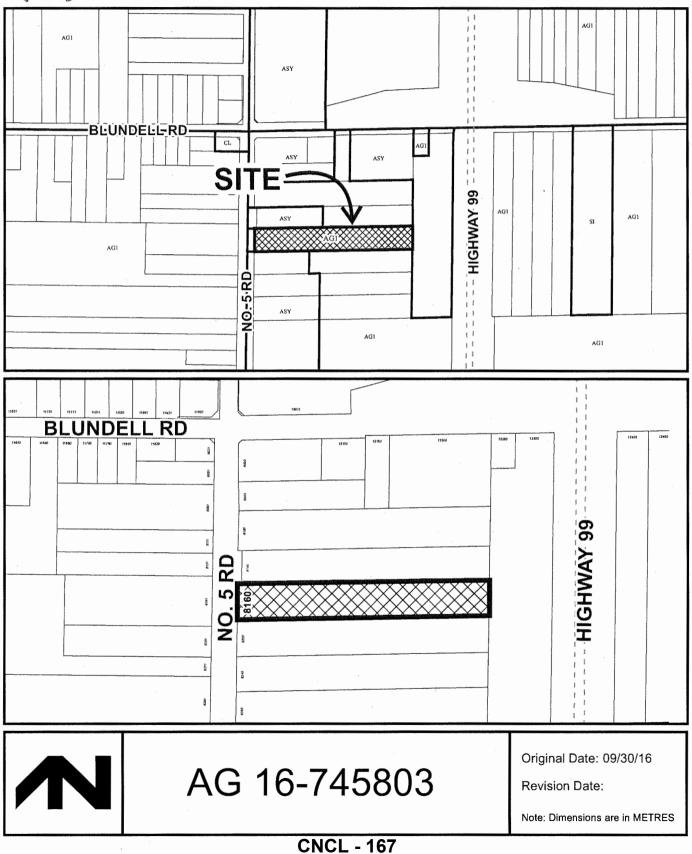
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Attachment 1: Location Map Attachment 2: Preliminary Consolidation Plan Attachment 3: Development Application Data Sheet Attachment 4: Farm Improvement Plan Attachment 5: Preliminary Drawings Attachment 6: Backlands Policy Area Map

Attachment 7: Excerpt of Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes Attachment 8: Drainage Memo from Agrologist

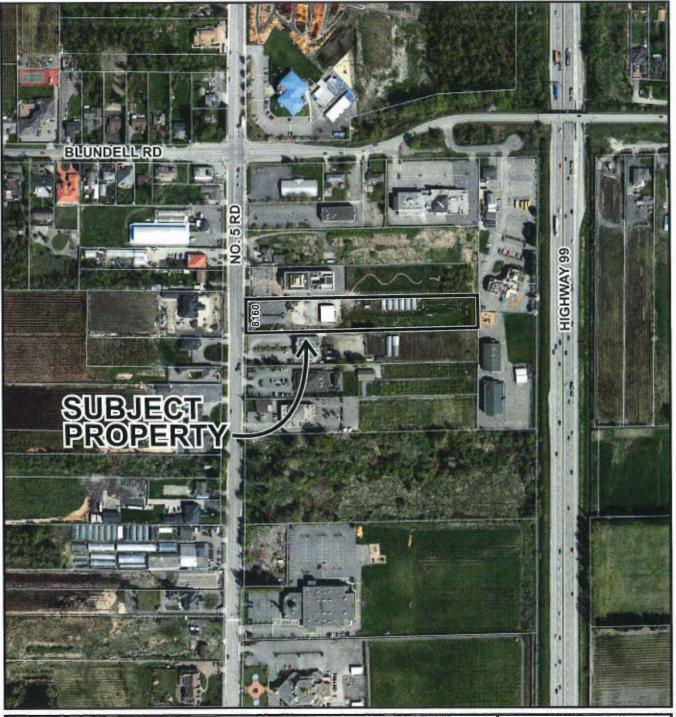


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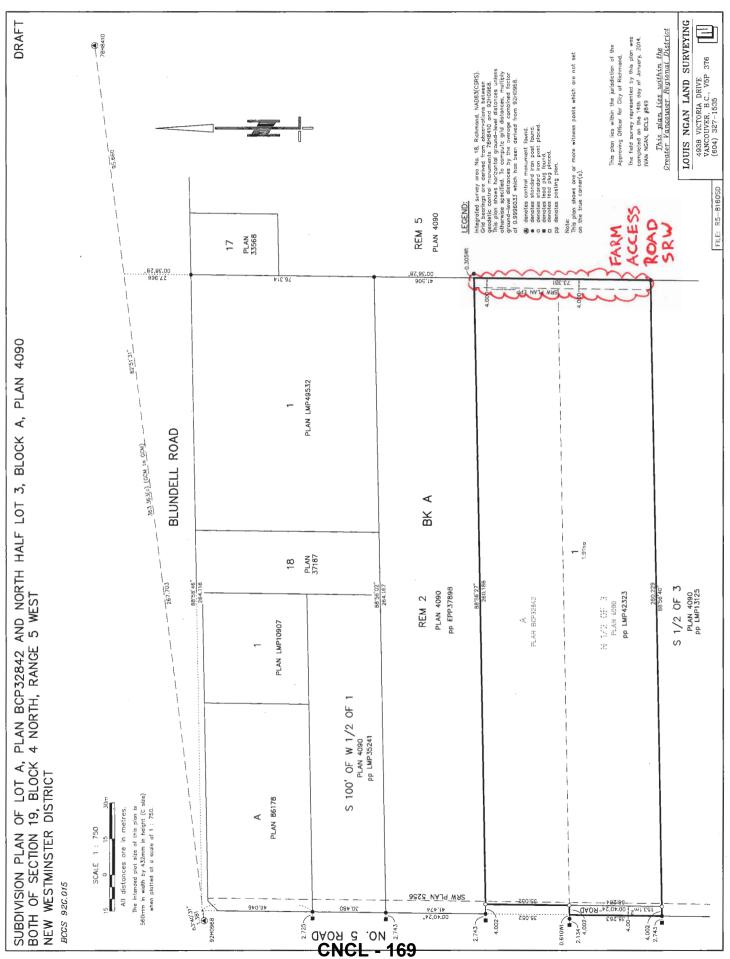
AG 16-745803

Original Date: 06/13/17

Revision Date:

Note: Dimensions are in METRES

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ATTACHMENT 2



Development Application Data Sheet

Development Applications Department

AG 16-745803

Address: 8160 No. 5 Road

Applicant: Thrangu Monastery Association

	Existing	Proposed	
Owner:	Thrangu Monastery Association	No Change	
Site Size (m²):	1.0 ha	1.91 ha (Consolidation with 8140 No. 5 Road)	
Land Uses:	Agricultural use	Agricultural uses (roadside stand, barn, and farm) and accessory community institutional	
OCP Designation:	Community Institutional at the front 110 m and Agriculture at the back	No Change: Complies	
ALR Designation	The property is contained within the ALR boundary	No Change: Complies	
Area Plan Designation:	East Richmond McLennan	No Change: Complies	
Zoning:	Agriculture (AG1)	Assembly (ASY) at the front 110 m and Agriculture (AG1) at the rear	
Parking Required	NA	3 (1 space/20 m ² of roadside stand)	
Parking Actual	80 spaces may be accommodated	54 parking stalls	
Other Designation	A small area designated as ESA on the east side of the subject property	No impacts to ESA as a result of proposed rezoning	

Attachment 3

Review of Farm Plan Implementation at 8160 No. 5 Road Richmond BC

> Prepared for Thrangu Monastery 8140 No. 5 Road Richmond, BC

> > Prepared by

Due MCV

Bruce McTavish McTavish Resource & Management Consultants Ltd. 2858 Bayview St. Surrey, BC V4A @z4

March 22, 2016

McTavish Resource & Management Consultants Ltd.

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1.0 Introduction

The following report is the third report related to the agricultural site assessment of land Located at 8160 No.5 Road Richmond B.C. The report is prepared in response to questions from the City of Richmond with respect to implementing the agricultural plan that was developed in 2013 and the Addendum prepared on December 2, 2013 that outlined implementation costs for the farm plan.

The December 2, 2013 addendum detailed implementation cost that totalled \$10,800 (see below).

The following cost estimate assumes no volunteer labour for planting, cultivation, maintenance, harvesting and upgrading polyhouses in year 1:

0	Purchase of fruit trees which will be 50 trees x \$25.00	= \$ 1250.00
0	Purchase of new raspberry canes	=\$ 50.00
	Purchase of 20 new blueberry plants	=\$ 80.00
۹	Hoses to the fruit trees for hand watering	=\$ 200.00
	Cultivation/tilling fruit tree area tractor + implements 8 hours	= \$ 1000.00
	 Includes move in and move out charges 	
	Upgrading two remaining polyhouses	= \$2,000.00
8	Planting trees, staking trees and planting small fruits	= \$1,000.00
6	Purchase of seed or plugs of vegetables and installation	=\$ 500.00
۰	Management of crops in year 1 including:	
	o Fertility	
	 Weeding 	
	 Pruning 	
	 Watering 	
	 Harvesting 	=\$4,000.00

Total Estimated Costs \$10,080

2.0 Implementation

A site inspection was carried out in the spring of 2016 to determine if the farm plan that was developed in 2013 had been implemented. The following observations were made:

The fruit tree orchard has been planted and all trees are staked, topsoil amended and in healthy condition (Figure 1).



Figure 1 Fruit tree orchard

Small fruit bushes including blueberries, goji berries, raspberries and black currents were planted and being maintained at the south end of the property.

Three of the polyhouses have been cleaned up and were in production in 2015 and have either been replanted in 2016 (Figure 2) or are ready for planting (Figure 3 and Figure 4). The remaining 3 polyhouses are slated for planting in 2016 (Figure 5).

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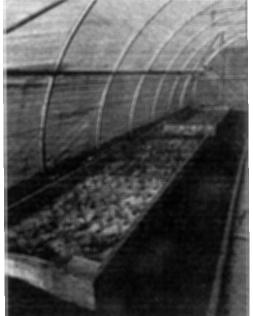


Figure 2 Raised bed planted in the late winter 2016



Figure 3 Raised beds ready for spring 2016 planting

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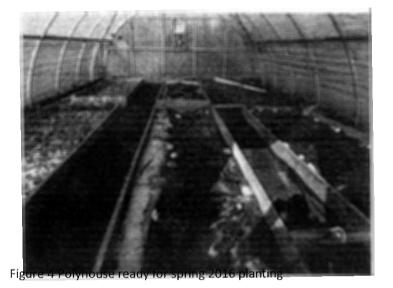


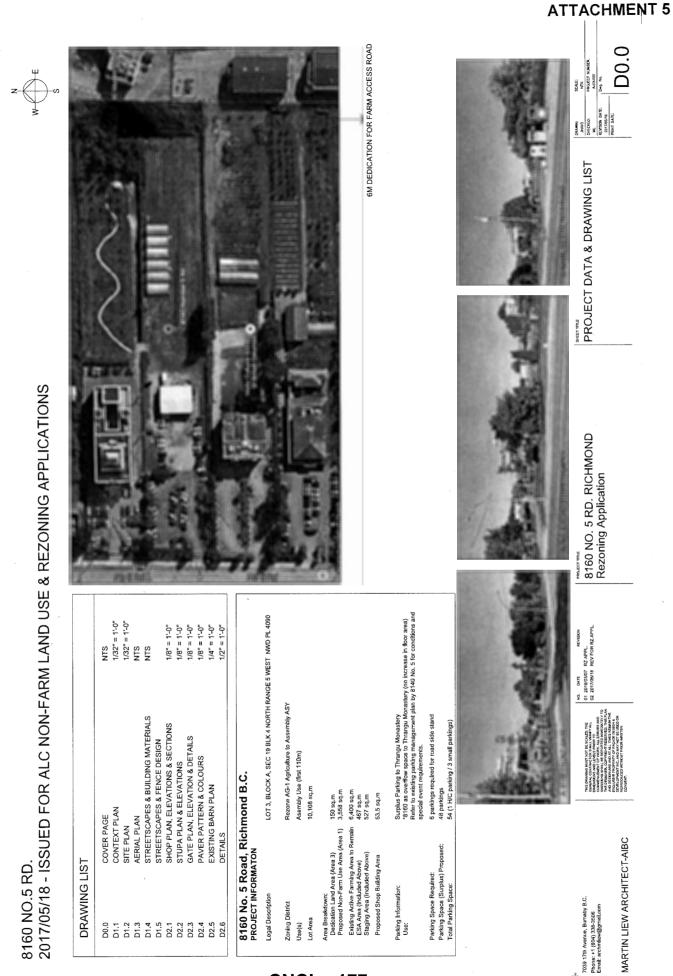


Figure 5 Overview of polyhouses

3.0 Summary

The site inspection indicated that the orchard and small fruit tree production area has been planted as recommended in the 2013 Farm Plan. The only addition work needed on this site is the clean up of 2 more polyhouses and the spring planting. The Polyhouse clean up costs will be approximately \$500 and the spring planting is an ongoing farm activity not a capital cost.

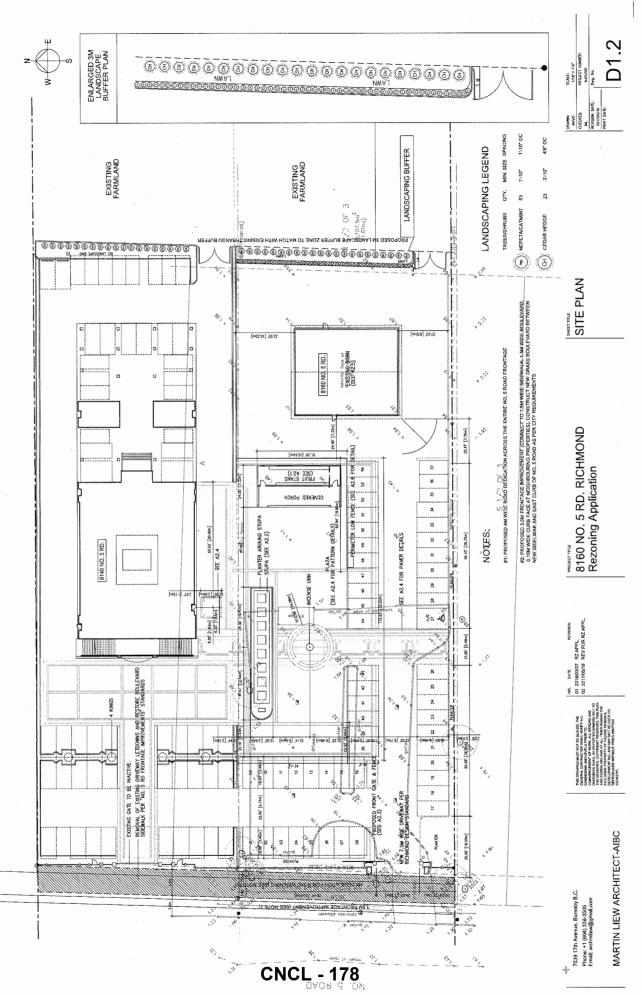
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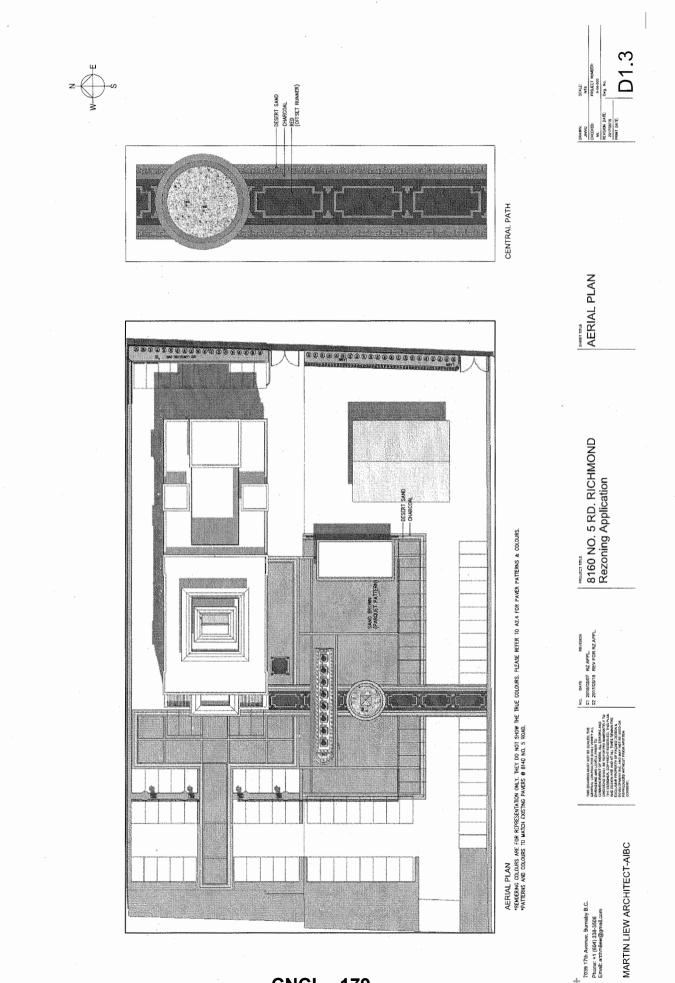
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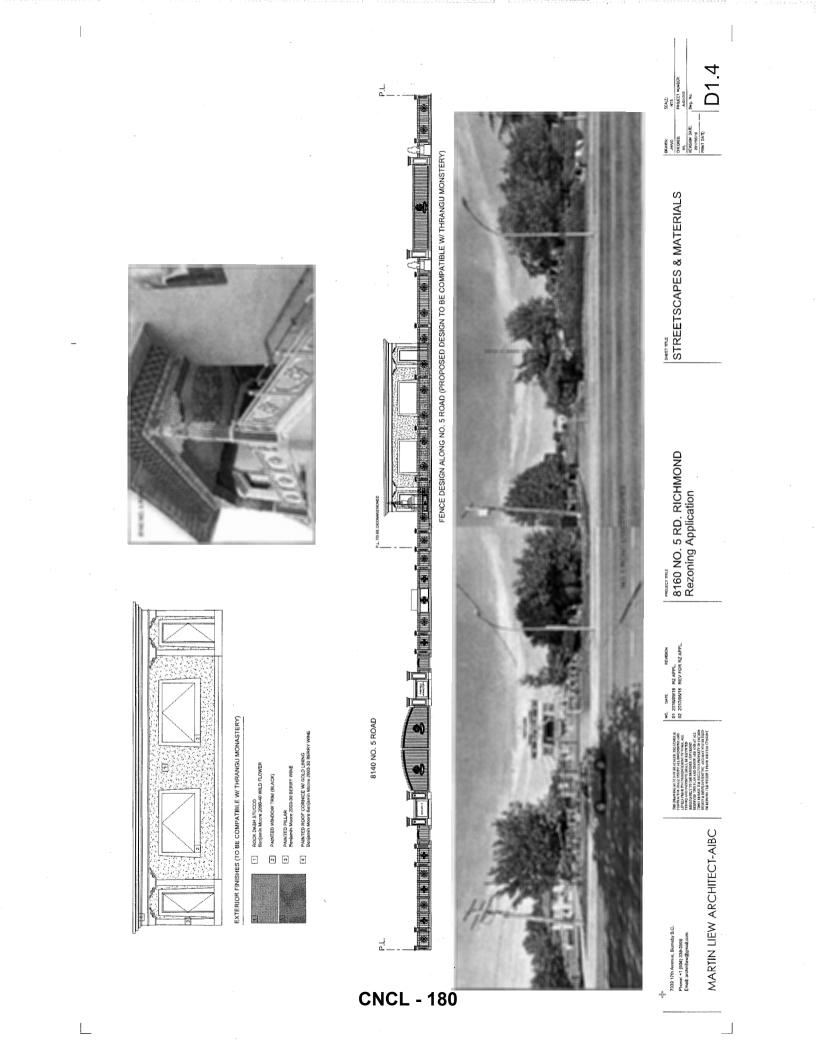
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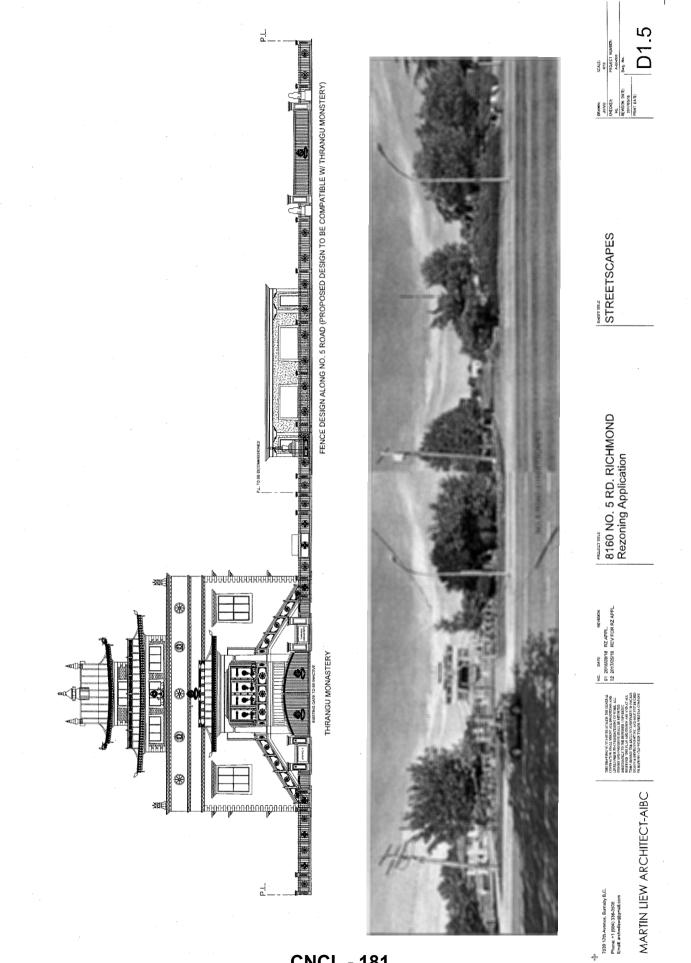


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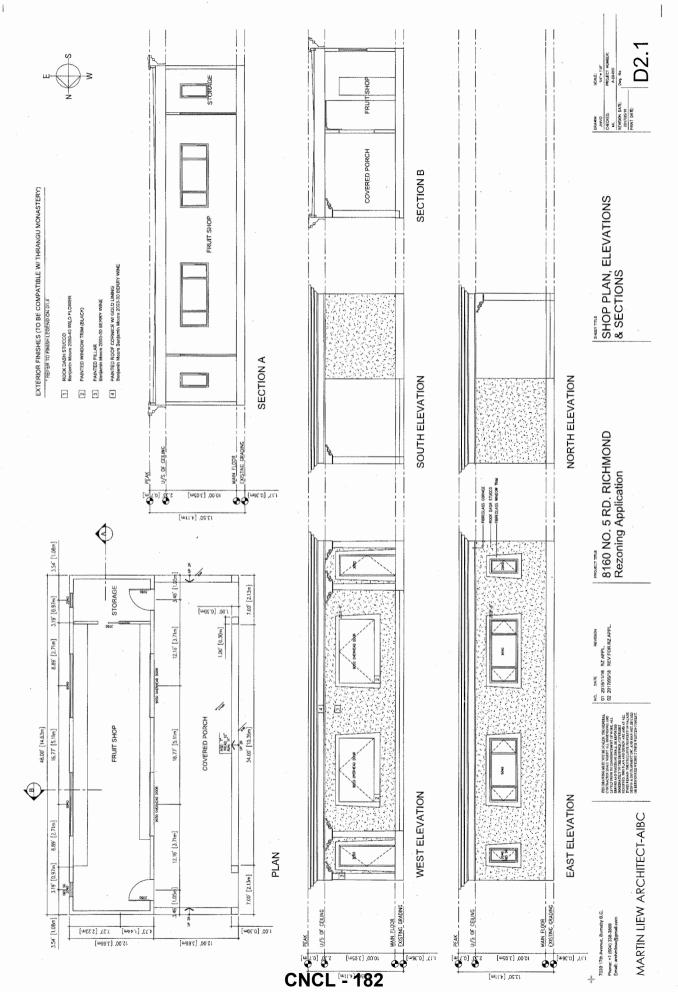


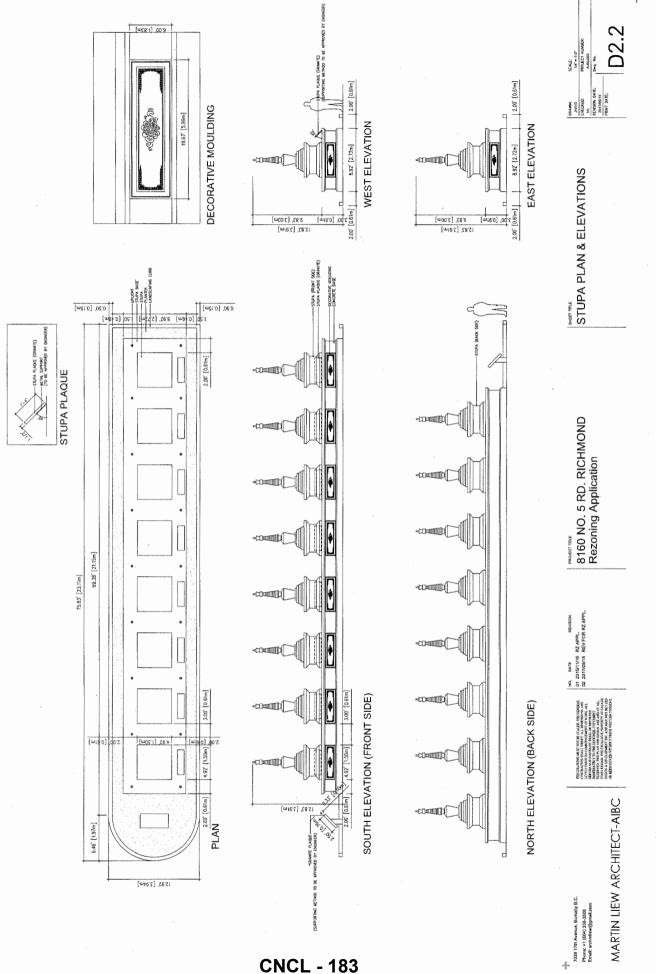


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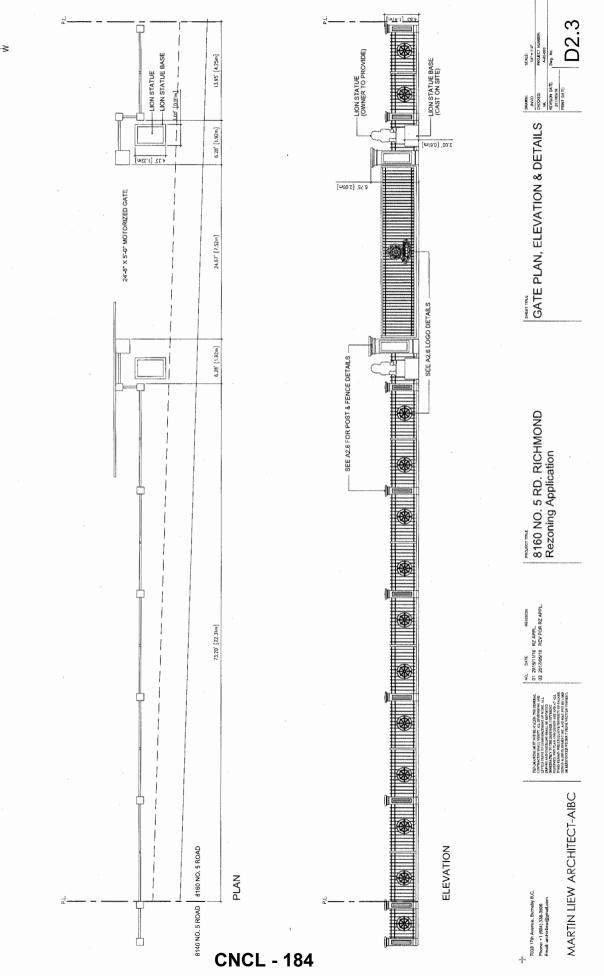
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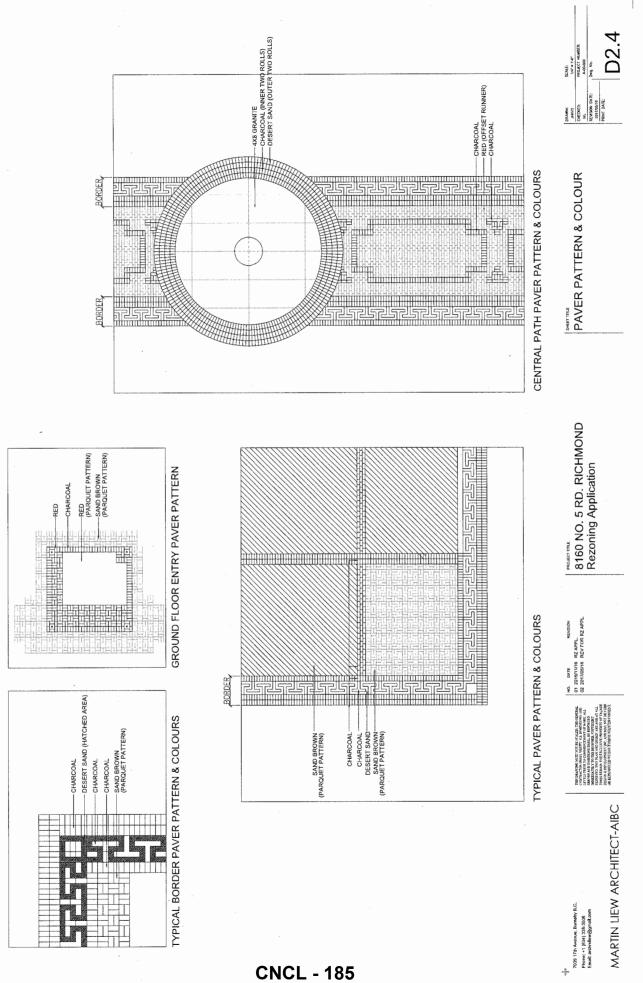


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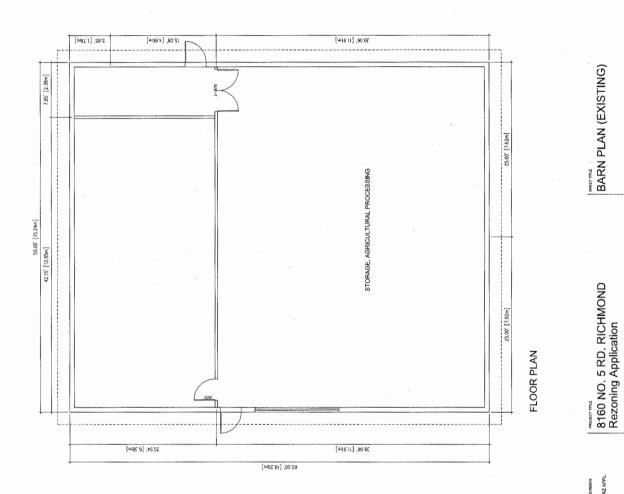
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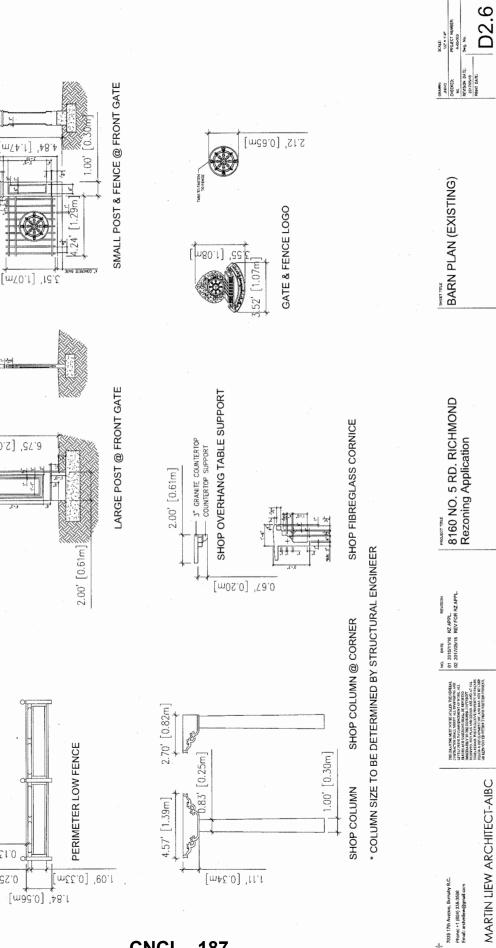
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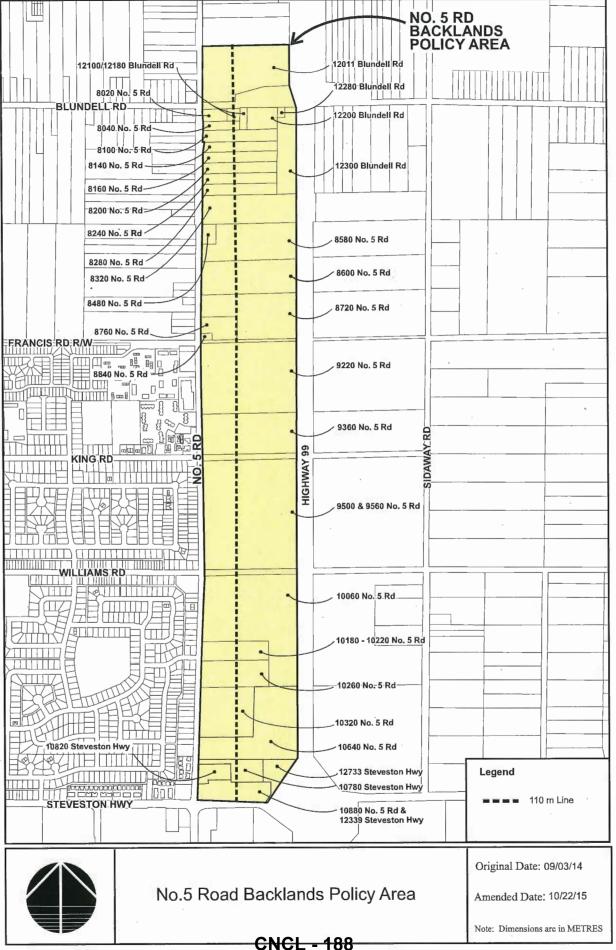
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ATTACHMENT 6





City of Richmond

Excerpt of Minutes

AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AAC) Held Wednesday, November 2, 2016 (7:00 pm) M.2.002 Richmond City Hall

3. Development Proposal – Non-Farm Use Application at 8160 No. 5 Road (Thrangu Monastery)

Staff provided an overview of the non-farm use application at 8160 No. 5 Road to beautify the front portion of the property by developing a landscaped extension to the existing temple at 8140 No. 5 Road, including religious statues, an accessory produce stand and overflow parking. The proposal also includes consolidation of 8160 and 8140 No. 5 Road into one legal parcel. The Chair invited the applicants to the table.

The Committee had the following questions and comments:

- The AAC wanted to know how the farm plan has been implemented. Current farming activities include the planting of a fruit tree orchard with trees staked, topsoil amended and in healthy condition. Small fruit bushes were planted and being maintained at the south end of the property. Six polyhouses have either been replanted or newly planted this year including vegetables, fruits and flowers.
- The AAC asked for more information about the produce to be sold at the produce stand. The applicant explained that produce planted on site are already being sold at the monastery. The proposed produce stand would allow for the expansion of produce sales as well as a seed germination area.
- The AAC asked what the benefits of consolidation are. The benefits would be the creation of larger farmable parcels to provide more farm property options and viability for agricultural operations. The City of Richmond looks for opportunities to consolidate agricultural lots to provide opportunities for larger scale farm businesses. As part of the rezoning and consolidation, the applicant will improve the agricultural portion of the property by installing a unified irrigation system over both 8140 and 8160 No. 5 Road.
- The AAC wanted clarification in regards to how the No. 5 Road Backlands farm access road would function. The proposed 4 m wide statutory right-of-way along the east property line will be used as a north south farm access road in the future to connect with adjacent properties within the No. 5 Road Backlands Policy Area. An east west farm access road (Williams Road) will also provide connections to No. 5 Road from the north

south access road. Statutory right-of-ways have been secured for a few properties south of the subject properties.

• The AAC asked about potential drainage impacts to the agricultural lands resulting from the proposed paving at the front of the property. The applicant explained that currently there is existing paving on the western portion of the site. Variation in elevation within the agricultural portion helps prevent the crops from being affected by flooding. The consultant suggested that a line may be installed to further pick up depression areas on the site and move excess water to the City's stormsewer system.

As a result of discussion, the Committee passed the following motion:

That the non-farm use application at 8140 No. 5 Road be supported as presented, subject to a revised farm plan reviewed by staff which would include drainage improvements to ensure agricultural land is not negatively impacted.

Carried Unanimously





May 15, 2017

MEMO

To: Ada Chan Russell Planner City of Richmond

From: Bruce McTavish PAg McTavish Resource & Management Consultants Ltd.

Re: 8160 No. 5 Road Drainage

I have reviewed my previous reports from 2013, 2015 and 2016, for this property with respect to drainage and my professional opinion is that the drainage is appropriate for agriculture and that the addition of a drain line to No. 5 Road is not necessary.

The monastery has implemented the recommendations from my 2013 report and are producing agricultural products from the greenhouses, orchard and outside vegetable beds. The raised orchard and vegetable production areas are well drained and the greenhouses are not affected by standing water during the rainy season.

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Bruce McTavish MSc, MBA, PAg, RPBio President McTavish Resource & Management Consultants Ltd.

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