



To: Richmond City Council

Date: July 13, 2026

From: Wayne Craig
Chair, Development Permit Panel

File: DP 19-869484

Re: **Development Permit Panel Meeting Held on August 27, 2025**

Staff Recommendation

That the recommendation of the Panel to authorize the issuance of Development Permit (DP 19-869484) for the property located at 7890 No. 5 Road, be endorsed and the Permit so issued.

Wayne Craig, General Manager, Planning and Development

Panel Report

The Development Permit Panel considered the following item at its meeting held on August 27, 2025.

DP 19-869484 – DAVID J. HO ARCHITECTURE INC. – 7890 NO. 5 ROAD
(August 27, 2025)

The Panel considered a Development Permit (DP) application to facilitate the construction of an elementary school and associated amenities within the area of the lot which is zoned "Assembly (ASY)".

Todd Chow, of Cornerstone Evangelical Baptist Church, introduced the project and spoke about the history of the church, the establishment of the elementary school in 1997 and the existing portable school buildings nearing the end of life. This has necessitated the proposed construction of a new elementary school building and associated educational amenities for students that could also be utilized for church programs.

The applicant and architect, David Ho, of David J. Ho Architecture Inc., the applicant's landscape architect, Fred Liu, of Fred Liu and Associated Inc., and the applicant's environmental consultant, Chris Lee, of AquaTerra Environmental Ltd., provided a brief visual presentation highlighting:

- The subject site consists of lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) which are zoned "Assembly (ASY)" in the western portion and "Agriculture (AG1)" in the eastern portion.
- The northern portion of the "Agriculture (AG1)" and the northwestern portion of the "Assembly (ASY)" zoned areas are leased to an agricultural operation for farming activities.
- The subject site includes an existing church building and three portable school buildings used for classrooms.
- The existing church building will be retained, and the portable school buildings will be removed.
- The proposed development will be constructed in three phases and includes a three-storey school building (first phase), gymnasium/cafeteria (second phase) and auditorium (third phase), which will be located in the northwestern portion of the site zoned "Assembly (ASY)".
- Due to the encroachment of the proposed development into an ESA designated area, an ESA compensation package has been proposed for the site.
- The existing vehicular access to the site on No. 5 Road will be removed and replaced with two vehicular access points on No. 5 Road restricted to right turn only exits.
- Additional vehicle parking as well as Class 1 and Class 2 bicycle stalls and storage areas will be provided.

- A pedestrian pathway is proposed from No. 5 Road from the sidewalk to the proposed school building.
- The proposed development has been designed to achieve BC Energy Step Code Level 3.
- Two trees are proposed to be installed to frame the pedestrian entrance on No. 5 Road and additional trees will be installed in the surface parking area to provide shade.
- Trees are proposed along the boulevard on No. 5 Road and low-level evergreen shrubs will be planted along the No. 5 Road frontage to provide separation and screening to the surface parking area.
- There are cedar hedges along the north property line to provide screening to the adjacent property to the north.
- A grassed play area for students is proposed at the back of the proposed elementary school building, and planting will be installed to provide screening and separation from the loading area to the south for the safety of students.
- The proposed planting for the site includes trees that are flower-bearing and evergreen shrubs and groundcovers to provide seasonal interest.
- The contiguous southeast portion of the “Agriculture (AG1)” zoned lands has the highest value habitat and will be retained.
- Areas occupied by the septic field and existing nursery to the north are proposed restoration planting areas to compensate for ESA-designated lands impacted by the proposed development.
- An Ecological Restoration Plan (ERP) has been submitted to the City, which includes a planting scheme that would result in a higher ecological value for the subject site and offset the impact on ESA-designated lands on-site.
- A mapping of the Japanese knotweed on the subject site has been undertaken to develop an appropriate plan for its management, removal and disposal.

Staff noted that (i) the subject site was granted permission by Council to continue the use of the site for school use in 2021 when school use were removed from the City’s No. 5 Road Backlands Policy, (ii) the proposed development is consistent with the “Assembly (ASY)” zoning of the western portion of the site, (iii) the ESA enhancement on the site includes ecological planting consisting of a variety of different shrubs and trees resulting in ESA restoration at a greater than 1:1 compensation ratio, (iv) the applicant has a lease with the existing farmer for the northeast portion of the site and which will continue to be farmed, (v) the City is securing a Statutory-Rights-of-Way (SRWs) providing Public Rights-of-Passage (PROP) for future road widening along No. 5 Road and Blundell Road, and (vi) there is a Servicing Agreement (SA) associated with the project that is required prior to Building Permit (BP) issuance including interim frontage works along No. 5 Road and Blundell Road, construction of a new bus pad on No. 5 Road, and appropriate servicing upgrades and utility connections.

In addition, staff confirmed that the proposed development is consistent with the existing non-farm approval granted by the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) in 2008.

In reply to queries from the Panel, the applicant noted that (i) the existing single vehicular entry and exit and the existing L-shaped parking area present a challenge for the drop off and pick up of students in the subject site, (ii) the proposed development provides two vehicular entry and exit points and a significant number of temporary parking spaces that would improve the drop off and pick up of students, (iii) at the current stage, the applicant will only be removing one existing tree that would be in conflict with the proposed new driveway that would replace the existing driveway, (iv) the proposed play area on the east side of the new school building would be sufficient for the play requirements of students, (v) a traffic impact study for the proposed development indicated that the on-site turning radii would meet fire truck requirements, (vi) a rooftop play area is currently not being considered due to the increased cost of construction, (vii) there is a continuous fence as well as cedar hedge planting along the north property line and a continuous fence along the boundary between the “Assembly (ASY)” zoned lands in the western portion and the “Agriculture (AG1)” zoned lands in the eastern portion, (viii) the applicant will consult with the Ministry of Education to confirm if the proposed development meets the Independent School Act licensing requirements, (ix) there is no lighting plan at this stage of the project but will be provided at the BP stage, and (x) the timing of the three phases of the project has not yet been determined as they are subject to fundraising.

In reply to a query of the Panel regarding the potential removal of existing trees along No. 5 Road, staff clarified that (i) the interim construction works that are required for frontage improvements do not anticipate the need for removal of existing trees at this time, and (ii) the applicant is required to provide a design for future road improvements to be constructed by the City and staff will continue to work with the applicant through the SA process to review opportunities to retain as many trees as possible.

As a result of the discussion with the applicant, the Panel provided the following direction prior to the application moving forward for Council consideration:

- That the applicant consults with the Ministry of Education to confirm whether the proposed development meets the Independent School Act licensing requirements;
- That the applicant work with staff to install a continuous cedar hedge in addition to the solid fence along the boundary between the “Assembly (ASY)” zoned lands in the western portion and the adjacent “Agriculture (AG1)” zoned portion to the east similar to the landscaping along the north property line; and
- That the applicant provides information regarding the exterior lighting plan for the proposed development, particularly for the surface parking area to ensure there is no light spillover onto adjacent properties and across No. 5 Road.

In response to direction from the Panel:

- The applicant has confirmed that the proposed expansion of the school and associated programs will not require additional licensing from the Ministry. This was also verified with the Federation of Independent School Associations of BC that the school's existing certification from the Ministry of Education would not need to be amended unless the proposed programming changes following the expansion. The applicant has confirmed

that there are no plans to add or reduce the types of programs and schooling currently authorized.

- The applicant has also revised the site plan to incorporate additional cedar hedging along the boundary between the "Assembly (ASY)" zoned lands and the "Agriculture (AG1)" portion of the site, complementing the proposed solid fence and matching the landscaping treatment along the north property line.
- The applicant has submitted a lighting plan prepared by the project architect identifying the proposed lighting fixtures and their locations within the development area. The lighting plan has been reviewed by staff and demonstrates that the proposed lighting has been designed to minimize light spillover onto adjacent properties and across No. 5 Road. The lighting plan has been appended to the DP.

The Panel recommends the Permit be issued.