



Special General Purposes Committee

- Date: Monday, March 27, 2017
- Place: Anderson Room
Richmond City Hall
- Present: Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie, Chair
Councillor Chak Au
Councillor Derek Dang
Councillor Carol Day
Councillor Ken Johnston
Councillor Alexa Loo
Councillor Bill McNulty
Councillor Linda McPhail
Councillor Harold Steves
- Call to Order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

1. **UPDATE ON AGRICULTURALLY ZONED LAND HOUSING REGULATIONS, CONSULTATION AND BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY**

(File Ref. No. 08-4057-10) (REDMS No. 5346368 v. 13)

Correspondence from Leeanna Jalbert, 2960 Steveston Highway, was distributed (attached to and forming part of these minutes as Schedule 1).

Wayne Craig, Director, Development spoke on the proposed moratorium on building permits for residential buildings on agriculturally zoned land, noting the following:

- a bylaw to address house size regulations on agriculturally zoned land is being prepared;
- in-stream applications and applications received within seven days of Council's adoption of the moratorium resolution will be assessed under the existing bylaw;

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- applications received after the seven days following the resolution's adoption would be brought to Council for consideration, in which Council may decide to issue the permit or withhold the permit for 30 days to address potential conflicts with the new bylaw under preparation;
- after the first 30-day withholding period, staff will bring forward the application to Council and Council may consider to issue the permit or withhold the application for an additional 60 days;
- a potential moratorium would not require setting a limit on house size;
- staff will bring forward recommendations on new house size regulations within agricultural land at the upcoming Planning Committee meeting on April 19, 2017; and
- staff will provide information on options to introduce farming requirements for developments on agricultural sites.

Discussion ensued with regard to (i) the number of building permit applications submitted in 2017 compared to previous years, (ii) the floor area of the proposed residential buildings, (iii) the number of agriculturally zoned lots that could potentially develop a residential dwelling, (iv) restricting the number and size of accessory buildings in agriculturally zoned lots, and (v) the potential increase in the number of submitted applications during the moratorium, if approved.

In reply to queries from Committee, Mr. Craig noted that residential portions of an agricultural site are taxed under the City's residential property tax rates. Staff added the subdivision of properties under the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) is not supported by the City's Official Community Plan (OCP).

Kush Panatch, Richmond resident, expressed concerns with regard to the potential moratorium on building applications on agricultural land and was of the opinion that the City proceed with further community consultation.

Todd May, representing the Richmond Farmer's Institute and the Agricultural Advisory Committee commented on housing regulations on agriculturally zoned lots and expressed concerns with regard to regulations that may impact the viability of agricultural land.

Bhupinder Dhiman, representing Richmond Farmland Association, noted that Farmland Association members are willing to work with the City on house size regulations within agricultural land.

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It was moved and seconded

Whereas Section 463 of the Local Government Act allows the withholding of building permits that conflict with bylaws in preparation; and

Whereas Council directed staff to conduct public consultation regarding house size, farm home plate and setbacks, including residential accessory buildings,

- (1) *That staff be directed to prepare for Council's consideration a bylaw to limit house size, farm home plate and setbacks, including residential accessory buildings in the Agriculture (AG) zones; and*
- (2) *That staff bring all building permit applications for residential development, including residential accessory buildings, in the Agriculture (AG) zones received more than 7 days after the passage of resolution #1 to Council, to determine whether such applications are in conflict with the proposed bylaw to limit house size, farm home plate and setbacks, including residential accessory buildings in the Agriculture (AG) zones.*

The question on the motion was not called as discussion ensued with regard to the increase in building permit activity and the application process under the potential moratorium.

Newspaper articles from the March 10, 2017 edition of the Richmond News, titled "City flooded with building permits" and "Lot size matters", and a real estate advertisement from the March 8, 2017 edition of the Real Estate Weekly was distributed (attached to and forming part of these minutes as Schedule 2).

It was suggested that staff provide additional data on previously approved residential applications within the ALR from 2010 to the present.

In reply to queries from Committee, Mr. Craig noted that Council is able to lift the moratorium prior to the adoption of a new bylaw.

The question on the motion was then called and it was **CARRIED** with Cllr. Loo opposed.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (4:52 p.m.).

CARRIED

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Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee of the Council of the City of Richmond held on Monday, March 27, 2017.

Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie
Chair

Evangel Biason
Legislative Services Coordinator

TO: MAYOR & EACH
COUNCILLOR
FROM: CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

ON TABLE ITEM

Date: MARCH 27/17
Meeting: SPECIAL GP
Item: 1

MayorandCouncillors

From: MayorandCouncillors
Sent: Monday, 27 March 2017 08:26
To: Crowe,Terry; Craig,Wayne
Cc: Hopkins,John; Chan Russell,Ada; Woo,Gavin
Subject: FW: Agricultural House Size

Schedule 1 to the Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting of Richmond City Council held on Monday, March 27, 2017.

Categories: - TO: MAYOR & EACH COUNCILLOR / FROM: CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

From: MayorandCouncillors
Sent: Monday, 27 March 2017 08:25
To: 'Sahm'
Subject: RE: Agricultural House Size

Dear Ms. Jalbert,

This is to acknowledge and thank you for your correspondence to Richmond City Council. A copy of your email has been forwarded to the Mayor and each Councillor. In addition, your correspondence has also been forwarded to Mr. Terry Crowe, Manager, Policy Planning Department and Mr. Wayne Craig, Director, Development.

Thank you for taking the time to write to Richmond City Council.

Sincerely,
Claudia

Claudia Jesson
Manager, Legislative Services
City Clerk's Office
City of Richmond, 6911 No. 3 Road, Richmond, BC V6Y 2C1
Phone: 604-276-4006 | Email: cjesson@richmond.ca

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MAR 27 2017

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From: Sahm [<mailto:thesiren8@shaw.ca>]
Sent: Sunday, 26 March 2017 18:11
To: MayorandCouncillors
Subject: Agricultural House Size

To Mayor Brodie and Richmond Council

Please do the right thing and limit house size (and "home plate" size) in our agricultural lands as soon as possible. If we consider the recommended house-size guidelines of the Agricultural Land Commission and the restrictions imposed by our neighbouring cities and municipalities (as quoted in the March 10th issue of the Richmond News) we could easily impose a limit of, for example, 7500 square feet for the main home and 3,000 square feet for the secondary home and still have the most generous house size limit in the region.

I understand this is the second or third time in recent years council has considered the issue only to back down and do nothing. This is very likely your last chance to value the legacy of our farming past and protect farmland for future generations. Applications for mega-homes are flooding in to the city's Building Department as builders and realtors fear Richmond council might finally take action.

If we wait another five years every farm parcel will be built out with bloated, hotel-sized "homes" which will never be practical for a single family and farmland prices will continue to skyrocket beyond the budget of anyone but the multi-millionaire. Farmland should be valued on agricultural use – not residential use. Yet because of the mega-home phenomenon this land sells for close to \$1 million per acre. There is a strong interest in organic farming and small-crop, specialty farming across North America but even our beautiful, fertile soil tempts very few to try their hand here because land prices are astronomical. Young farmers don't stand a chance.

I attended the February 7th Planning Committee meeting and heard Councillor McNulty decry the ALC for leaving house-size regulations up to individual municipalities but making decisions, sir, is your job. We elected you, and everyone on council, to make these difficult decisions and to make them for the good of the greater community at present and for generations to come. The ALR has given some very reasonable recommendations and left the fine-tuning up to you. Delta, Port Coquitlam, Maple Ridge and Surrey have all seen fit to limit house-size, home-plate size or both. I understand Pitt Meadows is in the process of doing the same.

The argument that farmers need massive homes because they are barely scraping by and must house multiple generations under one roof is a deflection of the issue. Palatial mansions with grand fountains, turrets, theatres, and the like are not houses built by people who are barely scraping by. These arguments are being trotted out in order to cloud the decision-making process with cultural issues.

Please decide in favour of responsible stewardship and our future ability to farm locally and sustainably. Your decisions will be your legacy.

Leeanna Jalbert

#30 – 2960 Steveston Hwy, Richmond, B.C.

City flooded with building permits

The City of Richmond has received a flood of applications for building permits for houses on farmland since Jan. 3, around the time of a staff report to council on regulating the size of homes in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). In the past two months, planners have been handed 17 applications. By comparison, the city normally issues 15 permits per year

(from 2009 to 2016 there were 103 permits issued for AG1 zones).

Fearing such an uptick, Couns. Carol Day and Harold Steves voted against public consultation on home sizes in the ALR on Jan. 23. Day had suggested immediately drafting a bylaw to temporarily limit homes to 7,500-square-feet and then taking the matter to public consultation.

March 12, 2017 NEWS

Lot size matters

Coun. Harold Steves contends one of the unique set of circumstances that exists in Richmond, which adds to the problem of large houses destroying farmland, is the fact that many of the Agricultural Land Reserve lots are small.

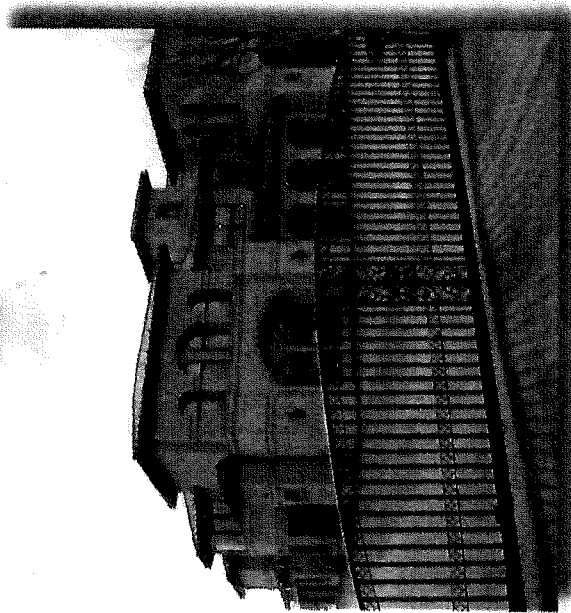
According to the City of Richmond, there are 1,369 parcels of land in the ALR, of which 61 per cent are less than one hectare (2.4 acres).

Because these lots are so small, under present-day

regulations, a large home can cover nearly half the lot. For instance, on a 1.46-acre lot, the city has allowed an 18,900-square-foot home to be built, covering 0.6 acres.

The city does control how far back a home may be built (50 metres from the road), however if the lot is shallow this means even less farmland can be spared.

Steves said the small lots were created during the war era to provide returning soldiers with a piece of land to farm.

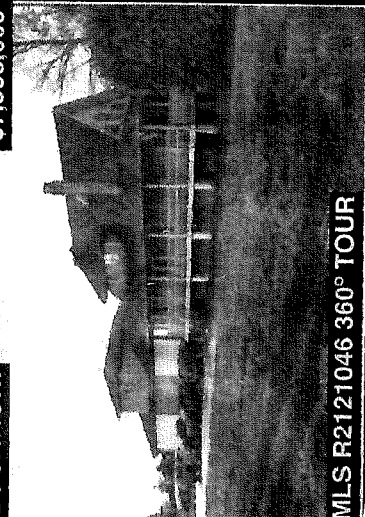


Real Estate Weekly - March 8, 2017

ABSOLUTE AMAZING STEVESTON ACREAGE! 12220 NO. 2 ROAD

LOCATION!

\$7,888,000



MLS R2121046 360° TOUR

This rare 6.52 acre parcel has one of the most desired locations in Richmond with opulent estates being built all around it! The solid classic farmhouse with wrap around covered porch was built in 1997 and is in good solid condition offers ground floor living w/2 bedrooms and family/games & master bedroom up. Property also offers a 54 X 40 detached barn/workshop with a large room above. The property is very private and enjoys breath taking views and yet is so close to old Steveston Village and waterfront. Property has a present maximum future building envelope of 28,225 sq.ft. This is truly a once in a lifetime opportunity. Tenant occupied, by appointment only.

Schedule 2 to the Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting of Richmond City Council held on Monday, March 27, 2017.