



Special General Purposes Committee

- Date: Monday, May 28, 2018
- 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 Harold Steves
- Absent: Councillor Linda McPhail
- Call to Order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:25 p.m.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

1. **RESPONSE TO REFERRAL – AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE COMMENTS ON ADDITIONAL DWELLINGS FOR FARM WORKERS AND PROPOSED AGRICULTURAL BUILDING AND GREENHOUSE REGULATIONS**

(File Ref. No. 08-4430-03-10) (REDMS No. 5854480)

Barry Konkin, Manager, Policy Planning, offered additional comments regarding the staff memorandum, noting that (i) the proposed regulations would apply to non-residential buildings outside the farm home plate, (ii) site coverage limitations of the zoning bylaw of 35% for non-residential would still apply to agricultural buildings, (iii) the initial bylaw, Bylaw 9861, proposed by staff recommends an accumulative building size allowance of up to 300 m², and (iv) the Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) has requested that Council consider individual buildings up to 2000 m² each.

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In response to questions from Committee, staff clarified that (i) option 2 in the staff memorandum includes an exemption of each building up to 2000 m² and would include greenhouses, (ii) option 1 in the staff memorandum would exempt accumulative building size of less than 300 m² and would not apply to greenhouses, (iii) if an exemption was required under option 1, a development variance permit or rezoning application would be required, depending on the nature of the application, and (iv) option 1 would provide the most preservation of soil on agricultural land as it would limit the size of buildings.

Joe Erceg, General Manager, Planning and Development, in response to queries from Committee, commented that any applications for development variance permits for buildings on agriculturally zoned land outside of the exempted size allowance would come through to Council for consideration. He further advised that rezoning applications and applying for a development variance permit normally take a similar amount of time to process.

In response to further questions from Committee, Mr. Konkin advised that utilization of soil removed during construction of new builds is at the discretion of the owner of the property and that removed soil could be reused for other applications. He further noted that the AAC had indicated a concern regarding the restriction of concrete slab in buildings on farmland, citing issues with produce accepted by sellers grown and stored on soil based operations.

Todd May, co-chair of the AAC and President, Richmond Farmers' Institute, offered comments regarding the AAC's recommendation of exempting individual buildings up to 2000 m². He noted that impermeable concrete flooring is important for current and future farming operations, maintaining a sterile environment for food growth and storage, animal husbandry, and worker safety. Mr. May further advised that some produce buyers require an audit of facilities and growing practices and that some may reject food grown in environments other than concrete slab greenhouses. He also commented that the exemption on building size should be per building and not accumulative.

In response to queries from Committee, Mr. May clarified that in certain situations, food produced in facilities and growing operations not conducted on concrete flooring could be rejected by buyers and that some producers do sell directly from their field. He further noted that although greenhouses are not often utilized for agricultural operations in Richmond, there is the potential to use them more in the future. In further response to questions from Committee, Mr. May commented that the AAC and agricultural community were of the opinion that the rezoning process was onerous and potentially could inhibit growth of production.

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Katherine McCreary, Richmond resident, expressed support for option 1 listed in the staff memorandum, noting that it would provide limitations on cannabis production on agriculturally zoned land. She further commented that exemptions for larger buildings could be made by application.

Niti Sharma, Richmond resident, expressed concern relating to the potential non-farm use of large agricultural buildings on farmland and noted that exemptions can go through the proper approval process.

Laura Gillanders, Richmond resident, spoke in support of prohibiting concrete floor greenhouses. She noted that she had been in consultation with Richmond farmers who commented that limitations on greenhouses would not affect their operations and she was of the opinion that they should be able to construct additional agricultural buildings, such as barns, as needed.

It was moved and seconded

(1) *That Richmond Zoning Bylaw 8500, Amendment Bylaw 9861, to regulate large agricultural buildings and greenhouses, be introduced and given first reading;*

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

Whereas Council has granted first reading to a bylaw to preserve high-quality agricultural soils, through the regulation of construction methods for agricultural buildings and greenhouses;

Therefore be it resolved that staff bring all building permit applications for agricultural buildings and greenhouses in the agriculture (AGI) zone, received more than 7 days after the date of first reading, forward to Council to determine whether such applications are in conflict with the proposed bylaw to preserve high-quality agricultural soils, through the regulation of construction methods for agricultural buildings and greenhouses; and

(3) *That a letter be sent to the Premier of BC, the BC Minister of Agriculture, and the BC Minister of Finance, with copies to all Richmond Members of the Legislative Assembly, the Leader of the Third Party, the Leader of the Official Opposition, and the Chair of the BC Agricultural Land Commission requesting that the province impose a temporary moratorium on the use of lands in the Agricultural Land Reserve for cannabis production.*

The question on the motion was not called as direction was given to staff to develop a policy regarding preserving top soil from building sites for reuse.

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

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2. **UPDATE TO BYLAW: RICHMOND ZONING BYLAW 8500, AMENDMENT BYLAW 9865 (SECONDARY SUITES IN DUPLEXES)**
(File Ref. No. 08-4000-01) (REDMS No. 5848173)

It was moved and seconded

- (1) *That the definition of "Housing, two-unit" be updated in accordance with the (revised) Bylaw 9865, as attached to the staff memorandum from the Director, Development dated May 25, 2018; and*
- (2) *That Richmond Zoning Bylaw 8500, Amendment Bylaw 9865 be given second reading, as amended on this day.*

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (4:58 p.m.).

CARRIED

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, May 28, 2018.

Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie
Chair

Amanda Welby
Legislative Services Coordinator