

Schedule 131 to the Minutes of the Public Hearing meeting of Richmond City Council held on Monday, May 15, 2017 and Wednesday, May 17, 2017.

**MayorandCouncillors**

**From:** Kerry Starchuk <kerrystarchuk@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, 15 May 2017 11:08  
**To:** MayorandCouncillors  
**Subject:** Farmland - Public Hearing Input  
**Attachments:** bridge farm.jpg; 10591 blundell road.JPG; new house on blundell.JPG

To Public Hearing  
Date: MAY 15 2017  
Item # 7  
Re: BVLAW 9706  
9707, 9712, 9717

Date: May 15, 2017



Dear Mayor and Council,

Re: Farmland House Size,

I was curious about the size of family homes permitted on ALR farmland and the changes that were being discussed lately and have attended the last two meetings in chambers to educate myself on the subject. It was very good to have the opportunity to listen to the different experiences of the speakers. I have now educated myself enough to know that no matter how big or small the farm house is built not everyone will be satisfied.

The majority that participated in the farm house survey (74 percent) I read in the Richmond News were not in favour of the mega houses and council still overrides the majority? I wonder what their motivate is?

I have been reflecting and thinking back when my grandparents were farmers years ago. They had a farm at Steveston Highway and No.2 Road and grew potatoes. They had 45 acres gifted to them from William Bridge when he passed on. I remember as a kid going there and my grandpa laying on the couch exhausted from a long days work. My grandma prepared lunch for all the hired hands. They had the average 3 bedroom house and a small kitchen. It was enough to put all the men around the table for lunch. Downstairs was a pantry full of home prepared canned goods. They sold off little by little their farmland because it was very hard to make a living as a farmer. The farm is no longer there and is now a subdivision and it is never going back to farmland. I know it was there but like many do not know much about old time Richmond farm families. That was then and this is now....

I have observed the different farmers that spoke at the two meetings. The Mays for instance have been farmers for as long as I can remember. They have farmed cranberries, strawberries and milk. The cranberries have been a very good revenue crop because of the juice industry. Their houses are large but they are not 11,000 sq.ft..

WA farms grow potatoes, pumpkins, beets, strawberries to name a few. I see that they live in a modest older style house but not a 11,000 sq.ft. house.

The Koop family had a farm for years @ 10591 Blundell Road that grew all kinds of produce. They also had an U pick for blueberries. They also did not have a 11,000 sq.ft. farm house.

I now go along Blundell Road in between No.4 and No.5 road as well as No.5 road and see many blueberry farms with recently built mansions. These houses were in the past an average sized house. I don't remember the price of local blueberries increasing enough to build million dollar mansions.

There is something that is out of proportion. We pay \$6200.00 for residential property tax for our city lot. I have been looking at the property taxes these farmers pay. These farms qualify for farm tax if they produce a crop of \$2500.00 per year. When was the last time the ALR taxes and crop evaluation reviewed?

I was sitting beside a fellow at one of the meetings and asked him how many people lived in their family farm house. He said there were 15 members. My tally in my head began calculating adding up the 15 people living in a farm house and paying let's say \$600.00 for taxes. That's pretty cheap.

Mayor Brodie proposed that the farm house size be increased to double the size at 11,000 sq.ft. I have to question why? When we met with him in 2011 regarding escalating property prices he suggested we sell our property and take the money and run ... I don't believe this to be a reasonable solution especially when I see all the corruption and abuse going on with real estate.

We all want farmland to be preserved and to be used for the right purposes. I found this link on farmland and would suggest others to read it.

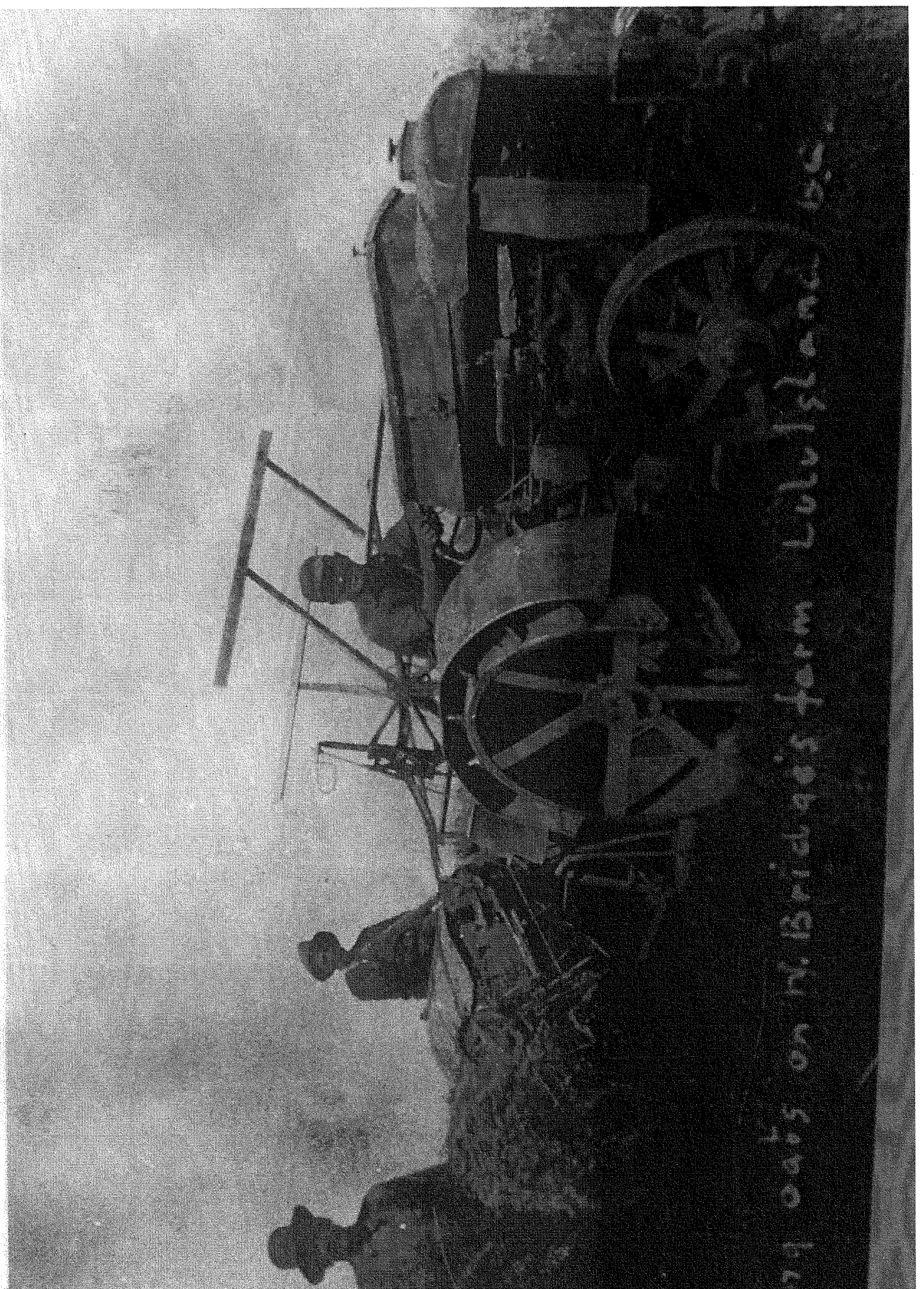
[http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/assets/alc/assets/library/land-use-planning/guide\\_for\\_bylaw\\_development\\_in\\_farming\\_areas\\_2015.pdf](http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/assets/alc/assets/library/land-use-planning/guide_for_bylaw_development_in_farming_areas_2015.pdf)

Since the 80's, the house size is getting larger and larger on farmland and the city residential properties. The residential houses are being built with many bathrooms and many bedrooms. Recently, these houses are being rented out for Air BnB, birth tourism, home stay, booking.com, immigration settlement to name a few. Can council not see when they approve these big mansions that the houses are not single family homes anymore? I propose that city council seriously look into how to tax a multi family unit and stop approving this madness.

So why is planning to approve a 10,764 sq.ft house when staff proposed a 5382 sq.ft. maximum as suggested by the ALR? Except that they are inspired for Richmond to have it's own solution? I would suggest council regroup and really think of the bigger picture because every decision that is made now will affect generations to come after all of us are gone.

Regards,  
Kerry Starchuk  
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V7C3A9

208. Cutting oats on the Bridge farm.



211 oats on N. Bridge farm Lulu Island BC





**CLOSED**

10591



