

Schedule 25 to the Minutes of the Public Hearing meeting of Richmond City Council held on Monday, May 15, 2017 and Wednesday, May 17, 2017.

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

MayorandCouncillors

From: Michelle Li <michelleli@shaw.ca>
Sent: Friday, 5 May 2017 14:33
To: MayorandCouncillors
Subject: ALR Home size



Dear Mayor & Councillors,

You will soon be making a decision that will impact British Columbia's Agricultural Land Reserve, surrounding municipalities, and the rich river delta farmland in Richmond for years to come.

Two of the strongest proponents of the relaxing of home size rules on ALR lands are Gurdial Badh and Ben Dhiman, business partners, who were featured in this Richmond News article:

<http://www.richmond-news.com/news/weekly-feature/feature-property-rights-of-farmers-clash-with-city-slicker-richmond-council-1.11414026>

The thing that doesn't sit well with me, and I think you should seriously consider, is that Mr. Badh and his business partners have much to gain from the exploitation and continuous residential development on ALR land. He has several ALR listings and land in Richmond, and the weakening of the ALR could obviously benefit him greatly.

<https://www.rew.ca/agents/4657/gurdial-sdale-badh/my-listings>

We talk about big money when it comes to our provincial election but it is possible that many of these farmers/realtors may have contributed to your personal electoral funds and I hope that doesn't play a factor in this decision to weaken the ALR.

There are many ways that council could help to control the home sizes on the ALR, and the current bylaw being considered does not do much to curb speculator development on ALR lands. Why not have the same as Delta and the ALC recommendations? Why not allow a bylaw exemption for bigger homes only for those farming families that really need it, instead of continuing to allow large homes to still be built on the ALR?

Everyone in the Lower Mainland will be looking to Richmond to see what we do here and you have the chance to ensure the viability of farming in the future instead of weakening the ALR.

<http://www.metronews.ca/news/vancouver/2017/02/08/municipalities-responsible-for-home-sizes-on-farmland.html>

One of the founders of the ALR sits on council with you and you have the chance to continue this good work by ensuring farmland stays farmland in the future. If you chose not to act, will we return to a feudal system?

Because it seems that is what some farmers want. They want to control land and it's value instead of honoring the fact that they bought land within a land reserve, which has it's own rules and regulations to ensure the future of agriculture.

You heard from farmers themselves that the future is not blueberries.

The future will mean we will need land for growing a variety of foods, and ALR land will never lose its value. This is about ensuring the viability of agricultural land in the years to come and you have a significant role to play in ensuring it's protected and not wasted on residential development.

Please consider changing your positions to ensure that the citizens of Richmond are heard, as they were in the public consultation survey, and balance that with the few loud voices who have much to gain financially from the weakening of the ALR. Many farmers did not attend the meetings and they cannot speak out. Your decision impacts everyone in the Lower Mainland, whether through access to land, access to locally grown foods or whether it is through the continuing unaffordability of the region driven by decisions like this one.

Please consider the future and those who want to see our city's greatest treasure, the ALR, preserved for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Michelle Li