

March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2008  
Chad Iverson  
12060 Woodhead Rd.  
Richmond B.C.  
V6V-1G3

To Whom It May Concern:

The preservation of lands such as those which are at stake here (The Garden City Lands) is essential to the maintenance of the well being of not only the citizens of Richmond but to everyone in the Lower-mainland. It merely takes a bit of common sense and a look at the glaring facts to understand this reality. Furthermore as the great great grandson of one of the first Reeves of Richmond, J.W.Sexsmith, I take especially deep concern towards the development proposal set out by the Canada Lands Commission, and the Musquem First Nations, along with the current sentiments of the majority of council and this cities Mayor for how these lands should be treated. Richmond's heritage as a food producer and what has allowed us to maintain the highest life expectancy in Canada, has been predicated by the fact that we are as everyone who drives into this city can see, an "Island City by Nature". Covering any of this property with buildings is in direct conflict with what this city says it stands for, and with the ideals that form the basis of the ALR.

To illustrate my concern I'd like to pose a few questions and state a few facts that should bring the reality of the situation to light. What do I as a citizen stand to gain for myself, my family and the rest of my community by loosing this land to large scale development? What do we stand to loose?

Addressing the first question is difficult, why?; well personally I can not see what anyone besides those with direct financial interest have to gain from the any loss of this land to development. Given the nature of the land as being crown should it not benefit more than just a select few, this sentiment is even echoed in the memorandum of understanding over these lands "ensuring the site will be in good hands to plan its future on behalf of public interests in the area"<sup>1</sup>.

In regards to the second question, well here we go:

I'm sure most of us have heard the statistic that the average mouthful of food in North America travels 2000miles to get to our plates (if not you have now); The cost of our food is heavily dependent upon the cost of transport. Now anyone who has been to fill up at the pump knows fuel has not exactly been getting any cheaper, and the jump in prices is never going to stop. Therefore the price of food will definitely travel right along with it, not good news for a province that as of now only produces 48% of its own food according to B.C.'s Ministry of Agriculture and Lands in their 2006 food security survey<sup>2</sup>. But the Garden City Lands is only 136acres does it really matter if we loose it, it's a drop in the bucket right? Absolutely, the loss of lands like this could initiate a precedent and will inevitably induce increased pressure that will likely lead to loss of other agricultural lands (Are you getting my point now of just how this issue becomes not only of concern to us here in Richmond but also everyone in the province?)

<sup>1</sup> [http://www-comm.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pages/release/bckgrnd/2005/bg005\\_e.htm](http://www-comm.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pages/release/bckgrnd/2005/bg005_e.htm)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/Food\\_Self\\_Reliance/BCFoodSelfReliance\\_Report.pdf](http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/Food_Self_Reliance/BCFoodSelfReliance_Report.pdf)

To those who say, well it's in the middle of the city it doesn't make sense to farm there. Actually it makes perfect sense, options proposed such as community farming and agricultural research would add an amazing gem to the center of this beautiful city; one which most urban communities would be envious. Alternatives such as this enhance quality of life promote a greater sense of community and truly fit the definition of sustainable development, a term which it seems this city's planning sector doesn't quite grasp.

The NPV of this land ~~is~~ untouched is incalc.  
∴ can't refer to w/ a dollar amt. (I can see why many of you don't understand our concern, b/c you don't understand the value when it isn't in terms of \$'s)

On my next point, developments like those proposed for this land along with the area already under development just north of Alderbridge road will bring 10's of thousands more residents to this area; do we really think that rapidly developing an area which is known to be in the top three cities at risk in Canada from climate change (ie. rising sea levels)? This is coupled with the fact that we lie in one of the highest risk locations for an earthquake and the fact that there has been not so much as even a mention to my knowledge of investing in infrastructure to address these issues (Such as dyke upgrades?). The build first ask questions attitude is not going to cut it here.

If your looking at what I have said right now saying who does this guy think he is Nostradamous!!! then forget the doomsday scenario then and consider this: How long does it take the average Richmondite to get to work right now? And how long will it take you with an extra 15000+ residents all trying to get on the same dilapidated bridges? Sure the sky train will save us right? But lets be honest we are no different than most North Americans - we're addicted to our cars so don't count on it. What about our hospital, even with out an emergency situation, can it handle the influx of people that will follow with this development and those that accompany it? → David Suzuki

Finally (though believe me there are countless social losses that I have not addressed), the ALR was created to preserve the food security of this Province, how is it suddenly we can alter this sentiment. Some may say oh well we can just exchange it for some other land right? WRONG! All lands from land class 1-4 were already placed in the reserve upon the ALR's creation, therefore anything added is guaranteed to be inferior. This fact makes the "lack" of development in Richmond in the last couple decades no surprise: This is some of the best agricultural land in B.C..

The government of this country and the Municipality have an obligation to make choices that will if not enhance at least not degrade the quality of life for it's citizens and to act in their best interests. The removal of some of the most fertile land that this Province offers does not demonstrate adherence in any way shape or form.

↳ hand written end.