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Chief Campbell Chan - 26 yrs Canada
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Your Worship, member of Council:

My name is Lawrence Lim and I live at 7580 Lombard Road. I would like to speak on 5 main points. I do apologize for missing my turns to speak earlier. I think the Council and ALC need to hear from the silent majority, who may not be active.

unseeded
or conquered.

Lawrence
Lim

Point #1 - We do not own the Land

I attended a Forum last night organized by the Richmond Youth Services on the topic of Intercultural Relationship with the First Nations. I heard the narration by Councillor Larry Grant, of the Musqueam First Nation. He spoke with great passion, the history of Richmond, before the arrival of the European settlers, how his ancestors, welcomed the European settlers into their ancestral lands to have a future of peaceful co-existence.

Richmond has always been part of the Musqueam First Nation's traditional territory. There were a number of houses on Garry Point and the Point family originates from. His Honour, the Honourable Steven Point, the Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia originates from those settlers in Gary Point. They were given the last name of Point because they were from Garry Point.

Councillor Larry Grant, has fond memories of harvesting wild blueberries in the bog on the Garden City Lands. Before the urbanization of Richmond, there were many sloughs flowing throughout Richmond. The Musqueam First Nation people were fishing from those sloughs, salmon were swimming upstream and the Musqueams were able to harvest them from the slough. The look forward to the ducks and snow geese as they returned during spring (like we are seeing today). They will be feeding on ducks and geese meat for the next few months. They will then venture up-river for deer meat in the summer.

There is no question in my mind that Richmond is part of the unseeded territory of the Musqueam First Nations. The Musqueam First Nation are gentle and patient people. Even though they have been taken advantage off during the course of the last 150 years, they have never been any violent confrontation with British Columbia, or with the Federal Government. They have submitted their land claim in June 1984 which I have a copy and it is still not resolved after 20 years. They are trying to abide by the rules set out by the government of Canada.

I would like to thank the Musqueam First Nation for their generosity in agreeing to negotiate rather than to litigate on the Garden City Land. It will take time, but I am convinced that the Musqueam First Nation will eventually end up owning the Garden City Land if they continue with their legal route. Instead, they have chosen to reach a compromised settlement of ending up with only 25% of the land and willing to share the balance of the land with CLC and the City of Richmond under the terms of the MOU.

I would like to congratulate the Musqueam First Nation, CLC and the City Council for the very innovative MOU, in allowing the City of Richmond take ownership of 68 acres of the Land. At the moment, the City of Richmond does not have any legal interest in the Garden City Land, it owns nothing and has no direct or indirect claim to the Garden City Land. If the MOU fails, the City has zero.

If the MOU proceeds and the City take ownership of the 68 acres, the City can then adopt its plan for a variety of uses as outlined in the current proposal. We can have our playing fields, parks and the Exhibition Centre. We can even have the urban garden and community garden that the opposition members are proposing. Let it be clear that it is the intention of the City to support small scale urban garden and community garden. If the MOU fails, the City has absolutely nothing and you can forget about your urban garden and community garden. The question then becomes, how much of the 68 acres should the City committed towards urban garden and community garden. I will leave that discussion for another day.

The opposition to this block applications seems to speak in term of wishing to have urban and commercial farming on the Garden City Lands as if they own the land. They are speaking as if the City owns the land or the Federal Government owns the land. Let me remind you, the land is currently owned fee simple by CLC and the Musqueam First Nations jointly and held in trust in the name of CLC.

We must respect the legal rights of these two parties as owners of the land and let us stop telling the legal owners what to do in their land as if it belongs to you. Let me ask the opposition: How do you like someone else to tell you what to do with your own backyard ? How do you like someone telling you to rip off your lawn and force you to have a community garden ? Come on, let us respect the rights of the property owners. You are not the property owner.

It is only after the MOU passes and the land is removed from the ALR that the City will own the 68 acres. At that time, you can all come together and work with the City on how much of the land should be used for community and urban farming. At this time, you should be supporting this block application and ensure that the City will take ownership of the 68 acres first. I will therefore encourage the opposition to adopt this rational approach. Let us not put the cart before the horse.

Point # 2 – The Garden City Land will not be farmed commercially.

One of the Council member even suggested that he does not care who owns it, as long as it stays in ALR. I can assure you that under that scenario, the land will still not be farmed. I do not think the Musqueam First Nation and CLC are interested in farming the land because it is not the right place for any large scale commercial farming that will make any economic sense. The Musqueam First Nation are historically hunters and gatherers.

Yunguan is produce food. - growing.

- 3 -

They are fisherman, hunters and gatherers of local berries, they are not farmers.

The land will just stay wasted for years to come and the City will not have the 68 acres to work with. We will not be able to have our community farm and urban farm on the property. There is absolute no guarantee that in the next round of negotiation, the City will get anything. I say, a bird in hand is worth two in a bush.

Let us support this block application and at least we can still have our community and urban farm on part of the City's portion.

Point #3 –We are incapable of being self-sufficient in our food supply.

If you go to Safeway and check out the grocery section, you will find most of the items on sale are not grown in Canada. You will probably find potatoes imported from Idaho, Pineapples from Hawaii, rice from Thailand, snow peas from Mexico, grapes from Chile, apples from New Zealand. The honest truth is that we are part of a global economy and we are able to enjoy all these varieties of groceries from all over the world because we have the ability to pay for such imports. You can blame it on our seasonal weather and in the case of the Garden City Land, the soil condition will support only a small variety of crops. Obviously we cannot grow bananas, mangos, rice or even wheat and even coconuts on the Garden City Lands.

The ability to pay for such imports is dependent on our ability to earn money generated from our economic activities. The question then becomes, what is the best use of the Garden City Lands in order to generate the financial resources for us to continue to have our current supply of good. The opposition may say that we retain the land in ALR for agriculture, so we can sell and generate financial resources to pay for the other imported groceries.

The question is then, is large scale commercial agricultural activities on the Garden City Land the most productive way to generate the financial resources as compared to other more productive use of the land. The answer is simple. The answer is NO. The jobs that will be generated by the economic activities from the development of the Garden City Land; the pleasure of having municipal amenities such as parks and soccer fields; the housing that it will provide for economic active citizens of Richmond, who will create jobs and whose jobs will generate the financial resources for our economy; the property taxes that will be generated from the increase in housing stock will have a much higher economic return than growing carrots, cabbages and blueberries. We can still have our small scale community garden and urban gardens.

Point #4 Richmond is not an agricultural small town, it is becoming a modern vibrant metropolitan City.

I am very excited about the City Centre Plan for the City of Richmond. It outlines the future of what the City will look like in the next few decades. We are establishing ourselves as a self-dependent City instead of just a bedroom community for Vancouver. The future is very exciting as we move into the 21st century. I want to be part of this maturity of Richmond as we became one of the greatest cities in the world. I did not settle in Richmond to be part of an agricultural small town. If I wanted to do that, I would have settled in Chilliwack.

If you look at some old photos of Richmond say in 1920s. You will see that Richmond is just a bunch of farms. If you take a drive east of No. 6 Road, this was what the west side of Richmond looks like during the 1920s, just a small backward agricultural small town setting.

The same type of argument can similarly be used at that time to retain Richmond for agriculture. The City of Richmond as we know today will not exist. There will still be giant ditches on No. 1 Road, No. 2 Road, No. 3 Road and No. 4 Road. There was a choice for Richmond to become part of an exciting metropolis City or to remain a bunch of rural farm. Our forefathers made the right choice, today, we are part of a prosperous and progressive City.

Point # 5 Garden City Land is capable of providing much needed land for residential development to accommodate the resident of our City.

There will be about 70 acres of high-density development under the MOU and the Garden City Land will provide accommodation for thousands of Richmond residents. If we are unable to develop the Garden City Land, where are the future residents going to live? They may have to move them to Aldergrove and Abbotsford and they will need to drive and commute to Richmond and Vancouver to work. This will add more traffic on the road, causing more air-pollution which I am sure that opposition understands very well.

Conclusion

I am therefore confident that the Council members will support this block application and will support this very attractive proposal currently outlined by the MOU. The Garden City Land is part of the City of Richmond's future. And the future is not in large scale agriculture on the Garden City Lands, the future is for the Garden City Land to be part of the integral piece of Metropolitan City of Richmond, and we can still have our community garden and urban agriculture.

Let acknowledge the generosity of the Musqueam First Nation in sharing the Garden City Land with us. It is a showcase example of how urban land claims can be resolved, by negotiation for mutual benefit to all parties, rather than litigation.

If this block application fail, the Musqueam First Nation will have no other choice than to protect their interest and I can assure you that they will end up with the Garden City Land. ALR does not apply to them as it is a provincial piece of legislation and the Musqueam First Nation do not need to abide by the ALR restrictions and they will do whatever is necessary for the self interest of the Musqueam First Nation. That may include the development of the entire 136 acres at their sole discretion. The Tsawwassen First Nation, the Squamish First Nation and the Burrard First Nation have already demonstrated their ability to carry out major real estate development at their own discretion. I bet the Musqueam First Nation has the ability and power to do the same.

If that happen, we have absolutely no control. With the MOU, we have control over 68 acres of the Garden City Lands.

Let us all support this block application and we all will become winners, including the opposition members, whom I greatly admired for their emotional commitment on their belief. Let us not let this bird fly away and having to search for them in the bushes of the Garden City Lands.

sustainability - grow you - :-
150 years - :-
balance but