



**To:** Richmond City Council

**Date:** March 30, 2026

**From:** Wayne Craig  
Chair, Development Permit Panel

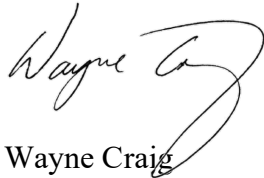
**File:** DP 21-944022

**Re:** **Development Permit Panel Meeting Held on January 15, 2025**

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### Staff Recommendation

That the recommendation of the Panel to authorize the issuance of Development Permit (DP 21-944022) for the property located at 18840 River Road, be endorsed and the Permit so issued.



Wayne Craig  
General Manager, Planning and Development

## Panel Report

The Development Permit Panel considered the following item at its meeting held on January 15, 2025.

### DP 21-944022 — COAST CONSTRUCTION — 18840 RIVER ROAD (January 15, 2025)

The Panel considered a Development Permit (DP) application to permit the construction of a single-family dwelling at 18840 River Road on a site zoned “Agriculture (AG1)” and designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA).

The applicant’s architect, Czar Villanueva, of ATA Architectural Design Ltd., and the applicant’s environmental consultant, Daniel McAllister, of Ecologic Consultants, provided a brief visual presentation highlighting:

- The proposed development includes a two-storey farmhouse, which is located within an area of the subject property that is designated as ESA.
- The proposed vehicular access to the site will be from River Road through the existing driveway.
- The farm home plate will be setback by 21.4 metres from the front (north) property line, to accommodate and address future City dike infrastructure upgrades along River Road.
- The owner intends to improve other areas of the site for lavender farming.
- The proposed barn (which is not subject to the ESA DP) will be used for lavender processing operations and as a parking area for farm-related machinery.
- A comprehensive baseline inventory of the site indicated that the proposed ESA compensation and enhancement area currently provides habitat to birds, bats and small mammals. This area would be enhanced through the removal of invasive plants and planting of native coniferous and deciduous trees, shrubs and grasses.
- 50 per cent of the trees and shrubs proposed to be planted will be fruit-bearing to promote biodiversity in the area.
- 10 to 25 per cent of trees to be planted will be conifers.
- A Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) will supervise the planting to ensure plants are installed and spaced appropriately. Planted trees will be monitored to ensure their survival

Staff noted that (i) the farm home plate has been set back from River Road to accommodate future diking infrastructure upgrades to be undertaken by the City at a future date, (ii) the applicant has proposed an area of over 3,700 square metres at the south end of the site for the ESA compensation and enhancement area to compensate for the encroachment of the proposed single-family building and associated structures within the farm home plate into an ESA designated area, (iii) the proposed ESA compensation area will be enhanced through planting with a mixture of native shrubs and trees, (iv) no enhancements are proposed within the Riparian Management Area (RMA) along River Road as this area will be impacted by future diking improvements, (v) the proposed lavender farm and the barn structure are not part of the subject ESA DP application as it is limited only to the single-family residential dwelling and associated structures within the farm home plate and

(vi) the subject site includes a hooked property located south of the Railway Right-of-Way, which is not intended to be farmed or subject to any ESA enhancements or improvement.

In reply to queries from the Panel, the applicant noted that (i) the proposed landscaping for the farmhouse is not proposed to be significant and gravel surface treatment is proposed around the barn, (ii) the proposed lighting for the farmhouse and the barn will be directed away from their adjacent properties, (iii) permeable limestone is proposed for the driveway from River Road to the carport of the farmhouse and gravel surface treatment is proposed for further access to the lavender farm, (iv) the elevation of the fill areas on the subject site associated with the lavender farm and the driveway through the RMA at the front of the subject property would consider the future diking upgrades along River Road to ensure consistency and compliance with Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) fill regulations, (v) a septic field for the septic tank will be provided adjacent to the carport within the farm home plate, (vi) the proposed ESA enhancement scheme for the site includes the removal of invasive plant species and planting and retention of suitable native shrubs and trees, among others, within the ESA compensation area, (vii) the proposed ESA restoration and enhancement measures would enhance the wildlife features of the ESA, provide suitable habitat for birds, bats and amphibians currently observed in the area and significantly improve the ecological function of the area.

Michaela Lynn (18740 River Road) delegated to the panel, expressing concern regarding the applicant's odour management plan to control and mitigate odours from on-site lavender processing operations, the number and size of trucks accessing the property to support farm operations and the extent and location of the farm access gravel driveway beyond the existing farmhouse driveway.

In reply to Ms. Lynn's queries, the applicant noted that (i) the lavender processing operations will be done inside the barn which will be designed to be airtight to prevent and/or mitigate odour coming out from the barn, (ii) large trucks are not anticipated to access the site due to the small size of the farming area and associated farming operations on the site, and (iii) the potential location of the farm access driveway would be between the farmhouse and the barn past the proposed farmhouse driveway and will not be in close proximity to the adjacent property to the west.

The Panel expressed support for the project, noting (i) the ESA compensation measures proposed by the applicant as part of the subject application, and (ii) the applicant's approach to focus ESA compensation and enhancement measures in areas that currently provide some habitat function. With regard to the landscaping on the farm home plate and ALC fill requirements for the subject site, staff were directed to work with the applicant to (i) investigate opportunities to extend the planting of native species within the farm home plate and (ii) clarify the process to be followed with respect to fill requirements and permissions from the ALC prior to the application moving forward to Council for consideration.

In response to directions and comments from the Panel, the applicant has agreed to undertake additional landscaping works within the farm homeplate. The additional landscaping is to include the planting of native tree and shrub species such as Bigleaf maple, Nootka rose, Oceanspray and Sword fern adjacent to the carport, the proposed farmhouse and the septic field

within the farm home plate area. The final quantities and placement of landscaping will be determined based on post-construction site conditions in consultation with a landscape professional and to the satisfaction of the Director, Development. With respect to fill placement, the Notice of Intent (NOI) previously approved by the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) in 2021 applies to the farming area, and the owner will be required to request an extension of this NOI in order to import soil and prepare the area for lavender cultivation. The proposed house and farm home plate are not subject to an ALC NOI application, and the owner will work with the City to obtain a Soil Deposit Permit, prior to Building Permit issuance, for the importation of fill associated with the house and other residential construction within the farm home plate.

The Panel recommends the Permit be issued.