



Agricultural and Food Policy Committee Minutes

Meeting Room 125A and 125B
Surrey Operations Centre
(Works Yard)
6651 - 148 Street
Surrey, B.C.
TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 2024
Time: 6:00 p.m.

Present:

Councillor Bose, Chair
Councillor Bains, Vice Chair
R. Brar
H. Dhillon
P. Harrison
S. Keulen
M. Schutzbank
R. Sihota
R. Vanderende

Absent:

D. Bondar
B. Favaro
S. Rai
R. Tamis
W. Kim

Staff Present:

M. Kischnick, Senior Planner
J. Kew, Planner
S. Meng, Administrative Assistant

A. ADOPTIONS

1. Adoption of the Agenda

It was Moved by P. Harrison
Seconded by R. Brar
That the agenda of the Agricultural and Food
Policy Committee meeting of March 12, 2024, be adopted.
Carried

2. Adoption of the Minutes – February 13, 2024

It was Moved by R. Sihota
Seconded by S. Keulen
That the minutes of the Agricultural and
Food Policy Committee meeting held February 13, 2024, be adopted.
Carried

B. DELEGATIONS

This section had no items to consider.

C. STAFF PRESENTATIONS**1. Development Application 7923-0343-00**

Jonathan Kew, Planner

Address: 16810 16 Avenue Surrey BC

The Planner summarized the report dated March 1, 2024, regarding Development Application No. 7923-0343-00 which proposes placement of fill to permit a garden sales use and improvement of agricultural soils. The following information was highlighted:

- An application to the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) for Non-Farm Use (Placement of Fill).
- Subject site is 3.1 hectares within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), zoned General Agriculture Zone (A-1) and the site is classified as farmland.
- Western portion of the site has been cleared for concrete storage bins.
- Applicant is seeking to establish a nursery and garden centre.
- A farm retail / greenhouse building is proposed to the southeast of the gravel lot.
- The purpose of application is to permit the fill that has been brought onto the site and to shift fill from the interior towards the eastern portion of the site to establish a garden centre / nursery.
- The existing gravel area on the west portion of the site will be utilized for parking, vehicles, and delivery circulation.
- The proposed rehabilitation of topsoil on the central portion of the site and subsequent relocation to the eastern portion of the site is intended to improve soil quality and benefit crop production.
- The central portion of the site would be refilled with gravel and established as the growing / display area for the centre (i.e. container garden).
- The existing concrete storage bins would be shifted onto the central portion of the site. The storage bins are intended to store topsoil, mulch, and planting materials.
- The area currently used for the storage bins is proposed to be remediated as a three-metre landscape buffer in alignment with the City's Green Infrastructure Corridor Network.
- The overall garden centre is proposed to occupy 0.92 hectares or approximately 30% of the lot.
- The container garden is proposed to occupy 0.58 hectares of the site. This area would be regraded, with 870 cubic metres of topsoil removed and replaced by 550 cubic metres of gravel.
- The overall proposal requires ALC approval.
- According to Section 25(3) of the ALC Act, a resolution of the local government is required to allow the applicant to proceed to the ALC for consideration.
- Should the subject application be referred to the ALC by Council, the ALC may do one of the following:
 - refuse permission for the use applied for;
 - grant permission, with or without limits or conditions, for the use applied for; or
 - grant permission for an alternative use, with or without conditions, as applicable.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Planner provided the following information:

- The nursery will include a greenhouse building, proposed to be 92 square metres. A portion of the greenhouse is intended for propagation and retail frontage.
- Nursery area contains storage area, parking, vehicles and delivery circulation. The garden centre is proposed to occupy 0.92 hectares.
- The site plan indicates a total of 19 parking spots.
- ALC indicates the general proposal and use is acceptable by the applicant.
- An Agronomist report to substantiate the soil rehabilitation and relocation proposal could be provided by applicant if requested from ALC.

The Committee provided the following comments:

- A committee member raised concerns about significant runoff of water with the amount of rainfall on the greenhouses.
- Chair stated growing these type of trees is not a benefit to agriculture. However it is an allowable use which makes it an exception.
- Chair noted that the applicant's ALC application states that the south abutting property is residential. However, however that property is part of ALR and farmland.
- Multiple committee members raised a concern regarding the quantity of existing gravel fill unpermitted on the property and indicated that rehabilitation should happen before any fill permit for import is granted.
- A committee member expressed support of the application as the applicant is positively contributing to agriculture in trying to establish the property with a recognized ALR use.
- Chair expressed concerns regarding the allowable use within ALR and a permit to fill gravel. He further states the applicant seems to put less gravel than the soil and that could create a shallow top soil flow.
- A committee member expressed concerns regarding how the gravel resembles a stockpile fill in the center and if rehabilitation takes place, the possibility of damaging the rest of the land.
- A committee member expressed support to this application and suggested for the applicant to confirm the onsite material used and to work with a professional to provide basic grading plan due to the sloping site and to accompany a simple sketch with it.
- A committee member stated the applicant should ensure the grades remain 0.5 metres and the fill application should have a cross section of the fill due to a possibility of larger volume of fill being displaced than the volume of fill coming in.

It was

Moved by R. Sihota

Seconded by R. Brar

That the Agricultural and Food Policy

Committee recommend that the General Manager of Planning and Development support Development Application 7923-0343-00 and confirm the quality of fill visible in the aerial photo, and that any grade changes in excess 0.5 metres are not anticipated on the southern portion and to ensure proper stormwater management plan is in place for runoff from the structure.

Carried

2. **Development Application 7923-0363-00**

Jonathan Kew, Planner

Address: 3230 176 Street (Highway 15) Surrey BC

The Planner summarized the report dated March 1, 2024, regarding Development Application No. 7923-0363-00 which proposes rezoning from “General Agriculture Zone (A-1)” to “Comprehensive Development Zone (CD)” based on A-1.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Planner and Senior Planner provided the following information:

- Retail footprint of 298 square metres is requested which exceeds current Zoning Bylaw allowance of 125 square meters.
- Applicant received Notice of Intent approval from the ALC but has not applied for a new fill permit (the site has fill from a previous permit issued in 2020).
- Senior Planner stated City of Surrey bylaw is different from ALC regulations – which is reason for application. Applicant is proposing to match ALC regulations of up to 300 square metres of commercial space. CD zoning of the property is required based on current City of Surrey A-1 zoning bylaw regulations that regulate less retail area than ALC regulations allow.
- Applicant is not proposing a single family dwelling or requesting that the proposed farm building have internal habitable area.
- Senior Planner stated the property is rezoning A-1 caveat of farm retail use from 125 square metres to 300 square metres.
- Senior Planner indicated that a stand alone Retail building could be considered by a CD Bylaw, but only accessory Agricultural office and retail use would be permitted and no residential on the top floor.

The Committee provided the following comments:

- A committee member expressed concerns regarding soil erosion and to ensure the top soil is preserved.
- A committee member expressed the applicant is very passionate about farming.
- Multiple committee members expressed support to this application.
- A committee member stated that the top floor unit looks like it may be intended for residential use instead of office space, which would not be permitted under the A-1 Zone.
- A committee member expressed concerns regarding that the new CD bylaw should not take any provisions under A-1 zoning permissible uses.

M. Schutzbank joined the meeting at 6:37 p.m.

It was

Moved by R. Brar

Seconded by H. Dhillon

That the Agricultural and Food Policy

Committee recommend that the General Manager of Planning and Development support Development Application 7923-0363-00 and its CD Zone.

Carried

3. **Development Application 7923-0295-00**

Jonathan Kew, Planner

Address: 4311 King George Boulevard

The Planner summarized the report dated March 1, 2024, regarding Development Application No. 7923-0295-00 which proposes a Development Variance Permit (DVP) to increase the height of a freestanding telecommunications tower from 12 metres (40 ft.) to 41 metres (134.5 ft.).

In response to questions from the Committee, the Planner, Senior Planner, and Applicant provided the following information:

- Height of the proposed telecommunications tower is 41 metres.
- Carrier for the telecommunication tower is Freedom Mobile.
- In response to Committee concerns about what appears to be additional driveway access on design drawing, the Senior Planner stated the applicant would need to apply for road access if the applicant wanted to create a new driveway access point, and contact the transportation division. This application is not related to a new driveway however and is only for the variance to the height of the telecommunication tower.
- Applicant confirmed they will be only using the existing driveways along King George Boulevard and can request to put light on top of the tower with approval by NAV Canada.
- Applicant stated the compound size is 5 feet by 8 feet with small footprint.

The Committee provided the following comments:

- Chair raised a serious concern with potential driveway addition along King George Boulevard as there are two accessible egress existing already.
- A committee member expressed concerns regarding height of the tower.
- A committee member expressed support of this application as long as it receives NAV Canada approval.
- Multiple committee members recommend the applicant to install a light on top of the tower to ensure airspace safety for low flying aircraft.
- Chair indicated the drawings should be revised to reflect the indication of driveways being used.

It was

Moved by M. Schutzbank

Seconded by R. Brar

That the Agricultural and Food Policy

Committee recommend that the General Manager of Planning and Development support Development Application 7923-0295-00 with the addition of a light on top of the telecommunication tower due to airspace safety measures and to utilize the existing access to the nursery.

Carried

Councillor Bains left the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

D. NEW BUSINESS

1. Farm Crop Identification Signs in Partnership with Surrey Farmers Institute

- The Surrey Farmers Institute aims to collaborate with the city to install signage promoting farms, focusing on private farms and side roads in order to increase awareness of farmers to the public.
- Chair mentioned in the City of Delta there are signs identifying crops grown on farm fields which brings awareness to the public which began with a pilot program.
- Senior Planner stated similar topic was brought forward to the committee in 2014.
- Senior Planner mentioned there are existing Sign Permit allowance for signage to be displayed on farms during growing seasons, as well as allowance for permanent signage options.
- Chair indicated the purpose of putting signage up on farms is to identify agricultural production within the city.
- A committee member expressed against the idea of allowing the city to design the signages.
- A committee member expressed the tractor signs was effective to identify tractor routes across the city.
- A committee member stated in addition to crop signage, a sign saying "Welcome to Surrey Farmland" should be created and placed near the highway exit 275 or through truck crossings near the border to the United States.
- A committee member suggested public art related to agriculture to be promoted across the city in public transit areas and the possibility to include an agricultural public art fund similar to city's current public art fund.

It was

Moved by R. Brar

Seconded by M. Schutzbank

That the Agricultural and Food Policy

Committee recommend that the General Manager of Planning and General Manager of Engineering to collaborate and partner with Surrey Farmers Institute to promote agriculture and support installation of farm crop signage in farming areas of Surrey.

Carried by members remaining

E. INTEGRITY OF THE AGRICULTURAL LAND

- This section had no items to discuss.

F. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Agricultural and Food Policy Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, April 9, 2024 with proposed location in Meeting Room 125 A and B at Surrey Operations Centre.

G. ADJOURNMENT

The Agricultural and Food Policy Committee adjourned at 7:39 p.m.

Jennifer Ficocelli, City Clerk

Councillor Bose, Chairperson