



**Staff Report Supplement
Application # MM – 34530**

**Applicants: Susie & George Friesen, Southgate Poultry Farm Ltd.
Alfred (Fred) Redekop
Davalen Enterprises Ltd. (Debra & Henry Penner)**

DATE RECEIVED: September 3, 2002

DATE PREPARED: April 3, 2008

TO: Chair and Commissioners – South Coast Panel

FROM: Tony Pellett, Regional Planner

N.B. For basic information see original staff report dated October 21, 2002

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Since the original staff report, the City of Abbotsford applied in 2004 for the conditional exclusion of 8 discrete blocks of land (totalling 372 ha) from the ALR to facilitate new job creation and economic growth. By Resolution #384/2005 (dated July 28, 2005), the Commission rendered its decision on 7 of the 8 discrete blocks but deferred its decision on a (72.3 ha) area including the subject lands pending discussion with the Abbotsford Airport Authority as to its long range plans for airport expansion and a review of a detailed plan from the Authority. None of those plans were ever completed.

In 2002, while the City of Abbotsford was preparing its 'block' application and undertaking a lengthy process of public involvement, the subject application was made pursuant to section 30(1) of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*. It proposed exclusion of three parcels totalling 10.6 ha for future development related to airport expansion. All three parcels were in active agricultural use, but in at least the case of the Friesen/Southgate property, it was necessary to decide whether to invest in new poultry barns or continue to make do with the existing barns until it was time to convert the land to airport-industrial or aviation-related development. As noted in the attached letter dated March 11, 2008, that decision is now extremely urgent.

Because the City's proposal involved a process to establish a fund for agricultural improvements, the City did not wish to encourage a proliferation of individual applications aimed at achieving exclusion of land separate from the City's process (and thereby escaping any requirement to participate in the agricultural fund). The City therefore asked that the Commission hold any new 'individual' applications in abeyance pending the 'block' application. By Resolution #647/2002, the Commission tabled the subject application "pending receipt of additional information referred to by City staff at the November 15, 2002 hearing [i.e. the meeting with the applicants] as well as specific information addressing the issues of the City of Abbotsford's industrial land policies in the context of the Fraser Valley Regional Growth Strategy".

In 2005, the Commission resolved to defer its decision on the airport lands and any decision on the subject application. Now, through the effluxion of time, the deferred portion of the City's application is no longer actionable thus the subject application is no longer deferred. The Commission is therefore in a position to meet with the applicants and then consider a decision.

STAFF COMMENTS:

In considering its decision on the application to exclude the subject lands, the Commission may wish to take into consideration that for the following reasons, the subject lands are highly suited to farming:

- the subject lands have been in agricultural production for generations;
- the subject lands have an improved capability rating of (1) and are thus capable of the widest range of cropping opportunities in addition to the non-soil bound agricultural uses currently being practiced on these lands;
- on the west side of Townline Road, these are among the three largest ALR parcels and are the only grouping of large ALR parcels; and
- the decision on Application #MM-35445 refused in its entirety the requested exclusion of the discrete block of lands on the east side of Townline Road.

Moreover there is currently no plan to put the subject lands into aviation or airport-related uses as contemplated when this application was originally submitted.

END OF REPORT

Signature

Date