

Staff Report
Application #O-35696-3
Applicant: South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority
(TransLink)

DATE PREPARED: November 30, 2007

TO: Chair and Commissioners – South Coast Panel

FROM: Tony Pellett, Regional Planner

PROPOSAL: To revise the agricultural enhancement works approved for the Golden Ears Bridge project (“Abernethy Connector” portion)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Commission approved the Golden Ears Bridge project through Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge, with special attention to the needs of specific farms. The Commission was guided in part by the Table of Commitments and Assurances developed through the Environmental Assessment process. For the three farms at the east end of the project, the Commission’s Resolution #2/2005 decision letter reads as follows:

13. Pelton Reforestation Nursery – PID 001-683-519

The proposed alignment cuts off the southeast corner of the property and also requires special treatment because of light sensitivity as part of the growing procedure for trees intended for different latitudes.

Approval of the proposed road across this parcel is subject to

- a. completion of all but the second of the bullet points of the property-specific Commitments supplied with the application,*
- b. consolidation of the severed area with the Hampton farm or consultation with the landowner and the Commission followed by completion of the second bullet point of the property-specific Commitments supplied with the application,*
- c. completion of the 1st, 3rd, 4th and 5th bullet points of the Operations and Maintenance Commitments supplied with the application and*
- d. completion of flood prevention works as contemplated by Section E3 of the Commitments and Assurances supplied with the application.*

14. Hampton and Laity “Century Farms”– PIDs 010-991-930 and 012-853-747

The Hampton farm is one of three farm parcels which the application proposes would be severed by the road, but this is the only one where the application would provide a grade-separated crossing. The application also proposes a frontage road across the Laity farm to divert 209 Street traffic to the 210 Street intersection, for the purpose of simplifying the movement of farm vehicles from these two farms to separate farm parcels to the north.

It proposes that the 210 Street intersection be signaled “when traffic volumes warrant”.

Approval of the proposed road across these farms is subject to

- a. completion of all but the third of the bullet points of the property-specific Commitments supplied with the application,*
- b. a commitment to keep the Commission informed on a regular basis of farm-related traffic operational and safety issues at the intersection of 128 Avenue and 210 Street and to sig-nalize the intersection (with farmer-initiated signals if all parties agree) when required by the Commission or other competent authority to resolve safety and operational issues involving farm traffic (which may conceivably be earlier than timing based solely on traffic volumes),*
- c. completion of all but the second of the bullet points of the Operations and Maintenance Commitments supplied with the application and*

d. completion of flood prevention works as contemplated by Section E3 of the Commitments and Assurances supplied with the application.

A problem has developed with respect to 14.a: one of the property-specific Commitments was that the grade-separation would be designed for farm equipment at foreseeable sizes, but for the farm underpass to be high enough for the original design specifications, it has to be located near the west side of the Hampton farm,

- blocking the view of the area north of the road from the Hampton farm house,
- making it almost impossible to shield the “dark” portion of the Pelton farm from headlights,
- making it difficult to access from Hampton farm driveways and
- making it virtually useless as a way of getting Laity farm equipment north of the route.

In addition, the Hampton farm does not use motorized equipment; the family has operated the farm for over 100 years using draught horses.

In meeting with the three farms, TransLink has agreed to build the requested smaller facility. Because it is smaller, it does not have to be so far from the 210 Street intersection, but it will not be possible for it to be used by Laity farm equipment to crossing the Connector. Accordingly, TransLink will install the farmer-initiated “demand” signals from the outset of the project.

STAFF COMMENTS:

The agreed modification is clearly better for all parties, but it requires Commission reconsideration of Resolution #2/2005.

All interested parties (the three farmers, TransLink and the District of Maple Ridge) are aware of the revised proposal and the fact it requires Commission reconsideration. TransLink has supplied written evidence that Bill Hampton (the owner of the land on which the grade separation will be built) concurs and consents. It is therefore not necessary for the Commission to issue a formal notice of its intent to reconsider that one provision of Resolution #2/2005.

The specific changes are: installation of demand signals at 210 Street from the outset,
relocation of the underpass 180 m to the east,
lowering the maximum underpass clearance from 4.3 m to 2.4 m,
narrowing the maximum underpass width from 4.3 m to 4.0 m and
constructing a gravel driveway from 209 Street.

There is no change to the requirement that the underpass be lighted, nor to the requirement that the “dark” area of the Pelton farm be shielded from light, notably from headlight beams as vehicles cross over the underpass and approach the bend in the road.

END OF REPORT

Signature

Date