



Agricultural Land Commission
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December 20, 2007

Reply to the attention of Brandy Ridout
ALC File: T-37623

Fiona Forshaw
1801 - 46th Avenue
Vernon, BC V1T3P4

Dear Ms. Forshaw:

Re: **Application for non-farm use in the Agricultural Land Reserve**

Please find attached the Minutes of Resolution #579/2007 outlining the Commission's decision as it relates to the above noted application. As agent, it is your responsibility to notify your clients accordingly.

Yours truly,

PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION

Per:


Erik Karlsen, Chair

cc: Regional District of North Okanagan (07-0189-B-ALR)

Enclosure: Minutes

Discussion

Assessment of Agricultural Capability

In assessing agricultural capability, the Commission refers in part to agricultural capability mapping and ratings. The ratings are interpreted using the Canada Land Inventory (CLI), 'Soil Capability Classification for Agriculture' system, or the BC Land Inventory (BCLI), 'Land Capability Classification for Agriculture in B.C.' system.

The agricultural capability of the soil of the portion of the subject property proposed for non-farm use is predominantly 70% Class 2 with a limitation of undesirable soil structure and 30% Class 2 with limitations of undesirable soil structure and topography. Class 2 land has minor limitations that require good ongoing management practices or slightly restrict the range of crops, or both.

Assessment of Agricultural Suitability

The Commission assessed whether factors such as encroaching non-farm development have caused or will cause the land to become unsuitable for agriculture. The Commission does not believe there are external factors that render the land unsuitable for agricultural use.

Assessment of Impact on Agriculture

The Commission also assessed the impact of the proposal against the long term goal of preserving agricultural land.

The Commission's main concern with the proposal was its belief that the presence of the school could limit the potential use of the remainder of the property because normal farm practices may be compromised due to the presence of young children on the property every day.

In addition, the proposal also included putting up volleyball nets and using fenced fields for soccer. As such, the Commission was concerned that the school use would expand in the future.

The applicant notes that "the concept of this program requires agricultural accessibility and could not be attainable in urbanized surroundings." While the Commission is supportive of integrating agriculture into an early education program, it did not believe that the program had to be situated in the ALR. As the garden area was proposed to be used as an outdoor play space with playhouses, sand boxes and small climbers, the Commission did not see how the children were to be exposed to agriculture, except that they would see it occurring on the property and adjacent properties.

The Commission reviewed all of the letters of support for the proposal, noting that many people indicated a shortage of childcare facilities. While the Commission acknowledged that there may be problems with adequate facilities in the Vernon area, it did not believe that the use should be located in the ALR.

Conclusions

1. That the land under application has agricultural capability and is appropriately designated as ALR.
2. That the land under application is suitable for agricultural use.
3. That the proposal would have a negative impact on existing or potential agricultural use of the subject property and surrounding lands.
4. That the proposal is inconsistent with the objective of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* to preserve agricultural land.

IT WAS

MOVED BY: Commissioner Irvine

SECONDED BY: Commissioner Mayer

THAT the application be refused.

CARRIED

Resolution #579/2007