



Agricultural Land Commission
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December 17, 2007

Reply to the attention of Martin Collins
ALC File: V-37678

Jessica Murphy
RR1 - Site 77, Comp 16
Oliver, BC
V0H1T0

Dear Madam:

Re: Application for Non Farm Uses in the Agricultural Land Reserve

Please find attached the Minutes of Resolution # 671/2007 outlining the Commission's decision as it relates to the above noted application. As agent, it is your responsibility to notify your client(s) accordingly.

Yours truly,

PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION

Per:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martin Collins', is written over the printed name 'Erik Karlsen, Chair'.

Erik Karlsen, Chair

cc: Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (C-07-05311-505)

Enclosure: Minutes

and that General Coach was so unique and valuable to Oliver it warranted consideration for accommodation in the ALR.

The Commission viewed the 5.5 ha lot, noting that the existing non-farm use was confined to the westerly 1/3 of the property, and that it was surrounded on three sides by Okanagan River oxbow sloughs. A vacant field area occupied the westerly half of the property.

Context

The proposal was weighed against the purposes of the Commission as stipulated in section 6 of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* (the "Act"). They are:

1. to preserve agricultural land
2. to encourage farming on agricultural land in collaboration with other communities of interest, and
3. to encourage local governments, first nations, the government and its agents to enable and accommodate farm use of agricultural land and uses compatible with agriculture in their plans, bylaws and policies.

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 BC Land Inventory (BCLI), 'Land Capability Classification for Agriculture in B.C.' system.

The agricultural capability of the soil of the subject property is (*3AP) indicating that the property has prime capability for tree fruit production with irrigation.

Assessment of Agricultural Suitability

The Commission assessed whether there are factors that will cause the land to become unsuitable for agriculture. The Commission noted that long-term adult care residential use of the property (predating the establishment of the ALR) has resulted in about a third of the property being alienated from agriculture because of large structures. However, a significant portion of the property is available for agricultural use. Furthermore, there are no external factors that render the land unsuitable for agricultural use, as this parcel lies within a active agricultural area.

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 believed the proposal has the capacity to negatively affect potential agricultural use of surrounding lands. While the Commission appreciated that the property is well buffered from adjoining lands by the oxbow sloughs, non-farm traffic would increase significantly, and perhaps more importantly, the ALR in this area might be perceived as suitable land for industrial (or other non-farm development). Heightened expectations, (often associated with large scale land use changes) has the effect of increasing speculation, and reducing farm investment.

Assessment of Other Factors

The Commission considered the applicant's assertion that there are no suitable parcels available in the Oliver area or in the region for industrial uses. The Commission is not convinced that no suitable parcels are available. It understands that there may now be land available in the Sawmill Road area (lands previously endorsed for industrial development by the Commission). Alternately, the Commission considers the former Weyerhaeuser site to be an ideal location for this and other businesses.

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 will negatively impact agriculture.
4. That the proposal is inconsistent with the objectives of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* to preserve agricultural land and encourage farming.

IT WAS

MOVED BY: Commissioner S. Irvine

SECONDED BY: Commissioner S. Sidhu

THAT the application to use 5.5 ha for industrial purposes be refused.

CARRIED

Resolution # 671/2007