



Agricultural Land Commission
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Reply to the attention of Terra Kaethler
ALC File: S-37837

February 7, 2008

Kevin and Kathryn Birch
PO Box 726 - 1388 Ward Road
Coombs, BC V0R1M0

Dear Sir/Madam:

Re: Application to Subdivide land in the Agricultural Land Reserve

Please find attached the Minutes of Resolution # 11/2008 outlining the Commission's decision as it relates to the above noted application.

Yours truly,

PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION

Per: 

Erik Karlsen, Chair

cc: Regional District of Nanaimo (6635-04-0710)

Enclosure: Minutes

TK
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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 subject property is improvable to Class 2 with a limitation of soil moisture deficiency. Land in this class has minor limitations that require good ongoing management practices or slightly restrict the range of crops, or both. The Commission also noted from the site visit that water was available. The Commission considered that the soil capability is prime for agricultural use and that the property could support a broad range of agricultural activity in its present size. The Commission believed that subdivision of the property would decrease the agricultural potential of the property.

Assessment of Agricultural Suitability

The Commission assessed whether the external 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. In the Commission's view, reduction of parcel size generally reduces the available options for agricultural use. Therefore, the Commission believed that the subject parcel had more agricultural value as a single unit than as two separate parcels and that subdivision would negatively impact the agricultural opportunities available to the subject property in the long-term. Further, the Commission believed that introducing an additional residential lot would encourage further parcelization in the area and may impact existing or potential agricultural use of surrounding lands.

Assessment of Other Factors

The applicants pointed out that the purpose of the proposal was to transfer ownership of the new lot to their children as part of their estate planning. The Commission considered that it must weigh an applicants' personal circumstances against its legislated responsibility to preserve agricultural land. In this case, the Commission believed that subdivision would have a negative impact on agriculture and would be inconsistent with the objective of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* to preserve agricultural land.

Conclusions

1. That the land under application has agricultural capability.
2. That the land under application is suitable for agricultural use.
3. That the proposal will impact agriculture.

IT WAS

MOVED BY: Commissioner Craven

SECONDED BY: Commissioner Rugg

THAT the application be refused.

CARRIED

Resolution # 11/2008