



MINUTES OF THE PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION

A meeting was held by the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission on September 10, 2008 at the offices the District of Saanich, located at 770 Vernon Ave, Victoria, B.C.

PRESENT:	Lorne Seitz	Chair, Island Panel
	David Craven	Commissioner
	Jennifer Dyson	Commissioner
	Terra Kaethler	Staff
	Roger Cheetham	Staff

For Consideration

Application: # J- 38342
Applicant: North Cowichan
Agent: BC Forest Discovery Centre
Proposal: Non-farm use to construct a gravel parking lot on a portion of land leased to the BC Forest Discovery Centre (BCFDC) by the Municipality of North Cowichan
Legal: PID: 004-328-124
Location: Lot A, Section 3 and 4, Somenos District, Plan 17449
2892 Drinkwater Road

Site Inspection

A site inspection was conducted on September 10, 2008. Those in attendance were:

- Lorne Seitz Chair, Island Panel
- David Craven Commissioner
- Jennifer Dyson Commissioner
- Terra Kaethler Staff
- Roger Cheetham Staff
- Vicki Holman Agent representative

The Commission viewed the area under proposal and noted that the area was a small corner of the BCFDC grounds and currently utilized for some equipment storage of the BC Forest Discovery Center (BCFDC). The area had been cleared and the top soil had been retained on the property. The parking area would support the farmer's market, events at the BCFDC and users of Somenos Lake.

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

The Commission assessed the impact of the proposal against the long term goal of preserving agricultural land. The Commission discussed that the area of the proposed use was only 0.2 ha and that the parking area would be a gravel surface, not paved. Also, it discussed that all topsoil would be removed before the placement of gravel and that it should be retained on the property, should it be required for future remediation. As such, the Commission did not believe the proposal would impact existing or potential agricultural use of the property or surrounding lands.

Furthermore, the Commission was of the view that as the proposed parking area was to provide for necessary parking for vendors and overflow for the farmer's market held at the BCFDC, it provided a benefit to the agricultural community in the area.

Conclusion

That the proposal will not negatively impact agriculture.

IT WAS

MOVED BY: Commissioner Dyson

SECONDED BY: Commissioner Seitz

THAT the application be approved;

AND THAT the approval is subject to the following conditions:

- THAT the area of non-farm use be in substantial compliance with the plan submitted with the application, approximately 0.2 ha.
- THAT the surface of the parking area be limited to gravel.
- THAT the topsoil of the area under proposal be retained on the property.

This decision does not relieve the owner or occupier of the responsibility to comply with applicable Acts, regulations, bylaws of the local government, and decisions and orders of any person or body having jurisdiction over the land under an enactment.

CARRIED

Resolution # 572/2008