



Staff Report
Application # MM – 38649
Applicant: Sawatzky Berry Farms Ltd
Agent: Helmut and Erika Sawatzky

DATE RECEIVED: November 18, 2008

DATE PREPARED: January 15, 2009

TO: Chair and Commissioners – South Coast Panel

FROM: Jennifer Carson, Land Use Planner

PROPOSAL: To subdivide a 0.4 ha parcel from the 5.6 ha property under the Homesite Severance Policy. This application is made pursuant to section 21(2) of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Local Government:

City of Abbotsford

Legal Description of Property:

PID: 009-342-354

Lot 6, Section 7, Township 16, New Westminster District, Plan 24575

Purchase Date:

November 1960

Location of Property:

1327 Clearbrook Road, Abbotsford

Size of Property:

5.6 ha (The entire property is in the ALR).

Present use of the Property:

Berry farm

Surrounding Land Uses:

NORTH: Hughes Park and a raspberry field
WEST: Albert Dyck Park
SOUTH: Chicken farm & black currant farm
EAST: Blueberry & raspberry farm

Agricultural Capability:

Data Source: Agricultural Capability Map # 92G.009
The majority of the property is identified as having Prime ratings.

Official Community Plan and Designation:

Zoned: Agricultural

Zoning Bylaw and Designation:

Zoned: Agricultural One Zone (A1)
Minimum lot size: 8.0 ha

PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS:

Application #22272-0

Applicant: District of Matsqui
Decision April 23, 1990

Date:

Proposal: Requested exclusion of 75.1 ha at Albert Dyck Park.

Decision: ALC recommended Cabinet refuse application for exclusion. Exclusion refused by Cabinet by Notice-of-Determination. (75.1 ha). This resolution number is used to enter statistical information relating to the area under application and subsequent decision by Cabinet.

RELEVANT APPLICATIONS:

Application #33656-0

Applicant: Zseder, Harold
Decision March 9, 2001

Date:

Proposal: To subdivide the existing farm homes and yard from the property within the spirit of the Commission's Homesite Severance Policy.

Decision: The Commission approved the subdivision request under the terms and conditions of its Homesite Severance policy and subject to the registration of a restrictive covenant restricting the building site to the 'upland' portion of the proposed remnant.

Application #35349-0

Applicant: District of Abbotsford
Decision May 11, 2004

Date:

Proposal: To extend the main east/west runway at Abbotsford International Airport by 360 m from the east end. The proposal also involves an extension of 250 m from the west end of the runway, but this land is outside of the ALR. This will cover approx. 2.2 ha of ALR land.

Decision: Allowed as requested.

Application #38174-0

Applicant: Siemens, Walter and Annette

Decision September 30, 2008

Date:

Proposal: The applicant is proposing a boundary realignment involving three parcels; two on Columbia Street of two (2) hectares each and one on Farmer Road of approximately 3.6 ha. The applicant has advised that the poultry industry is changing and there is more of a demand for specialty products and a move toward free range poultry. The applicant has two sons who want to start specialty egg operations on their own lots. The two parcels on Columbia are very long and narrow and are not wide enough to support a poultry barn, its setbacks and an outside ranging area. The applicant wants to consolidate the two lots on Columbia and divide the lot on Farmer Road into two 1.8 ha parcels with wider frontages (approximately 51 m wide) that are necessary for these types of poultry operations.

Decision: Allowed as proposed due to benefit to agriculture.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RECOMMENDATIONS/COMMENTS:

Council: Forward application to the ALC with endorsement for approval

STAFF COMMENTS:

It is recommended that the Commissioners consider the following:

- The applicants have owned the property since November 1960.
- The agricultural capability of the subject property is improvable to Class 1 with limitations of topography and stoniness.
- It is the Commission's experience that smaller parcels are correlated with less (not more) agricultural activity, and increased subdivision and rural residential pressures.
- Subdivision would heighten landowner expectations in the surrounding area that similar requests would be routinely permitted. The effects of heightened expectations are speculation, increased farmland prices, and reduced agricultural investment and activity.
- Commission staff have requested information from the applicant to support their claim for consideration under the *Homesite Severance Policy*.
- A site visit will help to determine whether or not this proposal will have an impact on agriculture.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. ALC Context Maps (2 pages)
2. Aerial Photograph
3. Agricultural Capability Map
4. Sketch of proposal (2 pages)
5. Local Government Staff Report

END OF REPORT

Signature

Date