



Agricultural Land Commission Staff Report

DATE: June 22, 2010

TO: Vice Chair and Commissioners - South Coast Panel

FROM: Ron Wallace

RE: Application # 45828

PROPOSAL: The property owner wishes to place approximately 35,000 to 40,000 m³ of fill over approximately 90%, or 3.6 ha, of the total property area. Due to the current poor drainage in the proposed fill area, the owner believes that the addition of fill is needed to make the area more productive. Currently blueberry fields are located on the western half of the property with a poorly drained boggy area located in the eastern half of the property.

Madrone Environmental Services Ltd. was retained by the applicant to conduct a soil assessment of the subject property. The purpose of the assessment was to review the soils and hydrological conditions of the property and to determine:

1. If the fill will maintain or (preferably) improve the existing land capability; and
2. If the operation will not have a material adverse affect on hydrology in the area.

PROPOSAL INFORMATION

Background: The subject property is located within the North Alouette floodplain. The property has Anderson Creek to the north and Cattell Brook to the south. The property is also subject to flooding along the west side of the property along 224th Street that fronts the property (this becomes a channel when the North Alouette level rises).
The property slopes downward from west to the east; and therefore the western portion of the property is slightly higher than the eastern half of the property. The proposed fill depth will be a maximum of approximately 1.5 m at the east side of the property.

Received Date: March 10, 2009

Applicant: Joga (Joe) Bassi

Agent: N/A

Local Government: District of Maple Ridge

DESCRIPTION OF LAND

PID: 008-398-241

Legal Description: Lot 28, Section 32, Township 12, New Westminster District, Plan 37547

Civic Address: 13780 - 224 Street, Maple Ridge

Area: 4 ha

ALR Area: 4 ha

Purchase Date:

Owner: Joga (Joe) Bassi

Total Land Area: 4 ha
Total ALR Area: 4 ha
Current Land Use: The western half of the property is currently used for blueberry cultivation. The blueberry plants appear to get progressively smaller and stunted to the east as the land becomes increasingly wetter. The applicant indicates that farm vehicles, such as tractors, cannot drive through the eastern rows of blueberries due to wet soil conditions. There are no permanent structures located on the property.

PROPOSAL DETAILS

Soil Change

Area	Agricultural Capability	Agricultural Capability Source
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3.6	Mixed Prime and Secondary	BCLI
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Activity	Volume (m3)	Depth (m)	Material Description
Add Fill	40,000.0	1.5	Coarse textured fill, inspected for quality

On- site processing: No
Description of Equipment to be used: Standard equipment.
Reclamation plan prepared by Professional Agrologist: Yes
Reclamation Measures: Refer to report.

Surrounding Land Uses:

North	Agricultural use
East	Park land
South	Agricultural use
West	Agricultural use

Official Community Plan

Bylaw Name:
Designation: Agricultural
OCP Compliance: Yes

Zoning

Zoning Bylaw Name: Upland Agricultural
Zoning Designation: A-2
Minimum Lot Size: 4.0 ha
Zoning Compliance: Yes

Committee Recommendations

Type	Recommendation	Description
Board/Council	Approve	That the application be forwarded to the ALC with a recommendation that the placement of fill is carried out in compliance with the relevant provisions of the Maple Ridge Soil Deposit Bylaw No. 5763-1999 and that the ALC consult with the Alouette valley Farm

and Homeowners Association; and further that the comments of Council noted in the minutes of January 19, 2009 Committee of the whole meeting be forwarded with the application to the ALC together with all related correspondence.

STAFF COMMENTS

Staff has the following comments:

- The applicant has explained that the subject property has very wet soil conditions (especially at the eastern half of the property) that is impacting the ability to produce and harvest a good blueberry crop.
- Madrone Environmental Services Ltd. was retained by the applicant to conduct a soil assessment of the property and determine if the proposed fill will improve the agricultural capability of the soil. The report concludes that the final land capability will be strongly influenced by the characteristics of the fill material. The source of the fill should be inspected to ensure that it meets the criteria for agricultural use.
- Local Council expressed concern that there could be a negative impact on the surrounding lands given that the whole area is in a flood plain and is subject to some flooding in most years.
- In light of the above, it may be prudent that the fill project be assessed by a professional hydrologist to determine if the displaced water from the subject property can be adequately drained from the property and not impact the surrounding lands.
- The report prepared by Madrone was sent to Alouette River Management Society (ARMS) and Homeowners Association for review and to provide comment. This information will be made available at the time of the on-site meeting.

ATTACHMENTS

38875 - AgCapMap.pdf
38875 - AirPhotoMap.pdf
38875 - ContextMap50k.pdf

END OF REPORT

Signature

Date