



**Agricultural Land Commission**  
133-4940 Canada Way  
Burnaby, British Columbia V5G 4K6  
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April 16, 2012

Reply to the attention of Liz Sutton  
ALC File: #52607

ABC Training & Wellness Centre  
Kevin Forrest  
5620 Blackburn Road South  
Prince George, BC  
V2N 6C5

Dear Mr. Forrest:

**Re: Application for Non-Farm Use in the Agricultural Land Reserve**

Please find attached the Minutes of Resolution # **129/2012** 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 that reads 'Liz Sutton'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brian Underhill, Executive Director

Enclosure: Minutes

cc: Regional District of Fraser-Fort George (ALR 1550/W/1/2)

JC/52607d1



## PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION

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A meeting was held by the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission on March 20, 2012 at the offices of the Commission located at #133 – 4940 Canada Way, Burnaby, B.C.

### COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

|                 |              |
|-----------------|--------------|
| Jennifer Dyson  | Vice-Chair   |
| Gordon Gillette | Vice-Chair   |
| Sylvia Pranger  | Vice-Chair   |
| Jim Johnson     | Commissioner |
| Jerry Thibeault | Commissioner |
| Lucille Dempsey | Commissioner |
| Denise Dowswell | Commissioner |
| Jim Collins     | Commissioner |

### COMMISSION STAFF PRESENT:

|            |                  |
|------------|------------------|
| Liz Sutton | Land Use Planner |
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### APPLICATION ID: #52607

**PROPOSAL:** To use the existing buildings on the property for an at-risk youth trades training facility and as a commercial storage business within approximately 6.5 ha of the subject property. (Submitted pursuant to section 20(3) of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*)

### PROPERTY INFORMATION:

|                           |                                                    |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Parcel ID:</b>         | 015-066-525                                        |
| <b>Legal Description:</b> | The West 1/2 of District Lot 1550 Cariboo District |
| <b>Civic Address:</b>     | 5620 Blackburn Road                                |
| <b>Size:</b>              | 63.7 ha                                            |
| <b>Area in ALR:</b>       | 63.7 ha                                            |
| <b>Property Owner(s):</b> | Veeken Poultry Farm                                |
| <b>Purchase Date:</b>     | September 9, 1997                                  |

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### COMMISSION CONSIDERATION:

Section 6 of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* identifies the purposes of the Commission 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.

The applicants had confirmed receipt of the staff report prior to the meeting and had submitted emails in response to the staff report. These items were provided to the Commission for their review.

### **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.

The agricultural capability of the soil of the subject property is

Class 4 – Land in this class has limitations that require special management practices or severely restrict the range of crops, or both.

Class 5 – Land in this class has limitations that restrict its capability to producing perennial forage crops or other specially adapted crops.

Subclasses

D        undesirable soil structure                      W        excess water

### **Agricultural Suitability**

The Commission assessed whether external factors such as encroaching non-farm development have caused or will cause the land to become unsuitable for agriculture. While the property is situated on the boundary of the ALR and City of Prince George, the subject property is in an agricultural area and many of the surrounding properties are actively involved in agricultural production. The Commission does not believe there are external factors that render the land unsuitable for agricultural use. Further, the Commission believes that the proposal itself is an example of encroaching development into the ALR, which, if approved, would negatively affect the agricultural suitability of neighboring properties.

The Commission also believes that the existence of agricultural buildings on the property would be better suited to agricultural use instead of non-farm use.

### **Assessment of Potential Impact on Agriculture**

The Commission also assessed the impact of the proposal against the long term goal of preserving agricultural land and believes that the proposed non-farm use of the currently vacant agricultural buildings does not encourage agriculture, and would likely discourage future agricultural use of the buildings. Furthermore, the introduction of non-farm uses such as those proposed are not desirable within the ALR. The Commission believes the proposal would impact existing or potential agricultural use of surrounding lands.

### **Other Factors**

The Commission has, of necessity, adopted a long term approach to the issue of preservation of agricultural land. The considerations involved in reviewing applications under the *Act* is more oriented towards maintaining a permanent farm land reserve without strict regard to present use or production needs. As such, agricultural land is not defined on the basis of present use, market conditions, proximity to transportation routes or consumer markets. All commodities go through cycles. If the Commission were to allow non-farm uses based on commodity cycle,



market conditions or economic hardship, eventually the supply of agricultural land would be diminished and compromised. If the ALR is to be maintained in the long term, it must be valued as agricultural land and cannot be endlessly eroded to make room for other uses.

The intent of the *Act* is to preserve and protect agricultural lands and farm communities in the long-term and the Commission considered that this application was inconsistent with that mandate.

**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 adversely impact agriculture.
4. That the proposal is inconsistent with the objective of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* to preserve agricultural land.

**IT WAS**

**MOVED BY:** Commissioner Dyson  
**SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Thibeault

THAT the application be refused.

AND THAT the applicant be advised of the provisions of Section 33 of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* which provides an applicant with the opportunity to submit a request for reconsideration.

- S.33 (1) *On the written request of a person affected or on the commission's own initiative, the commission may reconsider a decision of the commission under this Act and may confirm, reverse or vary it if the commission determines that*
- (a) evidence not available at the time of the original decision has become available,*
  - (b) all or part of the original decision was based on evidence that was in error or was false.*
- (2) *The commission must give notice of its intention to reconsider a decision under subsection (1) to any person that the commission considers is affected by the reconsideration.*

AND THAT the applicant be advised that a revised proposal does not constitute new information and will not be considered as a basis for reconsideration and the time limit for submitting a request for reconsideration is one (1) year from the date of the decision letter.

**CARRIED**  
**Resolution # 129/2012**