



Agricultural Land Commission
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December 18, 2012

ALC File: #52831

Roger & Dorothy Britton
8870 Adams Road
Smithers, BC
V0J 2N7

Dear Sir/Madam:

Re: Application to Subdivide Land in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)

Please find attached the Minutes of Resolution #410/2012 as it relates to the above noted application.

The Commission draws your attention to Section 33(1) of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* which provides an applicant with the opportunity to submit a request for reconsideration based on specific criteria.

- 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.

A revised proposal does not constitute new evidence and as such is not a basis for reconsideration. The time limit for submitting a request for reconsideration is one (1) year from the date of this letter.

Further correspondence with respect to this application is to be directed to Liz Sutton.

Yours truly,

PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION

Per: 

Brian Underhill, Executive Director

Enclosure(s): Minutes of Resolution #410/2012
cc: Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako (File:1126)

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MINUTES OF THE PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION

A meeting was held by the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission on November 20, 2012 at the offices of the Commission located at #133 – 4940 Canada Way, Burnaby, B.C. as it relates to Application #52831.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Richard Bullock	Chair
Jennifer Dyson	Vice-Chair
Gordon Gillette	Vice-Chair
Sylvia Pranger	Vice-Chair
Bert Miles	Commissioner
Jim Johnson	Commissioner
Jerry Thibeault	Commissioner
Lucille Dempsey	Commissioner
Denise Dowsell	Commissioner
Jim Collins	Commissioner

COMMISSION STAFF PRESENT:

Liz Sutton	Land Use Planner
Brian Underhill	Executive Director
Colin Fry	Executive Director

PROPOSAL: To subdivide the 16.0 ha parcel into one 2.4 ha lot and one 13.5 ha lot.
(Submitted pursuant to section 21(2) of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*)

LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT FOR COMMISSION CONSIDERATION

Section 6 (Purposes of the commission) of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* states:

- 6 The following are the purposes of the commission:
 - (a) to preserve agricultural land;
 - (b) to encourage farming on agricultural land in collaboration with other communities of interest; and
 - (c) 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.

COMMISSION CONSIDERATION

After considering the file information the Commission concluded as follows:

1. 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 CLI ratings applicable to the subject property are predominantly Class 4PT and 5TM:

Class 4 - land is capable of a restricted range of crops. Soil and climate conditions require special management considerations.

Class 5 - land is capable of production of cultivated perennial forage crops and specially adapted crops. Soil and/or climate conditions severely limit capability.

Limitations: (P) stoniness, (T) topography, and (M) moisture deficiency.

The CLI ratings applicable to the subject property are characteristic of the surrounding lands utilized for agriculture.

Conclusion:

The subject property is characteristic of surrounding agricultural lands and has agricultural capability.

2. The Commission does not support the subdivision of ALR properties into smaller parcels, as it often reduces the types of agriculture that can occur on the property. In addition, introduction of residential parcels would increase the residential use of agriculturally designated land and may lead to further pressures for subdivision. The applicant does not provide any agricultural rationale to support the proposed subdivision.

Conclusion:

The introduction of a small residential parcel into an area of large agricultural parcels would be inconsistent with the objective of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* to preserve and encourage agriculture.

3. The Commission noted that the application referred to section 946 of the *Local Government Act* (LGA) as a factor in support of the request to subdivide the subject property. Section 2 of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* (ALCA) establishes primacy of the ALCA over other legislation. More specifically:

2(1) This Act and the regulations are not subject to any other enactment, whenever enacted, except the *Interpretation Act*, the *Environment and Land Use Act* and the *Environmental Management Act* and as provided in this Act.

The LGA is subordinate to the ALCA and as such section 946 in no way compels the ALC to approve a subdivision involving ALR land. The ALC recognizes section 946 as a tool available to local government to accommodate a subdivision for a relative where the proposed lot is smaller than the minimum lot size specified in a zoning bylaw. If a subdivision for a relative involves land in the ALR, the local government can only use section 946 if an ALR application for subdivision has first been approved by the ALC. The ALC's consideration of subdivision proposals will be done in accordance with the purposes of the ALCA provided in section 6.

Conclusion:

The consideration of Section 946 of the LGA in support of the subdivision proposal is inconsistent with the purposes of the ALC.

IT WAS

MOVED BY: Commissioner Dyson

SECONDED BY: Commissioner Dowswell

THAT the request be refused.

CARRIED

Resolution #410/2012