



Agricultural Land Commission
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September 2, 2016

ALC File: 55117

Regional District of Fraser-Fort George
155 George Street
Prince George, BC V2L 1P8

Dear Sir:

Re: Application to Conduct a Non-Farm Use in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)

Please find attached the Reasons for Decision of the Agricultural Land Commission (Resolution #324/2016) as it relates to the above noted application.

Further correspondence with respect to this application is to be directed to Jess Daniels at (Jessica.Daniels@gov.bc.ca).

Yours truly,

PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION

Per:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jess Daniels' in a cursive script.

Colin J. Fry, Director of Policy and Planning

Enclosure: Reasons for Decision (Resolution #324/2016)

cc: Regional District of Fraser-Fort George

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AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION FILE 55117

REASONS FOR DECISION OF THE NORTH PANEL

Application submitted pursuant to s. 20(3) of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*

Applicant:

**Regional District of
Fraser-Fort George
(the “Applicant”)**

Application before the North Regional Panel:

**Dave Merz, Panel Chair
Sandra Busche
Garry Scott**



THE APPLICATION

[1] The legal description of the property involved in the application is:

Parcel Identifier: 017-928-249

District Lot 10255, Cariboo District

(the "Property")

[2] The Property is 6.9 ha in area.

[3] The Property is located at the intersection of Gray Road and Longworth South Road, north of Wells, BC.

[4] The Property is located within a designated agricultural land reserve ("ALR") as defined in s. 1 of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* (the "ALCA").

[5] The Property is located within Zone 2 as defined in s. 4.2 of the *ALCA*.

[6] Pursuant to s. 20(3) of the *ALCA*, the Agent is applying to use a portion of the old school house building on the Property as the new location for the community post office (the "Proposal"). The Proposal along with supporting documentation is collectively the application (the "Application").

RELEVANT STATUTORY PROVISIONS

[7] The Application was made pursuant to s. 20(3) of the *ALCA*:

20(3) An owner of agricultural land or a person with a right of entry to agricultural land granted by any of the following may apply to the commission for permission for a non-farm use of agricultural land.

[8] The Panel considered the Application pursuant to its mandate in s. 4.3 of the *ALCA*:

- 4.3 When exercising a power under this Act in relation to land located in Zone 2, the commission must consider all of the following, in descending order of priority:
- (a) the purposes of the commission set out in section 6;
 - (b) economic, cultural and social values;
 - (c) regional and community planning objectives;
 - (d) other prescribed considerations.

[9] The purposes of the Commission set out in s. 6 are as follows:

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.

EVIDENTIARY RECORD BEFORE THE PANEL

[10] The Panel considered the following evidence:

1. The Application
2. Local government documents
3. Agricultural capability map, ALR context map and satellite imagery

All documentation noted above was disclosed to the Agent in advance of this decision.

SITE VISIT

[11] The Panel, in the circumstances of the Application, did not consider it necessary to conduct a site visit to the Property based on the evidentiary record associated with the Application.

FINDINGS

Section 4.3(a) and Section 6 of the ALCA: First priority to agriculture

[12] In assessing agricultural capability, the Panel referred in part to agricultural capability mapping and ratings. The ratings are identified using the Canada Land Inventory (CLI), 'Soil Capability Classification for Agriculture' system. The improved agricultural capability rating identified on CLI map sheet 93H/14 for the mapping unit encompassing the Property is 100% Class 4X.

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

The limiting subclass associated with this parcel of land is X (combination of soil factors).

[13] The CLI ratings confirm that the Property has good agricultural capability.

[14] Regional District of Fraser-Fort George staff provided the following information regarding the Proposal and impact to agriculture: *There is currently no agricultural activity on the parcel. The subject parcel is bisected by the Upper Fraser Road and the Longworth South Road. The proposed building is an old school building presently being used as a community quilting/craft room for local residents. There is also a community hall on the other side of the road from the old school house. The Longworth Post Master recently retired. Previously, the post office was located within an accessory building on the Post Masters private property. The new Post Master, a resident of Longworth, together with the Longworth Recreation Commission, have requested to use a small*



portion of the old school house building on the community property to house the post office...

...As the application may be perceived as having little to no negative impacts on the agricultural development of the property and surrounding area and the subject parcel is central for the residents of the remote community of Longworth, it may be reasonable to forward the application to the Agricultural Land Commission with a recommendation of approval..."

Section 4.3(b) of the ALCA: Second priority to economic, cultural and social values

[15] The Applicant did not provide any information specifically citing economic, cultural and social values

Section 4.3(c) of the ALCA: third priority to regional and community planning objectives

[16] The Property is designated Rural Holdings (RH) by the Willow River-Upper Fraser Official Community Plan (the "OCP") with a conceptual PD/I designation indicating an existing use. RH and PD/I support Public Development/Institutional uses including a government office; therefore, an amendment to the OCP is not required.

[17] The Property is zoned Public Development 1 (P1) and Rural 1 (Ru1) pursuant to Zoning Bylaw No. 2892. The proposed site of the Post office is within the P1 designation. P1 supports a Government/Public Administration Facility Use; therefore, a zoning amendment will not be required.

Weighing the factors in priority

[18] In considering s. 4.3(a) and the first priority to agriculture, the Panel notes that the non-farm use is contained within an existing building on the Property where no agricultural activity is current taking place. For these reasons, the Panel believes that the Proposal poses a minimal impact to agriculture.

[19] The Panel gave consideration to economic, social and cultural values and regional and community planning objectives planning as required by s. 4.3. The Panel finds that the Proposal is consistent with both the OCP and zoning.

DECISION

[20] For the reasons given above, the Panel approves the Proposal.

[21] 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.

[22] Panel Chair **Dave Merz** concurs with the decision.
Commissioner **Sandra Busche** concurs with the decision.
Commissioner **Garry Scott** concurs with the decision.

[23] Decision recorded as Resolution #324/2016.

A decision of the Panel is a decision of the Commission pursuant to s. 11.1(5) of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*.

Upon instruction of the Panel, I have been authorized to release the Reasons for Decision by Resolution #324/2016. The decision is effective upon release.



Colin J. Fry, Director of Policy and Planning

September 2, 2016

Date Released