

Development Application Department,
6911 No. 3 Road,
Richmond, BC V6Y 2C1

December 16th, 2019

To Whom It May Concern,

Re. 20451 Westminster Highway, Richmond, BC
Legal Descript. L78 SEC4 BK4 NORTH R4W NEW WESTMINSTER DISTRICT PL 1593
PID: 003-934-268

This City of Richmond Development Application relates to Non-Farm Use Application made to the Agricultural Land Commission on December 11th, 2019, Application ID: 59968.

This application proposal is to exempt the current ALC agricultural restrictions on this 0.88 Acre parcel to bring it into conformance with it's long-standing City of Richmond ASY zoning.

Choice School for Gifted Children Society was established in 1985 as a Not-For-Profit Society which has operated the School on this parcel since 1992 and has owned the property since 1997. The society also owns the adjacent west parcel, which we use for our school playground, septic field and gravelled parking lot.

Choice is an independent school designated by the BC Ministry of Education as a Special Education School. Although we provide an education for gifted students, the majority of our students are often referred to as twice exceptional, a term used to describe a child who is both exceptionally able, but also has learning difficulties or a disability and presents a very complex profile. Such physical or emotional disabilities, or autism, require specialist teachers and support staff to respond to their twice exceptional nature. The school is 40% funded by the Ministry of Education and 60% from fees paid by our student families. Most of our families were not seeking a private education for their child, but after a realization that the public school system was not able to provide adequate support for their circumstances they sought us out.

Due to the unique education service we provide, the school enrolment has steadily increased over the years and we have now reached the capacity of our existing buildings with the current enrolment of 73 students. Consequently, in January 2019, our society embarked on a project to add a 1500 sq ft modular building to the parcel which would provide classroom spaces for up to 30 new students. The existing long-standing ASY city zoning allows up to 3,300 sq ft of additional building space.

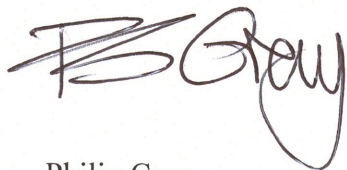
Before accepting a building permit application for the modular building, the City of Richmond requires a letter from the ALC confirming if any agricultural restrictions apply to the parcel. After requesting and receiving such a letter from the ALC (ALC Inquiry Ref. 51574, letter dated September 30th, 2019), our society was surprised to learn that despite this parcel's long-standing City of Richmond ASY zoning and previously received Building Permits, agricultural land restrictions do apply to this parcel.

To resolve this ALC restrictions versus historical zoning anomaly, and allow us to progress our building permit application, the ALC and the City recommended that we submit an application for Non-Farm Use.

Relevant to this application is the fact that the school also owns the adjacent west parcel which is free of any agricultural restrictions (ALC Inquiry Ref. 51575, letter dated September 30th, 2019). However, the property is in the ALR, zoned by the city as AG1 and currently houses our school playing field, septic field and a portion of our gravel parking lot. Recognizing that this lot is not subject to any ALC restrictions but is historically zoned AG1, as part of this application, our society is looking forward to working with the City of Richmond to find a solution to bring its use into conformance with AG1 zoning. Richmond Planning has suggested that a farm use complimentary to childhood education such as fruit and vegetable growing may be favourably viewed for the current use of the site.

Since 1992, these two properties on Westminster Highway have been a critical part of our school's success in helping close to two thousand young children achieve educational goals. With this in mind we respectfully request support for this application to allow us to move forward with our modular building project and allow us to educate additional gifted and twice-exceptional students from Richmond and the Lower Mainland.

Yours Sincerely,



Philip Gray
Board Chair, Choice School for Gifted Children Society, and
Agent for this application

Attachments:

1. Completed City of Richmond Development Application and Attachments:
 - a. Agent Agreement
 - b. State of Title Certificate (Lots 78 and 79)
 - c. Survey Plan (2 copies)
 - d. Site Plan of Property and Proposed Uses (2 copies)
2. Copy of Agricultural Land Commission Applicant Submission Application ID 59968