

Over the last 15 years we have produced enough annually to qualify for Farm Tax Status. We have tried several different types of farming on this property. We were looking for the right one for us to pursue after our retirement. During this time we were both employed full time elsewhere. Even so, we have raised calves to the point of butchering, this proved unsuccessful we couldn't find a market for them. We sold them to our children and family members. Then we tried a small flock of 14 sheep and small scale egg production. This was more successful, we were able to find a market for the butchered lamb and sold out of eggs daily. At this point Jim had a hip replacement, we sold the flock and I concentrated on egg production. With 150 hens I was producing 11 to 12 dozen eggs per day, all were preordered. Our post retirement plan was sheep (possibly 10 to 14 ewes and a ram), egg production from 200 hens and still have approx. 14 acres in hay production. We logged some of the forest, to provide a foraging area to add to our 2 existing pastures.

Plans were halted when we were informed by MOTI that they were expropriating 13% of the property, cutting it in half diagonally to construct a main arterial road. This created 2 separate parcels of land. A tunnel was not constructed to connect the 2 parcels. This leaves the undeveloped north parcel with no water, no electricity, and difficult to access making it hard to maintain farming. In the near future the north parcel will not be used as farmland and will revert back to a forest state with bush undergrowth, a green space. I feel that if it were subdivided and stood on its own, a 20 acre parcel of land, it is more likely to be developed into a productive farm.

Regarding the meeting with the agricultural advisory committee, it was disheartening to have the secretary of the committee put forward a motion to oppose the subdivision of the property and to have it seconded even before discussion was opened for the rest of the committee's input. Once discussion was opened some important and valid points were made by the 3 ladies on the farming committee. Such as:-

- the proximity of the acreage to Courtenay (on the city limits) and the quality of soil (grade 1), market gardening would be a possible use, this fits in with the growing trend to "buy local".
- since this acreage is divided by the road, 2 smaller acreages (both over 20 acres) would be equally, if not more farmable, than the whole.
- volume of production from smaller acreages (1 to 10 acres), smaller than this proposed parcel.
- very large acreages are no longer affordable to young farmers, smaller acreages are.
- the difficulty in farming land that you are not living on

Some of this is stated in the absentee vote in support of our proposal and in Jill Hatfield's report.

Points put forward by 2 of the other members are:-

- keep this ALC land as a whole and "leave it as it is"
- not wanting to see any more "trophy houses" built on ALC land

Their final reason for opposing the proposal is that "the land would not likely be farmed more as 2 parcels instead of 1" though valid points were brought up that suggested it would.

I feel that we have met the requirements necessary to subdivide and the reasons put forward by the agricultural advisory committee and the CVRD staff report for us not to be granted subdivision are outweighed by the benefits to farming that this separate parcel will create.

Thank you for your consideration,

Patricia Pollard