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■ With buckets in hand, kids hit the ground running for the annual Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday at West Richmond Community Centre. See more Easter photos on page 13. *Photo by Gord Goble/Special to the News*

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City proposes ALR house limits



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Mega homes on farmland in Richmond could be a thing of the past, if city council approves proposals to seriously curtail residential development on the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).

Councillors were expected, on Wednesday afternoon, to consider restricting the size of residences on Richmond's ALR to 5,382 square-feet. Also, if city staff's recommendations are to be followed, the square footage of an accessory, residential building on the property would be limited to a maximum of 753 square feet.

Even if the proposed bylaw amendments — which form part of a long-awaited move by city council to deal with growing concern over the proliferation of mega mansions on

the ALR — are approved this week, they still need to be considered at a public hearing, possibly in May.

City staff are also recommending formulating a "rezoning approach" for any proponents who wish to build beyond the proposed size limits for the residence.

Last month, a near unanimous Richmond city council placed a moratorium on building permit applications for houses on protected farmland, following a recent flood of such applications to build large houses on the ALR.

Coun. Alexa Loo opposed the moratorium, saying she thought it was "heavy-handed."

In January, when council began a public consultation process on restricting home sizes on farmland, Couns. Carol Day and Harold Steves called for a moratorium, fearing a rush of development. Since then, the average size of application was almost 13,000 square-feet, with one proponent asking for 32,660 square-feet.

Until now, Richmond was one of the few Metro Vancouver municipalities not to have any kind of effective restriction on the size of residences on farmland.

In preparing the aforementioned proposals, city staff said it consulted the provincial Ministry of Agriculture's guidelines, which recommend that residential development be commensurate with the same development in urban areas in Richmond's single-detached home zones.

According to this week's report, development variance permits could be issued to proponents in terms of either the main or secondary residential buildings, as long as the sum total doesn't exceed the limit.

Leading up to this week's proposals, a total of 679 surveys were received by the city. A significant majority (74.1 per cent) wanted size limitations on the principal farmland home, while, according to the report, farmers and ALR residents were "less supportive."



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RICHMOND-STEVESTON

STRONG BC BRIGHT FUTURE

Today's BC Liberals

THE PULSE

WE'VE GOT OUR FINGERS ON IT

HOPPING THROUGH THE HOOPS



■ Painted faces (above), hula hoops, fishing for rubber duckies and plenty more was in store at Aberdeen Centre on Sunday during the mall's special Easter Hop Hop Hooray event. *Photos by Gord Goble/Special to the News*

TIME FOR TEA



■ Tea for two. Sally Yu and Sunny Lu (above) were among those enjoying a special Easter Tea at London Heritage Farm on Sunday, which featured an Easter egg tart and chick cookie served along with a scone and, of course, a nice cuppa 'Rosie Lee.' *Photos by Gord Goble/Special to the News*

EASTER SUNDAY FUN



■ The Easter Bunny got plenty of hugs (left) from the kids at the West Richmond Community Centre's Easter Eggstravaganza on Sunday. In addition to an Easter egg hunt, there were plenty of games for the youngsters to play. *Photos by Gord Goble/Special to the News*

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