

**Planning Advisory Committee Minutes
December 3, 2009
Town Council Chambers**

Present

Councillor W. Cormier, Chair
Deputy Mayor L. Chisholm
Councillor D. MacInnis
A. Murray
D. MacFarlane
B. MacLean
M. MacDonald
T. Sherrington

S. Day, Planner
D. Wilson, Deputy Clerk

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:40 PM.

Approval of Agenda

Moved by M. MacDonald
Seconded by Deputy Mayor L. Chisholm
"That the Agenda be approved with additions." Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Councillor D. MacInnis
Seconded by T. Sherrington
"That the Minutes of November 5, 2009 be approved as circulated." Motion carried.

M. MacDonald clarified that the Minutes should reflect that most of the fill for the berm is on his property re Eastern Sanitation Limited).

Discussion re Rental Properties

The Chair provided a background on the reasoning behind the issue of the Town looking into licensing rental properties. B. MacLean distributed an information package and updated brochure used in Oshawa, Ontario, for their Residential Rental Housing Licensing Program. He provided the Committee on the history of Oshawa's rental issues and how their licensing program came to be. He noted this has resulted in amending their original Housing Act into a Residential Housing Act, which limits the number of bedrooms in rental units to four (4). Brief discussion took place on various aspects of rental units versus residential dwellings. He noted that if a dwelling unit is owner-occupied, no more than two (2) rooms could be let for rent.

Further to a request from the Chair, comments were provided from each member with all in support of moving toward licensing rental properties. It was noted that consideration would have to be given to low-income housing and trailer parks.

The Chair noted that some current staff members would have much knowledge as to the existence of rental units versus owner-occupied dwellings.

The Committee then reviewed Statistics Canada housing data on the Town distributed by S. Day.

Brief discussion took place on enforcement of licensing, suspension and/or revocation of licenses. The Chair noted that appropriate staff would have to be in place if licensing rental units were to be put in place, with S. Day noting that follow-ups to inspections would be quite time consuming.

B. MacLean advised that D. Potts, the lawyer involved with the Oshawa lawsuit, had indicated his willingness to come to Antigonish to review our documents with respect to licensing rental units. S. Day advised that Halifax Regional Municipality has a lawyer, A. French, on retainer who might be willing to look into the legality of licensing rentals, and agreed to contact him. B. MacLean suggested perhaps the Town should contact other university towns to see if they might also be interested in looking at this issue.

Brief discussion took place on the benefit of having D. Potts come to Antigonish, and B. MacLean was requested to look further into the cost of this. He was advised that the purpose of bring B. Potts to the area would be to meet with this committee and the public. It was suggested that if the Town were to move forward, other municipal units such as Halifax Regional Municipality and Wolfville might support a legislative change.

M. MacDonald suggested perhaps the Town should go backwards, i.e. start with a timeframe of September, 2012, and work backwards with the timelines in an effort to determine a timeframe that this process might begin.

In response to a question from T. Sherrington, the Chair advised that he has been tasked with gathering information to provide to town residents on how to respond to noise complaints.

Flow-through Buildings in Floodway

S. Day noted that he had recently met with the Antigonish Highland Society to discuss their plans for gardens, a building and permanent stage to be located adjacent the existing Columbus Field. He noted that much of the area is in floodway and that the existing washrooms at Columbus Field were built to allow water to flow through the bottom without causing damage to the building, and the same may have to be considered for portions of the Highland Society's proposed plans. He noted that currently the Town does not have a policy in this regard and that one would have to be developed, and that the Province and Department of Environment would probably not like it. He further noted that if LiDar were available, he might be able to determine the areas not in floodway.

Brief Discussion re Town's Strategic Plan vis. Planning

S. Day advised that the Town is currently undertaking a strategic plan, and that a lot of other plans relevant to the Town would have to be in line with the Town's Strategic Plan once it is complete.

Other Business

- Town Parking Opportunity at Court Street

D. MacFarlane advised that his brother had spoken with the appropriate personnel on this matter and he is waiting for a response.

- Site Alteration By-law

The Chair reported that the Site Alteration By-law is now with CAO, D. Kampen.

- Unsightly and Vacant Lot Policy

S. Day advised that the Unsightly and Vacant Lot Policy had gone to the Police and License Committee and is now with CAO, D. Kampen for review, prior to going to Council. He noted that Council may opt for a public information session on this matter.

- R. K. MacDonald Nursing Home Parking Lot Development

S. Day advised that this matter occupied much of his time last week. There is an issue with where storm water will be retained and how it will get to the river, and has met with the Engineers that are working on the project. He noted that A. MacNeil construction has materials stock-piled in this area, which is another issue. Upstream surveying has been carried out, and there are some concerns with lighting the parking lot.

- Staffing

S. Day advised that he had spent the past three (3) days attending a course dealing with energy and conservation, leading to much more work. He noted the need for Council to understand code requirement changes that have taken place over the past ten (10) years, which have a great impact on building inspections.

He advised that L. LeBlanc has indicated he will no longer be carrying out building inspections for the Town after January, 2010.

Action List

- 62 Hawthorne Street re 29 Unit Apartment Application

S. Day advised that the developer, I. Kadray, is not in agreement with what the Town Engineer, K. Proctor, feels is required in order to supply water for this development. The Chair suggested that perhaps the Engineers from both sides of the project get together. It was further suggested that if the project improves water supply to areas other than this development, perhaps a partnership or cost-sharing could take place.

- Rezoning and Development Agreement, West Street

Further to a eventual proposed rezoning and development agreement for the area on West Street currently being used for parking by St. FX University, it was noted that vehicles are not permitted to park overnight. T. Sherrington provided comments on the fact that parking should not have been permitted in the first place, and similar to activities ongoing at the Eastern Sanitation Limited site, some take liberties with little thought to any recourse, leaving the Town to deal with them as best it can.

- Rezoning Applications, Adam Street

Mr. Day noted there was nothing new on this matter. M. MacDonald noted that an area east of M. Breen's on Bay Street had been dozed recently.

- Conference Review

Mr. Day noted there was nothing new to report on this matter.

- Substandard Housing (M. MacDonald)

M. MacDonald reported that he is involved with an organization that sees many people living in substandard housing in the area, however, due to confidentiality issues, little can be done to improve their situation. He noted that there may be a perception that this is only in some of the

local mobile homes, when in fact it is not. He noted there is a huge gap with no obvious solution.

At 7:00 PM. A. Murray left the meeting.

- Antigonish Heritage Museum Board (M. MacDonald for A. Murray)
On behalf of A. Murray, M. MacDonald advised that on the last day for applications to sit on the Antigonish Heritage Museum Board, he had dropped off an application to the Town Hall that morning, only to be advised that his application had been received too late. It was suggested that all mail received by hand should have the time and date noted.

- M&M Meats (Councillor W. Cormier, Chair)
The chair questioned S. Day on the status of the addition to the M&M Meat Store. S. Day advised that although the project meets the letter of the building code, it does not go out of the way to meet the spirit of the building code.

The Chair also commented on work being carried out to the Curry property on Hawthorne Street, to which S. Day advised was permitted.

Adjournment

Moved by M. MacDonald

Seconded by T. Sherrington

“That the meeting be adjourned.” Motion carried.