

PORT HAWKESBURY TOWN COUNCIL
SPECIAL PUBLIC MEETING
Minutes of Meeting
May 26, 2022
Shannon Studio

Present

Mayor, Brenda Chisholm-Beaton
Deputy Mayor, Jason Aucoin
Councillor, Blaine MacQuarrie
Councillor, Hughie MacDougall
Councillor, Mark MacIver
Chief Administrative Officer, Terry Doyle
Director of Finance, Erin MacEachen
Eastern District Planning Commission, Executive Director, John Bain

1. Call to Order

A Special Public Meeting of the Port Hawkesbury Town Council was held in the Shannon Studio, Thursday, May 26th, 2022 called to order by Mayor B. Chisholm-Beaton at 5:30 pm.

2. Additions to Agenda

- i. Federal Electoral Boundary Letter – Mayor, B. Chisholm Beaton
- ii. Festival of the Strait – Councillor, H. MacDougall

Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton had requested a slight change in the order of the recommendations from the Planning Advisory Committee.

3. Approval of Agenda

Moved by Councillor, B. MacQuarrie and SECONDED by Deputy Mayor, J. Aucoin “That the Town of Port Hawkesbury approves the Special Public Meeting Agenda with two additions.” MOTION CARRIED.

4. Pride Plan 2022 – Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton

Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton had circulated the Pride Plan for 2022 in the agenda packages. Flag Raising for June 1st and Pride Parade on June 26th followed by a picnic at the Granville Green.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor J. Aucoin and SECONDED by Councillor, M. MacIver “That the Town of Port Hawkesbury accepts the 2022 Pride Plan.” MOTION CARRIED.

MOVED by Councillor, B. MacQuarrie and SECONDED by Deputy Mayor J. Aucoin “That the Town of Port Hawkesbury designates Taylor Linloff as the Town of Port Hawkesbury Pride Facilitator. MOTION CARRIED.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor, J. Aucoin and SECONDED by Councillor, M. MacIver “That the Town of Port Hawkesbury will send a letter of thanks to Taylor Linloff for her organizing and guidance in planning Pride events in the Town of Port Hawkesbury since 2018.” MOTION CARRIED.

5. Nova Scotia Access Awareness Week 2022

Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton had reviewed the Nova Scotia Access Awareness

MOVED by Councillor, H. MacDougall and SECONDED by Councillor, M. MacIver “That the Town of Port Hawkesbury proclaims May 29th – June 4 2022 as ACCESS Awareness week in the Town of Port Hawkesbury.” MOTION CARRIED.

6. Review of Recommendations from Planning Advisory Committee – Executive Director, J. Bain

- a. Amendment to the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law to amend the Granville Street/ Waterfront Development (C-2) Zone.

ED, J. Bain had given an overview of the file with Council. An application was submitted in January regarding Granville Street/Waterfront. The amendment would allow for craft beverage facilities in the C-2 zone. The intent of the applicant is to put a portable distillery on that property. A policy would be established along with the change and there will be a definition of a craft micro/brewery and distillery and what will be permitted. The definitions align with Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation’s definitions.

Executive Director, J. Bain reminded the gallery that all staff reports are available on the Eastern District Planning Website and he reviewed the Municipal Government Act’s process around any planning changes with regards to the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land-Use By-law.

He had stated that this process is unique because Council had requested a Special Public Meeting to review the planning changes.

Concerns were raised by Councillor, M. MacIver about setback requirements. Executive Director J. Bain had confirmed that Mr. Colpp would have to meet the accessory building setbacks.

MOVED by Councillor, H. MacDougall and SECONDED by Deputy Mayor, J. Aucoin “That the Town of Port Hawkesbury gives first reading and will schedule a Public Hearing to approve the amendments to the Port Hawkesbury Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law to add Craft Beverage Facility as a permitted use in the Granville Street/Waterfront Development (C-2) Zone and insert accompanying definitions.” MOTION CARRIED.

- b. Amendments to the Port Hawkesbury Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law to permit Accessory Dwelling Units.

Executive Director, J. Bain had said that the staff has been concerned about the housing shortage in the Port Hawkesbury Area. The issues with housing is across the Strait Region and the Province. Planning staff look at the housing issues under the IDEA lens: Inclusive, Diverse, Equitable, and Accessible. He had stated that an accessory dwelling (basement apt) unit is permitted in your house if your home is in the R-2 Zone. The amendment would allow for an accessory dwelling one unit could be either in the house in the garage suit or in a garden suit – a small building in the back of the house. Both St. Peters and Antigonish have made this amendment to allow for accessory dwelling units to be added.

Councillor, H. MacDougall would like to strike out reference to R-1 in the introduction of the report to avoid confusion. Executive Director, J. Bain had confirmed that the recommendation is to amend the R-2 Zone.

Councillors had raised concerns about restrictions on the height of garages, the number of rooms in basements permitted, parking, absentee landlords that are renting rooms out, unsightly properties, and there were questions about who sees the signature on the Dangerous and Unsightly Premises complaint forms and how residents can address their complaints.

Executive Director, J. Bain had stated that the maximum number of dwelling units allowed would be two including the primary residence.

With respect to the Dangerous and Unightly Premises Complaints, he had said that information would be protected under Freedom of Information Protection of Privacy and would not be released with regards to complaint forms. EDPC staff would redact anything that would identify the complainant. The only caveat would be if the case was to end up in court they would have to release the name of the complainant. If a Councillor signs the complaint and the complaint comes to the council chambers, that councillor who submitted the complaint form would have to recuse themselves as it would be a conflict of interest.

It was the consensus of the Council to have Eastern District Planning Commission revise the Staff Report and Recommendation based on Council's comments and direction.

- c. Proposed Land Use By-law amendment to rezone lots in the Grants Ponds Subdivision, on MacLaughlin Drive, and the undeveloped lands off Spruce Street from the Residential – Single Unit (R-1) to the Residential Two-Unit (R-2) Zone.

Councillor, B. MacQuarrie had declared a conflict and left Council Chambers at 6:17 pm.

Executive Director, J. Bain had stated that Planning Advisory Committee had given direction to the Eastern District Planning Commission to look at rezoning the R-1 zone to the R-2 zone. He had reviewed the housing areas that were proposed in the amendment. Most of those properties are already well developed. He had stated that changing the zoning would not decrease your property value.

Councillor, H. MacDougall had concerns about traffic and asked what could be built in the Grants Pond arena other than basement apartments and stated that he will not be supporting this amendment at this time.

Councillor, M. MacIver had indicated that he has received a number of emails and calls and concerns about Grants Pond, and undeveloped lands off Spruce Street. He had suggested that this staff report go back to Eastern District Planning Commission and the Planning Advisory Committee to be revised to only include the MacLaughlin Drive and the undeveloped Spruce Street properties.

Deputy Mayor, J Aucoin had reminded Council that Council had set housing as one of their priorities for this term. He would like to educate the residents and see this amendment go forward to a Public Hearing.

The consensus of Council was for the proposed staff report regarding MacLaughlin Drive and the undeveloped lands off Spruce Street to be revised by the Eastern District Planning Commission based on the feedback and direction of Council. Council is not interested in rezoning the Grants Pond area at this time.

Councillor, B. MacQuarrie had returned to Council Chambers at 6:32pm.

7. Approved Additions

Federal Electoral Boundary Letter – Mayor, B. Chisholm-Beaton

MOVED by Councillor, B. MacQuarrie and SECONDED by Deputy Mayor, J. Aucoin That the Town of Port Hawkesbury will send a letter of opposition regarding the addition of Antigonish Town and County to the Cape- Breton – Canso district to the Federal Electoral Boundary Commission and copy Members of Parliament, Mike Kelloway and Sean Fraser. MOTION CARRIED.

Festival of the Strait – Councillor, H. MacDougall

MOVED by Councillor, B. MacQuarrie and SECONDED by Deputy Mayor, J. Aucoin “That the Town of Port Hawkesbury grants permission to hold the Festival of the Strait beer bash in the Veteran’s Memorial Arena and the Knights of Columbus Pancake breakfast in the Bear Head Room as well as any other requirements as a rain venue.” MOTION CARRIED.

8. Public Question Period

A number of questions were brought forward from residents from the Grants Pond and Spruce Street Areas.

Concerns were raised over the car congestion on Crandall Drive, as well as the traffic issues and lack of sidewalks for school children. Residents were also concerned about their property assessments depreciating. Questions were raised if a number of reports were completed: financial, engineering study on the public works infrastructure, traffic study, and what impact the rezoning would have on the natural sources of water. There were questions raised about the deed covenants on Pine Ridge and Chiavari Close and Spruce Street.

Executive Director, J. Bain had confirmed that the rezoning changes would not affect/include the properties that have deed covenants as they are registered against the title.

CAO, T. Doyle ensured the gallery that the Planning Advisory Committee meetings would be well advertised. Planning Advisory Committee Meetings are public meetings. He had stated that a number of lots were sold last year well under market value. Staff and Council are trying to sell the property and attract developers into the area. A developer permit application is in process right now for a multi-unit building. No new builds have occurred in Port Hawkesbury for some time and the demand is there.

9. Adjournment

MOVED by Deputy Mayor, J. Aucoin SECONDED by Councillor, M. MacIver “That the Town of Port Hawkesbury adjourns the Special Public Meeting at 7:04pm .”. MOTION CARRIED.

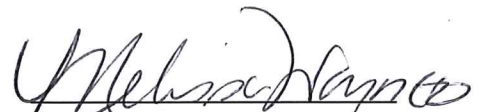
June 9/2022

Date



Approved by:

Terry Doyle, P. Eng., CAO



Recorded by:

Melissa Warner,
Communications &
Administrative Officer