



West Hants
something inspiring awaits

WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
Planning & Heritage Advisory Committee (PAC/HAC)
November 9, 2023 – 6:00pm
Sanford Council Chambers, Zoom / Facebook Live

PRESENT: Mayor Abraham Zebian
Councillor Laurie Murley (District 10)
Councillor Jim Ivey (District 11)
Jennifer Nicholls, WHRM Representative (Cheverie)
Jane Davis, Hantsport Representative
Stefan Palios, Windsor Representative
Tim Carr, Hantsport Representative
Lisa Bland, WHRM Representative (Three Mile Plains)
Tasha Rogers, WHRM Representative (Newport)
Paul Beazley, Windsor Representative

STAFF: Sara Poirier, Director of Planning and Development
Vanessa Lake, Planning Assistant

GUESTS: Jennifer Daniels, FireSmart
Tunde Awoyiga, Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Azad Haider, Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing

PUBLIC: There were no members of the public present.

Call to Order and Attendance

Jennifer Nicholls called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Vanessa Lake took attendance. All members of the Committee were present.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Committee members introduced themselves prior to the election.

Sara Poirier opened the floor to nominations for Chair. Jane Davis nominated Jennifer Nicholls who respectfully declined. Laurie Murley nominated Tim Carr who tentatively accepted. Mayor Zebian nominated Stefan Palios who respectfully declined. Mayor Zebian nominated Paul Beazley who respectfully declined. Laurie Murley nominated Lisa Bland who respectfully declined. With no further nominations, Tim Carr was elected as Chair for this term.

Chair Carr opened the floor to nominations for Vice-Chair. Laurie Murley nominated Paul Beazley who respectfully declined. Stefan Palios nominated Lisa Bland who tentatively accepted. With no further nominations, Lisa Bland was elected as Vice-Chair for this term.

Announcements

Chair Carr read the Land Acknowledgements. The Committee welcomed Paul Beazley as the new Windsor Representative. Mayor Zebian congratulated Tim Carr and Lisa Bland on their new positions as Chair and Vice-Chair, and informed the Committee he will need to temporarily step out at 6:45pm. Lisa expressed her gratitude to Jennifer Nicholls and Laurie Murley for their roles as previous Chair and Vice-Chair.

Approval of Agenda and Additions

Sara requested that items 10.1 and 10.2 be moved above Section 7.0 as the presenters are from outside the organization. Moved by Paul Beazley and seconded by Jennifer Nicholls that the agenda be approved as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts were declared.

Approval of Minutes (October 12, 2023)

Moved by Laurie Murley and seconded by Jennifer Nicholls that the minutes be approved as circulated. Motion carried unanimously.

Presentations

FireSmart Presentation by Jennifer Daniels

Jennifer Daniels is a West Hants firefighter with the Hantsport Fire Department and a Local FireSmart Representative (LFR). FireSmart is a grassroots initiative that began 20 years ago in Alberta and British Columbia. It encourages communities to learn more about fire risk and prevention and how to better protect their homes.

Jennifer Daniels described wildfire behaviour and its factors. She told the Committee that FireSmart offers free Community Assessments which provide a personal-to-you list of ways you can improve your home's fire protection. Three important ways to mitigate the effects of wildfires in a community is by having suitable evacuation routes, emergency water sources, and buffer zones around the area. Public education is also vital.

Mayor Zebian stepped out at 6:45pm.

The Committee asked if there was any sort of tax reduction or insurance benefits for homes that are FireSmart certified. Jennifer Daniels said there are ongoing discussions about this, but she does not have any concrete information at this time. The Committee would like to see a wildfire risk map for the region and Jennifer Daniels replied that a map can be obtained through the Department of Natural Resources. The Committee would like to see FireSmart practices considered for the Plan Review. The Committee thanked Jennifer Daniels for her presentation, and she left the meeting at 6:57pm.

Information: WHRM Housing Needs Assessment Report (Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing)

Tunde Awoyiga and Azad Haider are economists with the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and they recently completed a West Hants Housing Needs Assessment report. The report was released on October 23, 2023 and was the first of its kind in Nova Scotia. This assessment was in response to the Affordable Housing Commission's report which stipulated that the province needed up-to-date housing needs information. Turner Drake & Partners were

contracted to help generate the report and municipal records were also used. Public engagement was held with 165 responses from WHRM. Three main themes were outlined: Availability, Affordability, and Suitability.

Paul asked if there was data on how many affordable units are needed. Tunde replied that the data does not go that far, and need and interest are constantly changing. He noted that the province does have plans to address these challenges. The Committee thanked Tunde and Azad for their presentation, and they left the meeting at 7:21pm.

Business Arising from the Public Information Meetings

There were four (4) Public Information Meetings held on November 2, 2023, with approximately 30 members of the public present. The Mayor returned to the meeting at 7:23pm.

File # 23-24, PID 45226636, Halewood Drive, Falmouth (Sara Poirier for Alex Dunphy)

This application was a Council request to rezone the lot from the Open Space (OS) zone to the Single Unit Residential (R-1) zone. Five (5) members of the public made comments at the Public Information Meeting. The public comment period is open until November 16, 2023. A recommendation report is planned to come to the December meeting of PAC/HAC. The Committee asked if this area was serviced, and Sara confirmed it is a Growth Centre where servicing is provided. The Committee had previously discussed changing all R-1 zones to R-2 to increase density, but this application is specifically for R-1. Sara explained that it is due to the planning document policies and the lot size requirements. Chair Carr was in attendance for the PIM and noted that many residents were concerned with losing the green space.

File # 23-35 Wagner's Court, Windsor (Sara Poirier for Alex Dunphy)

This application was for a development agreement to permit the conversion of 5 existing single unit dwellings on Wagner's Court to two-unit dwellings. Four (4) members of the public made comments at the Public Information Meeting. The public comment period is open until November 16, 2023. A recommendation report is planned to come to the December meeting of PAC/HAC. Stefan asked for clarification as the sign on the site mentioned "affordable housing" and Sara thanked him for pointing this out. This was a mistake on the Planning Assistant's part. Planners/Development Agreements are only able to regulate land-use, not rental cost. Laurie

asked about the proposed elevation of the units and how this would affect floodwater, and Sara replied that the developer must provide clarification for the staff report.

File # 23-26 PID 45215290 Riverview Drive, Brooklyn (Sara Poirier for Mark Fredericks)

This application was a Council request to rezone a municipally owned property from the Open Space (OS) zone to the Single Unit Residential (R-1) zone. One (1) member of the public made comments at the Public Information Meeting. The public comment period remains open until November 16, 2023. A recommendation report is planned to come to the December meeting of PAC/HAC. Jim commented that the member of the public was not aware that this was a green space in their community. Chair Carr suggested making this information more readily available in the future.

File # 23-33 Windsor Back Road, Three Mile Plains (Sara Poirier for Mark Fredericks)

This application was for a development agreement to permit 87 residential units in 3 multi-unit buildings on a vacant property on Windsor Back Road in Three Mile Plains. Twelve (12) members of the public made comments at the Public Information Meeting. The public comment period remains open until November 16, 2023. A recommendation report is planned to come to a future meeting of PAC/HAC. Jane asked how the environmental assessment regarding the species at risk would be handled, and Sara replied that Mark Fredericks will be investigating this as part of his staff report. Paul asked which species were involved, and Chair Carr replied that it was barn swallows, bobolinks, monarch butterflies and flycatchers.

Business Arising From the Minutes

Update: File #23-02 WMPS and WLUB Amendments: 368 Nesbitt Street, PID 45056447 (Sara Poirier)

This application is a request to amend the Windsor Municipal Planning Strategy and Windsor Land Use By-law to permit a mixed-use, multi-unit development and hockey themed tourist destination on the site of the former Textile Mill. An information report was presented for discussion at the May 11, 2023 PAC/HAC meeting. A Public Information Meeting was held at 6:00pm on June 19, 2023 in Council Chambers. Sara is waiting for responses from inquiries before she can bring a recommendation forward to the Committee.

Update: File #23-04 Payzant Drive, Windsor (Sara Poirier for Alex Dunphy)

This application was for a development agreement to permit multi-phase residential development on Payzant Drive. Site design is ongoing in coordination with the Public Works Department. This application will be brought forward for recommendation once comments on the design are received from the Public Works Department.

Update: File #23-09 PID 45366432 Cole Drive, Windsor (Sara Poirier for Alex Dunphy)

This application was the second application for a development agreement to permit a 4-storey mixed-use apartment building on Cole Drive. Council approved the application at Second Reading on October 24, 2023. A Notice of Approval was published in the paper on October 31, 2023 initiating the 14-day appeal period.

Update: File #23-14 8 Upper Water Street, Windsor (Sara Poirier for Alex Dunphy)

This application was for a 6-storey mixed-use apartment building on the corner of Upper Water Street and King Street. The Public Hearing was held on October 24, 2023; however, the Second Reading was postponed to November 28, 2023 to request additional information regarding view planes from Fort Edward, pending legal opinion.

Update: File #23-03 Pemberton Ave, Garlands Crossing PID 45003563 (Sara Poirier for Alex Dunphy)

This application was for a rezoning to permit two (2) two-unit dwellings on Pemberton Avenue. Council approved the application at Second Reading on September 26, 2023. A Notice of Approval was published in the paper on October 3, 2023 initiating the 14-day appeal period. No appeals were received. This item may now be removed from the agenda.

Update: File #23-06 35 William St, Hantsport PID 45044419 (Sara Poirier for Alex Dunphy)

This application was for a text amendment to the Mixed Commercial/Residential (C-2) zone to permit a 5 storey, 40-unit apartment building. Council approved the application at Second Reading on September 26, 2023. A Notice of Approval was published in the paper on October 3, 2023 initiating the 14-day appeal period. No appeals were received. This item may now be removed from the agenda.

Update: Plan Review Consultant (Sara Poirier)

On June 27, 2023 Council passed a motion to give Planning staff the capacity to engage consultants to further the process of the Plan Review. A Request for Proposals document was developed and was posted to the Provincial procurement website with a closing date of

October 24, 2023. Two proposals were received and evaluated by staff. A recommendation report will be presented to Committee of the Whole on Tuesday evening (November 14).

Update: Heritage Plaques (Sara Poirier)

On September 26, 2023 Council approved the motion to “begin to immediately work with the West Hants Historical Society to create consistent signage to highlight historical places to visit within West Hants before the celebration of the World Acadian Congress in 2024.”

Sara Poirier, Kathy Kehoe, and VanEssa Roberts are meeting with representatives from the West Hants Historical Society next week to discuss this project in time for budget discussions.

Update: File #23-11 Short Term Rentals (Sara Poirier for Mark Fredericks)

This is a project requested by the PAC/HAC and Council to investigate regulations for short term rentals. On May 23, 2023 Municipal Council passed a motion for staff to prepare a report and regulations for Short Term Rentals if deemed appropriate. At the September 14, 2023 meeting, the Committee directed staff to host a public meeting and gather input and collect information on the standards and requirements of traditional accommodations. There is currently an online survey which is collecting public feedback on the issue of short term rentals and a public meeting is scheduled for November 21, 2023 in the Council Chambers at 100 King Street, Windsor. Staff expect a follow-up information report will be brought to this committee at a future meeting. Lisa provided feedback on the survey question regarding secondary residences.

Update: File #23-13 187 Payzant Drive, Windsor (Sara Poirier for Mark Fredericks)

This application is a request for a development agreement to permit a community/recreation centre on a portion of the property at 187 Payzant Drive in Windsor. Council approved the application at Second Reading on October 24, 2023. A Notice of Approval was published in the paper on October 31, 2023 initiating the 14-day appeal period.

Update: File #23-16 Affordable Housing Policies (Sara Poirier)

At the October 12, 2023 PAC/HAC meeting Sara provided an information report regarding potential amendments to the planning documents to enable more affordable housing developments within the Municipality. The Committee made a recommendation requesting staff consider amendments to the planning documents in advance of the plan review. Sara will work on these amendments as she has time and bring them back to future PAC/HAC meetings for recommendation.

Update: File #22-23 PID 45006947 and 45415668, MacLeod Court, Three Mile Plains (Sara Poirier for Mark Fredericks)

This application is a request for a development agreement to permit 27 townhouse units off a new public street off MacLeod Court in Three Mile Plains. The First Reading was held on October 24, 2023 and the Public Hearing and Second Reading is scheduled for November 28, 2023.

Update: File #23-19 411 King Street, Windsor (Sara Poirier for Alex Dunphy)

This application was for a development agreement to permit an 18-unit stacked townhouse development at 411 King Street. The First Reading was held on October 24, 2023 and the Public Hearing and Second Reading is scheduled for November 28, 2023.

File #23-07 PID 45180635 Hwy 215, Summerville (Mark Fredericks)

This application is a request for a development agreement to permit an outdoor Paintball facility on a portion of a property on Highway 215, Summerville. The subject property was owned by a deceased member of the applicant's family and a Will is in the process of being probated, necessary to verify the legal ownership. This process is ongoing, and staff expect to bring the recommendation report back to PAC/HAC at a future meeting.

Building and Development Activity Reports (October 2023)

The report was circulated with the agenda package. There were no questions.

New Business

Information: JRTA – Stage 1 Public Engagement What We Heard Report (Sara Poirier)

The Joint Regional Transportation Agency (JRTA) is tasked with developing a Regional Transportation Plan for a study area which includes Halifax Regional Municipality and the municipalities within 1 hour of Halifax Regional Municipality, which includes WHRM. Sara sits on the JRTA Municipal Working Group on behalf of WHRM.

The JRTA released the stage 1 public engagement "what we heard report" at the end of last month. The report provides a good overview of the public feedback received regarding public transportation in the study area, which includes WHRM. The information from the public engagement sessions will assist the JRTA develop the Regional Transportation Plans vision and goals. It was added to the agenda as information for the Committee.

The Committee was very excited to see this study done and some members were very interested in the prospect of the rail line being revitalized. They considered it a benefit for both WHRM and HRM if they had better connectivity.

Notices from Adjacent Municipal Units

Notice from Kings County

West Hants Regional Municipality received a notice from Kings County. The notice was to advise Council of a Public Participation Meeting held in October 2023 for amendments to the policies related to housing development incentives, including inclusionary zoning and density bonusing, as well as amendments to increase the maximum number of residential units in multi-unit dwellings developed in the Residential Medium Density (R3) Zone and the Residential Multi-unit (R4) Zone. These amendments are not of concern to planning staff and do not require any action from the Committee or Council.

Notice from Halifax Regional Municipality

West Hants Regional Municipality received a notice from Halifax Regional Municipality. The notice was to advise Council of the ability to comment on the draft Regional Plan as an abutting Municipality until November 22, 2023. Staff did not review the entire draft Regional Plan however reviewed the staff report associated with the draft plan which outlined priority areas of Council through the review and a summary of the document. Planning staff do not anticipate any action being required by Council in relation to the notice.

Lisa asked if anything stood out in HRM's draft plan that would be helpful for WHRM. Sara said that would be the benefit of having the Plan Review consultant, who has knowledge of planning documents from different jurisdictions.

Questions and Comments from the Public

Facebook comments are not followed in real time. The public is encouraged to contact staff directly if there are any questions or comments. Public comments received during the Public Information Meetings and during the comment period will be considered and included in the staff report. There were no questions or comments at this time.

Next Meeting Date (December 14, 2023) / Adjournment

The next meeting is scheduled for December 14, 2023 at 6:00pm. The Committee and the public will be notified of any changes. Moved by Lisa Bland and seconded by Stefan Palios that the meeting be adjourned at 8:07pm. Motion carried unanimously.