



WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
Planning & Heritage Advisory Committee (PAC/HAC) Minutes
May 8, 2025, 6:00pm – 7:31pm
Sanford Council Chambers, Zoom / YouTube Live

PRESENT: Tim Carr, Hantsport Representative, Chair
Abraham Zebian, Mayor
Kayla Leary-Pinch, Councillor (District 7)
Jim Ivey, Councillor (District 11)
Guido Furlani, Windsor Representative
Jane Davis, Hantsport Representative
Michel Bourgeois, WHRM Representative
KJ Conyers-Steede, WHRM Representative
Mark Kehoe, WHRM Representative

STAFF: Kari Fougere, Acting Director of Planning and Development
Will Hong, Planner
Vanessa Lake, Planning Assistant

GALLERY: Councillor Bonnie Smith
3 members of the public

REGRETS: Paul Beazley, Windsor Representative

1.0 Call to Order and Attendance

Chair Carr called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Quorum was achieved. Paul Beazley had sent regrets. Councillor Leary-Pinch arrived at 6:04pm.

2.0 Announcements

West Hants Regional Municipality acknowledges that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People and that this land is governed by the treaties of Peace and Friendship signed in 1726. West Hants Regional Municipality recognizes that we are all treaty people and have responsibilities to this land and each other. West Hants Regional Municipality recognizes African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose history, legacies, and contributions have enriched that part of Mi'kma'ki known as Nova Scotia for over 400 years. We acknowledge the historic and ongoing racism against these communities, and we are committed to mending our relationships by listening, learning, and recognizing our wrongs.

The Committee and members of the audience are reminded of the proper behaviour expected of them from the Municipal Code of Conduct, and that the meeting is live in YouTube.

Chair Carr reminded everyone that Mother's Day is this weekend, and that there are many wonderful local shops, services and locations in West Hants to find a gift or experience. Guido mentioned that he has some comments from the public to share later in the meeting. KJ announced that the Rural Community Foundation of Nova Scotia has started the Rural Pride Fund, an initiative throughout Nova Scotia looking to provide resources for rural communities looking to build Pride organizations. He said that West Hants Pride was one of the first groups on board. The Fund is currently looking for charity partners.

3.0 Approval of Agenda and Additions

Moved by Guido Furlani and seconded by Councillor Ivey that the agenda be approved as circulated. Motion carried unanimously.

4.0 Declaration of Conflict of Interest

No conflicts were declared.

5.0 Approval of Minutes (April 10, 2025)

Moved by Guido Furlani and seconded by Michel Bourgeois that the minutes be approved as circulated. Motion carried unanimously.

6.0 New Business

6.1 File #24-11 Development Agreement: 60 Old Walton Rd, Upper Burlington (Will Hong)

This is a development agreement application to permit an automotive repair shop on the subject property. The Public Information Meeting was held on April 2, 2025. There were no comments received during the comment period. Planner Hong noted that he is still waiting for a response from the Fire Chief and hopes to hear back before the First Reading. The Manager of Building and Fire Inspection Services has confirmed that a fire inspection will be required on the building being used for the repair shop to ensure compliance with the Fire Safety Act.

Jane asked for clarification on Section 4 of the draft development agreement, regarding the commencement date. Planner Hong explained that, as the use is already in place, this date has already been sent for legal review. 24 months is the typical timeframe given, but it can be negotiated with the applicant. Jane asked when the timer starts, and Planner Hong explained that it begins when the development agreement is signed.

Mark asked if there were any restrictions to the inventory storage, such as the number of derelict cars on the lot. Acting Director Fougere explained that development agreements are able to include screening requirements which have been included in the draft agreement. Chair Carr and Councillor Leary-Pinch added that there is always the option to call By-law Enforcement in the case of an unsightly property.

Moved by Mayor Zebian and seconded by Councillor Ivey that PAC/HAC recommends that Council give First Reading and hold a Public Hearing to consider entering into a development agreement to allow an automotive repair shop at 60 Old Walton Road, Upper Burlington, PID 45168069 in a manner substantively the same as the draft set out in Attachment C of the report File #24-11 to the Planning and Heritage Advisory Committee report dated May 8, 2025. Motion carried unanimously.

Moved by Mayor Zebian and seconded by Councillor Ivey that that PAC/HAC recommends that Council require that the development agreement with Matthew Moore be signed within 120 days

from the date of final approval by Council or the date that any appeals have been disposed of; otherwise this approval will be void and obligations arising hereunder shall be at an end. Motion carried unanimously.

6.2 File #25-04 Development Agreement Amendment: PID 45056363 Upper Water Street, Windsor (Kari Fougere)

This is a development agreement amendment application to allow for updated unit designs, updated exterior finish, adding two (2) additional units to the upper floors, and updating the required parking. The original development agreement was signed in 2009 for a mixed commercial and residential building. The amendments are considered substantive, and Staff have drafted an entirely new development agreement to replace the old one. The Public Information Meeting was held on April 2, 2025. There were no comments received during the comment period. Acting Director Fougere noted that the property was improperly surveyed in 2009, and the building location has been reoriented accordingly.

Councillor Ivey noted that on page 68 of the agenda package, the text refers to “The Town” and wondered if that should be changed. Acting Director Fougere explained that the criteria were taken directly from the Windsor Municipal Planning Strategy. Councillor Ivey also noted that the street frontage is listed as 0ft, and Acting Director Fougere confirmed that this is permitted in the Town Centre zone. The new site plan places the building further from the sidewalk to accommodate parking. Councillor Ivey asked about the changes to the wording regarding stormwater management. Acting Director Fougere explained that the wording was adjusted in consultation with Public Works and removes the liability from the Municipality, and allows the Municipality to follow up on the state of stormwater management.

KJ asked about the commercial businesses that could be permitted. Acting Director Fougere explained that it would be several businesses currently permitted in the Town Centre zone. This list has been expanded from the previous development agreement to allow the developer more options to secure commercial tenants. KJ also asked about the potential impact to the Fort Edward sightline. Acting Director Fougere said that the proposed building is 3 storeys and would be set lower than the houses behind it on Cobbett Street.

Jane asked about the difference in Section 4 in the development agreement compared to the previous file regarding the commencement date. This property is currently undeveloped, and this

timeframe allows for the time needed to prepare the land. Jane asked if there are any development agreements currently in place where the timeframe has expired, and what, if any, action has been taken. This will be added to the Q&A section for the next meeting.

Moved by Mayor Zebian and seconded by Councillor Ivey that PAC/HAC recommends that Council give First Reading and hold a Public Hearing to consider entering into a development agreement which replaces the original development agreement on PID 45056363 on Upper Water Street, Windsor in a manner substantively the same as the draft set out in Attachment D of the report File #25-04 to the Planning and Heritage Advisory Committee report dated May 8, 2025, taking note that this development agreement will discharge and replace the development agreement recorded at the Land Registry Office on November 25, 2009, as document number 94794790. Motion carried unanimously.

Moved by Mayor Zebian and seconded by Councillor Leary-Pinch that PAC/HAC recommends that Council require that the development agreement amendment with Seastone Developments Limited be signed within 120 days from the date of final approval by Council or the date that any appeals have been disposed of; otherwise this approval will be void and obligations arising hereunder shall be at an end. Motion carried unanimously.

7.0 Business Arising from the Minutes

7.1 Committee Q&A

The dashboard was provided with the agenda package. Related information was forward to the Committee prior to the meeting date.

Councillor Leary-Pinch commented on Public Information Meetings (PIMs) being held in the affected communities. Residents had reached out to her indicating that they would prefer this option. She acknowledged that current technology may not allow for it at this time. This may play a role in the low attendance at PIMs since not everyone is able to make it to 76 Morison for meetings. Chair Carr commented that the document staff shared with the Committee made points both for and against changes to the notification and locations for PIMs. It is encouraging that conversations are being had to accommodate the public as best as possible.

Guido asked what PAC/HAC can do at this moment. Chair Carr said that the Committee is advisory to Council and can make a recommendation if they wish. He noted that this topic has gone to

Council twice already, so the recommendation should be clear and succinct. Guido made a motion, seconded by Jane, for Council to reconsider the 2023 staff recommendation.

The Committee discussed the motion as presented. Council had already turned down the 2023 motion, and some members felt the contents should be workshopped before it was presented to Council again. It was noted in the staff report that WHRM is already leading in public notification compared to other districts. There may be other elements in play. Guido explained he was making the motion to encourage discussion on this matter at the Council level.

KJ mentioned the thriving community centre network within West Hants and suggested exploring a hybrid approach where the Municipality sub-contracts the community centres to help with engagement. Residents already place their trust in these community centres, and it may also alleviate the strain on financial resources and capacity. Volunteers are very active and vital to the communities in West Hants and KJ suggested giving them the permission to test this out.

Moved by Guido Furlani and seconded by Jane Davis that PAC/HAC recommends that Council reconsider the staff recommendation from 2023 regarding increasing the notification distance from 300ft to 1000ft, increasing the size of signage, and increasing the lead time for advertising from 7 to 14 days for Public Information Meetings. Motion defeated with Mayor Zebian, Tim Carr, Michel Bourgeois, Councillor Ivey, Councillor Leary-Pinch, and Mark Kehoe opposed. In favour: Guido Furlani, Jane Davis, and KJ Conyers-Steede.

The Committee may brainstorm other ideas at a later meeting. Mark asked for clarification about the “increased costs” mentioned in the report. Chair Carr explained that the costs of notification are worked into the application fee, for things such as newspaper ads and postage for letters, and to increase the amount sent would inevitably increase the cost for the applicant.

8.0 Upcoming Public Information Meetings – May 21, 2025

8.1 File #25-18 Development Agreement: Bear Lake Wind Farm – Revised (Kari Fougere)

This is a development agreement application to permit a wind farm with up to seven turbines in the Vaughan area on PIDs 45060068, 45060076, 45381209, 45381217, 45399540, 45399573, 45317435, 45399532 and 45317427. This is a new, updated application for the Bear Lake wind farm which reduces the number of turbines from eleven to seven and decreases the geographic

area used. The Public Information Meeting will be held at 6:00pm on May 21, 2025, in the Council Chambers. There were no questions or comments.

9.0 File Updates

The file updates were circulated with the agenda package and are available on the Municipal website. There were no questions or comments.

10.0 Building and Development Activity Reports (March 2025)

The report was circulated with the agenda package and is available on the Municipal website. There were no questions or comments.

11.0 Notices from Adjacent Municipal Units

11.1 Municipality of Chester – Upcoming Public Hearing

A notice was received from the Municipality of Chester regarding an upcoming Public Hearing to be held on May 15, 2025, at 6:00pm. The purpose of the Hearing is amendments to the Chester Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law by adding policies and definitions for Short-term Rental accommodations. There were no questions or comments.

12.0 Public Comments

The public is encouraged to attend the meetings or contact staff directly if they have any questions or comments. An email can be sent to planning@westhants.ca and the appropriate staff member will respond. Contact information is also available on the Municipal website.

Kathleen O'Brien would like for the PAC/HAC to be involved in creating a telecommunications tower procedure for West Hants. Kathleen O'Brien states that West Hants currently only addresses setbacks, and everything else is addressed by the Federal Government. She also stated that the current public consultation period is 1 month via email or by phone, and with a notification distance of less than 400m, and that there are no public meetings or Council involvement. She asked if PAC/HAC can help establish a procedure with mandatory Council involvement, better public input, and a larger notification radius. The Innovation for Science and Economic Development (ISED) can help develop such a procedure with the municipality. Ms.

O'Brien had gathered over 70 signatures to request more Council involvement, but it was too late for the tower she was concerned about. She would like to have something in writing before the next tower is proposed so basic procedures are followed. She has asked Guido to get involved and to share his research.

Guido stated he is happy to help the public when they reach out to him. He had received correspondence from Ms. O'Brien where she expressed her concerns. She is asking that more is done than just sending letters. One of the development officers had explained that the Municipality does not have jurisdiction over the development of telecommunication towers. Guido would like to see more people be involved because it is their lives that are being affected. He expressed concern over the potential health effects of cell towers. He had previously shared a report with the Committee from Dr. Olle Johansson on this topic. He wanted to know what WHRM would be able to do to these towers, rather than what they couldn't do.

Judy Millard-Wile also expressed concern about the potential health effects of these telecommunication towers and electromagnetic frequency radiation. She feels it has effects on all organic life and could be a big problem if not addressed. She listed some of her sources.

Guido wanted to speak on the emails he received from the last meeting regarding the Dalhousie presentation on infill. He will bring more items for discussion at later meeting.

12.0 Next Meeting Date / Adjournment

The next meeting is scheduled for June 12, 2025, at 6:00pm. A notice will be sent out if there are any changes. With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:31pm.