

Planning Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

December 14, 2017

Town Council Chambers

Present

Mayor L. Boucher, Chair
Deputy Mayor, W. Cormier
Councillor D. MacInnis

B. Gottschall, Vice Chair
C. Hanlon
C. Henderson
J. Kerr
K. Silver
J. Sullivan

S. Day, Director of Planning
K. MacInnis, Planner
D. Halfpenny, Secretary

Absent

P. Andersen, StFX Representative

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

Approval of Agenda

“It was moved and seconded, that the Agenda for the Planning Advisory Committee meeting of December, 2017 be approved with addition of 52 Victoria St Update and Correspondence under New Business.” Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

“ It was moved and seconded, that the Minutes of Nov 2, 2017 be approved.” Motion carried.

Conflict of Interest

No committee members declared a Conflict of Interest.

J. Sullivan asked why Conflict of Interest was added to every agenda.

Mayor L. Boucher explained that due to the topics discussed at the Planning Advisory Committee and the fact that the Committee is made up of developers, landlords and others that it is there as a reminder for committee members to review the agenda and determine if they are in conflict.

J. Sullivan commented that he found it offensive.

Department Updates

S. Day reported that he has retained the services of a Chief Building Inspector Level 2 to provide inspection services for the Royal Canadian Legion and the Brian Mulroney Hall.

S. Day advised that B. Poirier has been providing services for the regular Commercial inspections, closing out old files and doing regular inspections each Thursday. He noted that B. Poirier had to deal with an issue where a demolition had occurred without a permit. The property owner was required to pay a double demolition fee, properly dispose of the waste materials, and clean up the site. S. Day noted that he continues to follow up with the business owner as currently the requirement is to not have the entire lot covered in retail display.

116 Church St.

S. Day advised that 116 Church St appeal settlement didn't come together. He noted that the plaintiffs have received clarification that the commercial periphery is not an issue nor is the Town's work on the 112 Church Street property to loop a waterline. He commented that the check off list is shorter and considerably simplified. He stated that the dates have not been set yet with the Utility and Review Board and that it will be up to the plaintiffs to meet the obligations.

52 Victoria Street

S. Day provided a brief background on the property. He noted that the appeal settlement was successful in that Council agreed to go through a Development Agreement process whereby the developer will be required to respond to the concerns of the neighbours over the unknown such as stormwater management, architectural drawing, parking, etc.

Dr. R. Sers, one of the two appellants, commented that he doesn't read the Casket newspaper or pick up the Highland Heart and hadn't noticed the sign on the property at 116 Church Street. He mentioned his concerns for Commercial Periphery issues on this property.

The Chair explained that Commercial Periphery is not a part of the Church Street area and is restricted to the downtown core and is a separate amendment to the Land Use ByLaw. She noted that the rezoning would permit a flag lot to be developed behind the existing property. She stated that at present there is no plan for such a development to occur.

S. Day stated that 116 Church is a L-shaped lot and, with site plan approval, has the potential for subdivision allowing the erection of a two unit house.

Dr. Sers commented that there is a plan to create a watermain loop by creating an easement at 112 Church Street and that he had received a notice in his mailbox identifying that the work would be taking place.

Mayor L. Boucher stated yes, notices were sent out by the Engineering Department in conjunction with the contractor to advise that work will be taking place as a courtesy and to advise of traffic issues. She reiterated that in the future the Town of Antigonish would go above and beyond and are currently looking at a policy to send memos to those in affected areas which will go beyond the requirements listed in the Municipal Government Act..

Dr. Sers asked about the development of 112 Church Street. The Chair stated that currently the property is owned by the Town of Antigonish and future plans are to sell the property with an easement. She noted that the purchaser would determine what they propose to build on the site.

S. Day commented that currently those proposing new developments or rezoning are encouraged to contact the adjacent property owners and to discuss their projects and obtain support from their neighbours for their proposed project.

Deputy Mayor W. Cormier noted that when a variance is applied for the neighbours receive a letter asking for identification of any concerns about a proposed project. He noted that he would advocate that the same should be done for notices of rezoning.

Discussion followed on changing ways of how people receive news. Website posting, changes in role of newspapers, use of such tools as the Talk of the Town and placing notices in with town electric bills, etc.

Mayor Boucher acknowledged that placing notices in electric bills has been discussed as an option.

Antigonish Affordable Housing

S. Day stated that the Town had donated a piece of land to Antigonish Affordable Housing. Council had expressed concerns that a degree of privacy be maintained for neighbouring properties.

Deputy Mayor W. Cormier commented that having the privacy requirements incorporated into the deed would allow for requirements to be met before sign off.

S. Day noted that Antigonish Affordable Housing are very acceptable to having the privacy issues requirements in the agreement. S. Day advised that a bond would work to ensure that the property privacy separation is met.

Residents will be show plan. Housing will be for low income people.

Mayor L. Boucher, Chair explained that Antigonish Affordable Housing is comprised of a board of volunteers and that support systems are in place for the residents. She noted that terms of reference must be met for eligibility to rent with Antigonish Affordable Housing.

Parking Amendment Update

K. MacInnis Provided an update on parking requirements for the Town . She explained that two recent developments the Royal Canadian Legion Arras Branch 59/CACL project and the Brian Mulroney Centre have necessitated that the town take a closer look at amending the formulas for determining the required number of parking spaces. She stated that the current formula would require an additional 9 parking spaces be developed for the Legion project and an additional 210 spots for the Brian Mulroney Centre.

K. Macinnis noted that she is looking at specific use, capacity and floor area using the existing formula and then taking a closer look to see if it still appropriate when looking at unique environments like STFX campus. She acknowledged that there are pros and cons to decreasing the parking on the STFX Campus. She advised that to decrease the parking may encourage students to walk to campus instead of bringing their vehicle but could create a spillover effect where students park their cars behind the old post office and walk up to campus. She commented that this may be an opportunity for increased usage of the Antigonish Community Transit.

K. MacInnis advised that at present she is looking specifically at institutional zone control. However, she noted her role may be expanded to include parking consideration for other zones. She identified the three major Town documents that are important to keep in mind when reviewing the parking guidelines. She explained that the ICSP sites goals to increase public transportation and encourage active lifestyles; the Land Use Bylaw which lists the parking requirements, and the Municipal Planning Strategy which strives to maintain balance of parking requirements while allowing for the best use of resources for the needs of the citizens, workers, and visitors.

K. MacInnis advised she had reviewed the 2013 parking Study which had focused on the Main Street Corridor. She noted that at peak times occupancy rates for downtown parking rarely exceeded 80%. She commented that there had been a parking study conducted by a 3rd party which specifically examined STFX parking, although the study was not extremely useful as it was prepared based on one day in April when the majority of students are not on campus.

K. MacInnis noted she had observed that the Canada Post Parking lot is being used by StFX staff and students, that the StFx parking lots are full during peak times. She advised that there is shared parking used by StFX students at St Ninians Place and Cathedral that is not taken into consideration for the inventory of parking at STFX.

Discussion followed and it was mentioned that the St Ninian Parking is often unavailable at morning Mass times and when there are funerals or other events at St Ninian's Place. She advised there are approximately seventy spaces available in this parking lot.

K. MacInnis stated that she is looking at site specific issues, whether bike facilities, StFx enforcement and control of parking through a metered approach, overflow areas, public transportation options, and parking trip demand analysis concerns will determine if an increase or decrease in parking is needed. She noted that day and night usage is another consideration.

Deputy Mayor W. Cormier commented that a period of wait and see may be required to determine the exact number of spaces required. He noted that a Main Street developer had supplemented his parking space requirement by using spaces at his East Main location a block from his Main Street building and that there seemed to be some problems with this arrangement.

C. Henderson stated that when planning for parking spaces for tenants there should be a requirement to allow for visitor parking spaces.

K. Silver commented that the Antigonish Mall parking lot should have metered parking and then students using the parking lot could either walk up through Founder's Lane or have the Antigonish Transit keep rotating through to drive students up to the University.

Mayor L. Boucher noted that the Town does not own the Mall parking lot or Antigonish Community Transit and therefore are unable to calculate in the use of these resources.

S. Day commented that the CAO had meet with StFX to explore the idea of car share in the Town.

K. Macinnis concluded that she will be continuing research on the parking issue. She noted that the committee discussion will help her to move forward with obtaining parking implementation and more in depth analysis and obtain better data.

Lodging Residence

Mayor L. Boucher turned the meeting over to Vice Chair B. Gottschall and removed herself from the table. C. Henderson and J. Kerr also removed themselves from the meeting.

S. Day provided a brief review of Lodging Residences. Committee members viewed a map prepared by K. Macinnis of Lodging Residence density in the R1 zones. Lodging Residence

S. Day reviewed the definitions for Lodging Residence, Lodging Unit, and Rooming House. He spoke of permitted uses in an R1 zone and how the committee had held public meetings with the Antigonish Rental association to remove the word rooming house renaming it lodging residence to remove any negative connotation.

S. Day did a brief review of staff report on lodging houses.

Motion

“A motion was made and seconded that Council approve the recommendations contained in the staff report which would set the limit on the number of rented bedrooms contained within a residential unit in an R1 zone to a maximum of four along with other, related changes.” All in favor Deputy Mayor W. Cormier, Councillor D. MacInnis, Vice Chair B. Gottschall, StFX Rep, P. Andersen. Negative K. Silver. C. Hanlon asked to abstain.

Motion Carried.

Mayor L. Boucher returned to chair the meeting. C. Henderson and J. Kerr returned to the meeting.

Motion

“It was moved and seconded, that the meeting be adjourned.” Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.