

Public Hearing & Regular Town Council Minutes
March 18, 2019
Town Council Chambers

Present

Mayor L. Boucher
Deputy Mayor D. MacInnis
Councillor A. Murray
Councillor W. Cormier
Councillor M. Farrell
Councillor J. MacPherson
Councillor D. Roberts

Also Present

CAO J. Lawrence
D. Wilson, Deputy Clerk
M. Barkhouse, Corporate Services
P. Dec, Planner

Media

Delegates

Public Hearing

Call to Order

Mayor L. Boucher called the public hearing to order at 5:30 PM

P. Dec, Planner, noted an application was submitted by C. MacDonald to develop a 15 unit building through development agreement.

P. Dec provided a PowerPoint presentation, noting that the land is currently comprised of two (2) properties, and the requirement for the properties to be consolidated. He noted Council previously approved the rezoning of these two properties in January of this year.

Elevations of the building were presented. It was noted the façade of the building line falls along with the grade of the street, will feature 15 units and will be three stories high. Floor plans were introduced and reviewed. The proposed site plan was presented.

Council was advised that Policy P-4.1.9.1 of the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) supports this development where the land is appropriately zoned, and Council shall consider the proposal through policies P-8.2.7, 8.2.8 and the following:

P. Dec spoke to hard surface requirements and how they have been met. He noted the building may not exceed three stories, set backs must exceed regular set-back requirements by 10%, which has been met on three sides, a variance was requested for the fourth side, and as there were no appeals, the variance is now in effect.

Council was advised that parking requirements are somewhat relaxed due to the close proximity of the building to the downtown. The required parking spaces were then reviewed. P. Dec noted there will be a requirement for a minimum of 15 parking spaces, which are identified in the proposal.

P. Dec spoke to the building height and window ratios for the development. It was further noted that consideration must be given to ensure that the building not be placed in front of or to the rear of an existing structure which is considered historically or architecturally important, no façade shall not be unrelieved for a distance greater than 40 feet, signage should be modest, and loading areas screened.

Council was advised that a landscaping plan has been submitted which meet requirements. Also, a few trees have been catalogued as important and will be retained.

P. Dec noted the requirement to consider the impact to adjacent structures, noting there are two municipal heritage properties (75 & 82 Church Street) as well as a large apartment building on the corner of Church/St. Ninian Streets.

In keeping with neighboring structures, the building will feature bay windows on all three stories, glazed doors, decorative parapet, and appropriate window ratios.

P. Dec advised Council that the landscaping and building meet current requirements.

P. Dec then spoke to the general policies which are mostly administrative, except there shall be a security deposit required (performance surety in the amount of 1% of the building cost). He noted Policy 8.2.5 speaks to development agreements in general, and the need to comply with intent of MPS and Vision Statement, which the proposal does. P. Dec spoke further to considerations on implications for municipal services, as well as for Provincial Statements of Interest. Council was advised that a two-hour fire separation is required. Consideration must also be given to impacts to the neighborhood and additional traffic, however given the current amount of vehicular traffic on Church Street, this project is not expected to have a significant impact.

It was noted that erosion and sedimentation control must be considered during construction.

P. Dec advised Council that Planning Staff and the Planning Advisory Committee both recommend approval of the proposal.

P. Dec then called for questions regarding the proposed development. In response to a query from Councillor A. Murray, P. Dec responded that current planning documents do not consider building colour or materials.

At 5:59 PM the public hearing concluded.

Regular Town Council Meeting

Call to Order

At 6:04 PM. Mayor L. Boucher called the meeting to order.

Approval of Agenda

"It was Moved and Seconded to approve the Agenda with additions." Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

"It was Moved and Seconded to approve the Minutes of the February 19, 2019 Regular Council meeting and February 20, 2019 Email Poll Minutes." Motion carried.

Presentations

- **Antigonish Culture Alive**

S. O'Toole and R. Power were in attendance to provide Council with a PowerPoint presentation and expanded on what Culture Alive is, their purposes and how they are achieved.

R. Power requested the town advise her of any events that they may not be aware of, and expanded on posters, newsletters, and information that is shared locally, provincially and internationally.

S. O'Toole spoke to their partnerships and advocacy, programs and projects and their budgets

S. O'Toole noted that if the provincial or municipal funding gets reduced, so does the federal funding.

Following a question and answer session the presenters left the meeting.

Mayor L. Boucher thanked S. O'Toole and R. Power for all their work and efforts.

A brief question and answer session followed. Discussion took place on the need for a paid position to try to give more cohesion to the organizations.

- **Antigonish Highland Society**

Ms. I. MacLeod and M. MacIsaac were in attendance to provide information to Council on their activities and the upcoming Highland Games.

I. MacLeod provided details on the Highland Games, now in their 156th year. She spoke to how the games bring large number of people to the downtown, their partners and other organizations that sponsor events during the Highland Games experience, and to the large amount of money that they spend locally, provincially and nationally.

I. MacLeod spoke to the success of the Ships of 1801 which began as part of the Highland Games 150th anniversary, and briefly touched on key partnerships. Council was advised on the large number of volunteers (paid) and their value.

M. MacIsaac, treasurer of Highland Society took to the floor and spoke to costs of hosting the Highland Games, noting that although it is hard to put an exact number on costs, it is approximately \$300,000, with the make-up being gate and beer tent garnering close to

\$150,000, municipal and provincial funding 30%, and the remaining 20% coming from sponsorship.

M. MacIsaac then broke down the budget numbers into specific sections, specifically noting the large amount of money that the Highland Society spends locally.

Mayor L. Boucher thanked the delegates for their presentation and called for questions from Council. Councillors M. Farrell, J. MacPherson and D. Roberts provided comment.

I. MacLeod noted that they have no control over some costs, such as insurance and parades.

- The Arts House

Mayor L. Boucher welcomed M. MacEachern to the meeting. He noted they have three major events, namely the Arts House, summer Arts Fair (ongoing), and the Harvest Bash (Halloween).

M. MacEachern thanked Council for their recent generosity. He noted they would be applying for a Community Grant and that the 'ask' would be the same as last year.

M. MacEachern stated they have two grant proposals in the works to assist with new windows, drafts, etc. He spoke to the upcoming Art Fair, noting the bigger picture is having all the food trucks at the park. He spoke further to issues with lighting and the need for more 120v plugs. Council was advised on attendance numbers.

M. MacEachern advised that they may be taking over the Street Fair, however he stated they cannot lose money.

M. MacEachern then called for questions. Mayor L. Boucher suggested that M. MacEachern work with S. Scannell on matters such as electricity and plugs.

Mayor L. Boucher noted that they are currently reviewing their grants. M. MacEachern noted that A. Arnold had stepped up to fill the role of the late D. Miller.

Councillor M. Farrell spoke on the positive comments she received on their pottery program.

Mayor L. Boucher thanked M. MacEachern for his presentation.

Business from the Minutes

- Divestiture of Land; 112 Church Street, Antigonish

CAO J. Lawrence noted Council discussed the matter In Camera and will be putting the property up for sale, will notify neighbors and those who have expressed an interest directly and that the matter will come back to Council.

- Eastern Strait Regional Enterprise Network

CAO J. Lawrence noted that this matter was discussed In Camera. CAO J. Lawrence referred to a meeting held last week involving a provincial representative.

CAO J. Lawrence requested a motion from Council to exit the REN.

"It was Moved and Seconded that the Town of Antigonish give notice of its intention to move forward with the Notice provided last March and disband from the Eastern Strait Regional Enterprise Network." Motion carried.

Mayor L. Boucher noted that the Town has been a big supporter of the REN. She thanked J. Beaton for all the hard work he has done over the past three years. J. Beaton thanked the Town for their support in return.

New Business

- Financial Statement of the Antigonish Arena Commission; Year Ending March 31, 2018

M. Barkhouse noted that the Arena is in a deficit again this year and spoke to adjustments made to the books. She noted the Arena has a line of credit that needs to be looked at, and further they are also looking at an operating deficit. Council was advised that reviews will take place on matters such as the canteen and ice rentals. M. Barkhouse further noted the Town will need to pay approximately \$80,000, to give the Arena a clean slate.

M. Barkhouse expanded on the deficit.

CAO J. Lawrence noted that the Arena has an accumulated deficit of approximately \$160,000 and that it has been recommended that we pay our 50%. It was noted the Arena is now being audited by the same auditors the Town uses. Controls will be put in place for matters such as monthly budgets, internal controls and the yearly budget. CAO J. Lawrence noted that the Town and County will work with the manager to ensure controls are implemented.

Councillor D. Roberts questioned the use of the Arena during the summer months. Brief discussion took place.

Councillor W. Cormier provided comment on having three ice surfaces in the community and whether it would make more sense to have a more coordinated effort in scheduling events.

Mayor L. Boucher spoke to the social benefits of arenas and the difficulties in breaking even, with CAO J. Lawrence noting that generally things are running well, and that there is nothing here that is out of line with other arenas.

Discussion took place.

Following brief discussion, it was "Moved and Seconded to accept the Financial Statements of the Antigonish Arena Commission for the year ending March 31, 2018." Motion carried.

"It was moved and seconded that the Town pay their share of the accumulated deficit of the Antigonish Arena in the amount of \$79,816.50." Motion carried.

- Land Transfer; Town of Antigonish to Kell's Enterprises Ltd.

CAO J. Lawrence noted S. Scannell is on vacation. He spoke to parcels of town-owned land that was part of the old river bed that have been made available to abutting property owners in the past at their cost. He further noted it was the recommendation of staff to turn the property over to Kell's as requested, subject to the maintenance of stormwater drainage, etc.

"It was Moved and Seconded that the Town turn the land over to Kell's as requested with any costs to be borne by Kell's." Motion carried.

- Newline Skatepark contract

CAO J. Lawrence spoke to project noting it is staff's recommendation to enter into a contract with Newline Skatepark for the construction of a Design-Build All-Wheels Skatepark.

CAO J. Lawrence responded to a query from Councillor W. Cormier. He noted the project will be compartmentalized and can be done in phases as funding becomes available, with an anticipated start date of this July.

"It was Moved and Seconded to have the CAO sign the contract between the Town of Antigonish and Newline Skatepark at the current contract price of \$409,998. (HST included)." Motion carried.

- Accessible Field Documents

CAO J. Lawrence noted that the field project will be proceeding and outlined features of the field. He noted that the costs would be a bit less than anticipated.

CAO J. Lawrence noted that the Town had allocated \$150,000. From Capital Reserves in last year's budget to be used toward renovations, to the existing field for Special Olympics with the residual to go towards the Challenger Baseball field, and noted he was seeking permission to have administration sign a contract.

"It was Moved and Seconded that the CAO sign the contract between the Town of Antigonish and Turf Masters Ltd. for the construction of the Antigonish Sandlot Accessible Ball Field upgrades Project at the current tendered price of \$387,420 (plus HST)." Motion carried.

Correspondence

- T. Felix Re: Request for Property Tax Reduction; 195 Main Street, Antigonish

M. Barkhouse spoke to the request for a property tax reduction and how she came to the proposed reduction. Following brief discussion, the following motion was put forth:

"That Council approve a tax credit of \$3,077.75 to account #00091049 for the period of time that there was no building on the property due to destruction." Motion carried.

- Town of Port Hawkesbury; Re Eastern Strait Regional Network (ESREN)

Mayor L. Boucher noted that there was correspondence from the Town of Port Hawkesbury regarding ESREN.

- District of St. Mary's; Re Eastern Strait Regional Network (ESREN)

Mayor L. Boucher noted that there was correspondence from the District of St. Mary's regarding the ESREN.

- Town of Shelburne; Re HST for Infrastructure

Mayor L. Boucher noted that the Town of Shelburne is asking for a letter to be sent to Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM), supporting their request to the province for .75% of the Province's share of the HST to go toward infrastructure projects for municipalities when 2/3 of the residents in the municipality have municipal services. CAO J. Lawrence responded to a query from Councillor D. Roberts.

“It was Moved and Seconded to have a letter sent in agreement with the Town of Shelburne to the NSFM.” Motion carried.

Staff Reports

- CAO Report

Councillor W. Cormier provided comment on conversations he had in regard to the tennis courts. Brief discussion took place.

CAO J. Lawrence noted that there was a mixed message as to whether Council would be interested in possibly relocating the courts, and that the matter would have to be further looked into further now that Council has indicated it is open to this option.

CAO J. Lawrence stated he would bring matter forward with the University.

Brief discussion took place.

Councillor D. Roberts brought forth discussion on a request for \$7,000. for active transportation. It was noted discussion on the request would take place during budget deliberation.

Deputy Mayor D. MacInns questioned M. Barkhouse on current electric utility, and general operating costs, with the CAO noting that a lot of transfers haven't happened, along with some capital transfers that haven't been made yet. M. Barkhouse reiterated the CAOs comments.

Following brief discussion, the following motion was put forth:

“It was Moved and Seconded that Council accept the CAO Report as presented.” Motion carried.

Committee Reports

- Recreation

Councillor M. Farrell noted the Recreation Committee had met, skatepark discussed, along with the accessible ballfield, and 55+ Games and noted the great work being undertaken by Councillor D. Roberts. Discussion also took place on the grants submitted. She noted two volunteers will receive awards, namely Gladys MacDougall, and youth volunteer Hillary Broussard.

- Accessibility Committee

Deputy Mayor D. MacInnis noted he was unable to get quorum in order for the Accessibility Committee to meet.

In response to a query from Councillor W. Cormier, the CAO stated he anticipates a tender for the accessible ramp to be let in April or May.

- Police & License Committee

Councillor D. Roberts stated the Police & License Committee would be meeting next month.

She reported on 55+ Games noting a tentative budget is in place and registration packages have been completed. She advised that Nova Construction had donated \$2,500., and that there

would be a reduced cost for those who wish to attend the hospital-sponsored ceilidh. Councillor D. Roberts thanked 98.9XM for their ongoing promotion of the Games.

- **Beautification and Land Rehabilitation Committee**

Councillor A. Murray noted that the Committee did not meet as there was only a small agenda, however, he did provide the Council with an update. He noted this would be the third consecutive year that the colour of the flowers are being chosen in conjunction with a special event, and that this year the colours would be in keeping with those in the Town and County logos for the 55+ Games. He noted ongoing research is being done on Christmas décor and that he may have something firm to report next month.

- **Solid Waste Management Committee**

Councillor J. MacPherson reported that the Committee is revamping the Waste By-law. In response to a query from Councillor W. Cormier, it was noted the Town is waiting to see what the Halifax Regional Municipality decides with respect to plastic bags.

- **Fire Committee**

Councillor W. Cormier stated he had nothing to report at this time.

- **Planning Advisory Committee**

Mayor L. Boucher stated she hoped everyone is looking at the discussion papers on the planning documents, which will provide a good basis for questions when documents are presented.

Mayor L. Boucher acknowledged the attendance of K. Proctor and spoke to the challenges over the last number of weeks, and acknowledged the work he does and his team, as well as by-law.

“It was Moved and Seconded that Council proceed into a development agreement with the owner of 74/76 Church Street.” Motion carried.

Adjournment

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:35 PM.