



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITY

The Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) have been discussing a number of amendments to the Town's Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law. Two of the changes are as follows:

Permitting an Accessory Dwelling Unit in an Existing Home or in the Back Yard

A number of municipalities including East Hants and Halifax Regional Municipality are permitting homeowners to construct a dwelling unit in their home or in a building located in the back yard. In East Hants the maximum size of the accessory dwelling unit is 80 square meters (861 square feet).

This proposed change would apply to every lot which is occupied by a single unit home.

Permitting Apartment Buildings of More Than Three Storeys by Development Agreement

At present new apartments buildings of more than three storeys are permitted through a rezoning to the Multiple Residential (R3B) zone. This change would require a development agreement for these buildings. Development agreements give Council more control over such matters as building appearance, building location, landscaping, and storm water management.

Council recently approved an amendment limiting the height of a building in the Downtown (C-1) Zone to four storeys. This proposed amendment does not apply to this zone.

A public meeting to receive comments is scheduled as follows:

Where: Community Centre, Stewiacke

When: Thursday, June 6, 2024. 7:00 pm

Additional information is contained below and by contacting Grant Cooke, gucooke@gmail.com

Written comments are also welcome and should be forwarded to the Town Office by June 15, 2024.

Accessory Dwellings

The following is from a report prepared by HRM staff several years ago when they were considering allowing accessory dwellings:

“Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) has begun to see dramatic population growth. With this growth comes the need to house the population. The introduction of policy and legislation that permits intensification will be one of the means by which HRM responds to housing need. Allowing for secondary and backyard suites is one means of intensification.

There are several benefits associated with secondary and backyard suites such as increasing the overall density of an area without affecting the overall built form of the neighbourhood (hidden density); providing opportunities for affordable home ownership; providing rental opportunities in areas where there is traditionally little to no rental supply; and providing an additional source of income to existing landowners, including seniors looking to age in place.”

Stewiacke Town staff has prepared a brochure containing information from East Hants. It is on this website under “Accessory Dwellings Units Brochure”.

Permitting Apartment Buildings of More Than Three Storeys by Development Agreement

This change has been prompted by an informal development proposal to construct four apartment buildings at the end of Garden Gate Lane. One issue with that came to light was that the public street does not extend up to the site of the proposed apartment buildings.

In addition to the benefits of a development agreement outlined in the notice above the agreement can stipulate that the developer be responsible for bringing the travel way into the site up to public street status (including services) so it can be taken over by the Town.

The following is draft policy including criteria governing the approval process of a development agreement. This criteria has been taken from Truro’s Municipal Planning Strategy.

“Policy A

It shall be a policy of Council to consider in the Services Residential designation of the Generalized Future Land Use map multiple unit residential development in buildings of more than three storeys.

Policy B

Commercial uses on the ground floor may also be considered in conjunction with Policy A

Policy C

Policy A shall not apply to areas that are currently zoned Multiple Mid Rise Residential (R-3B).

Policy D

When considering a development agreement application in accordance with Policy A it shall be a policy of Council to have regard for the following:

- a) compatibility of the proposed land use with adjacent land uses;*
- b) compatibility of the development with adjacent structures in terms of height, scale, lot coverage, density, and bulk;*
- c) compatibility of the development with adjacent properties in terms of lighting, signage, outdoor display, outdoor storage, traffic, vehicle headlights, and noise;*
- d) the adequacy of sewer services, water services, waste management services and storm water management services;*
- e) that the proposal contributes to an orderly and compact development pattern that makes efficient use of existing and new municipal infrastructure and services;*
- f) the adequacy and proximity of schools; g) the adequacy and proximity of recreation and community facilities;*
- h) the adequacy of the road network in, and adjacent to, or leading to the development; i) the potential for the contamination or sedimentation of watercourses or for erosion;*
- j) environmental impacts such as air and water pollution and soil contamination;*
- k) previous uses of the site which may have caused soil or groundwater contamination;*
- l) suitability of the site in terms of grades, soil and bedrock conditions, location of watercourses, marshes, swamps or bogs;*
- m) the application of sustainable and energy efficient design principles;*
- n) the ability of emergency services to respond to an emergency at the location of the proposed development;*
- o) that the proposal conforms with the intent of this strategy and with the requirements of Town By-laws and regulations other than the Land Use By-law; and*
- p) the financial ability of the Town to absorb any costs relating to the development.”*