

Minutes of a Public Hearing held on Thursday, January 18, 2024, at 10:00 a.m., at the Municipal Administration Building, Annapolis Royal, NS.

Present: District 1 – Bruce Prout, present
District 2 - Brian “Fuzzy” Connell, absent
District 3 – Dustin Enslow, present via Zoom
District 4 – Clyde Barteaux, present
District 5 – Lynn Longmire, present
District 6 – Alex Morrison, Warden, present
District 7 – David Hudson, present
District 8 – Michael Gunn, present
District 9 – Wendy Sheridan, present via Zoom
District 10 – Brad Redden, Deputy Warden, present
District 11 – Diane Le Blanc, present

Also Present: CAO Chris McNeill, Municipal Clerk Carolyn Young, Director of Planning & Inspection Services Linda Bent, Debra Ryan, Nadine McCormack, and 40 members of the public.

Welcoming Remarks – Warden Alex Morrison

The purpose of a Public Hearing is to permit members of the public to make their views known to Council, via oral or written submissions, concerning, solely, and only, the application before Council at this time. This Public Hearing concerns the Annapolis County Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw. That is the subject of the meeting and upon which folks can speak. Glad to see so many here today. All the people who participated in the more than 36 public meetings continue to be interested.

After receiving a number of calls, and because of the manner in which people spoke, the Warden asked that all share their opinions in a respectful manner. We welcome your input. Any rude or disrespectful actions or comments will not be permitted.

All questions and comments, reasonable, rational, or relevant, throughout the public hearing are required to be addressed to the Chair. The Chair will provide an opportunity for public input and will ask that persons speaking identify themselves so that their comments may be recorded in the minutes of these proceedings and that the person speaking identify if they are speaking in favour or against the application.

Minutes provided are not verbatim. They relate the sense of comments and may include direct quotes but are not verbatim minutes. After you identify yourself and your community, please identify if you are speaking for or against the application.

Written presentations are acknowledged first, followed by registered speakers, followed by public oral presentations. Questions and comments from Council members are asked to be held until all public comment is heard.

New Business

Re: Annapolis County Municipal Planning Strategy & Land Use Bylaw Review

- **Information Report** - Director of Planning & Inspection Services provided an overview of the planning process to date.

- **Acknowledgement of Written Submissions** (Municipal Clerk)

The Clerk advised five submissions had been received and read them aloud for the record:

- Sue Skipton, West Dalhousie
- Rebekah Wheadon & Kerstin Wilson, Lawrencetown
- Deiter Sabean, no community stated
- Calvin Piggott, Centrelea
- Matthew Piggott, Bridgetown

- **Registered Speaker**

Emily Clarke-Haughn, Granville Beach – noted a few issues with the plan:

- human habitation in general
- Limiting livestock
- Low density rural res – too many restrictions, 4.22
- Wind turbines water supply – would be nice to see professional documentation on that
- Has more issues
- Rushed by province.
- Process in the plan 7.42 council has the right to extend the process
- Go ahead and get more information in advertisements
- Next steps – 2 successive weeks of advertising for this meeting – first saw on Jan 10th. Jan 11 on FB, Jan 12 Rader. Not two weeks.
- Quotes from last meeting – requested minutes on Jan 2nd for Dec 14th. Still don't have the minutes. Not enough time to review any of the submissions. Were any of the concerns addressed?
- What changes have been made?
- Changes will be made at our own expense
- Living document, let's not kill it.
- Article to shrink council recently ...
- After last meeting, invited to state what she really thinks!
- Elected by people not the process. Failing us. Aware since 2018. They failed. If you pass it fails us. Is it progress? Decide wisely, because we are coming for your jobs in October.

- **Call for Oral Presentations** (open discussion from the floor – public)

1st call for comments against the application

Leigh Baker, Granville Beach – has been keeping up with planning.

- Now concerned of this council protecting tax-paying property owners. Not democratic to give only 5 minutes to speak – not enough time to address issues or changes.
- Minutes from previous meeting – not released properly, not transparent enough, released last minute. Should be able to review and demand a transparent process. This council should make a motion to halt the proceedings in order to review the changes.

- Disappointed that council is moving ahead in light of housing crisis because the plan opposes the encouragement of more affordable housing on lots and backyards or to convert out buildings into affordable housing.
- In a crisis of Inflation and manufactured foods.
- Need a plan that is not limiting livestock and restricting greenhouses.
- The plan restricts home occupations – why would we restrict that in any residential zone? One of many concerns.
- Zoning - less issue in rural areas but housing issues right now, too many restrictions on development.
- Free markets and demand should regulate this.
- More public need to participate. No particular percentage will appease those that can attend.
- Work on behalf of those who do attend and participate.
- Not the job of the public to recruit attendance. Your job to raise volunteers and have people attend.
- Red flag – behind on the implementation despite that we can go back and fix things. But at public expense. Do it right the first time.

Recess

The Warden called a brief recess at 10:35 a.m.

2nd call for comments against the application

Kevin Emry, Anywhere, Annapolis County – this side of Bear River.

- Single accessory building on 1 or 100 acres – ridiculous
- Food production – 25 is not enough. Spoke at last meeting. If preparing documents should be a subject matter expert. If not a subject matter expert, you should not be defending the document, you should be learning. 25 is a random number. Some very good things in the document. Not the fault of those today that it is behind us. But the past lag is your problem.
- To push through without fixing it will create anxiety and cost of changing in the future.

George Bruce, Tupperville – not for or against.

- Nothing personal, just frustrated.
- Following a timeline that a greater government is mandating. That is not truly what we need.
- We need to have encouragement from public participation.
- Has attended all meetings. What he sees is not harmony. People are frustrated. Not the fault of any person in this room. Being forced to meet by the provincial government.
- We are not the kind of people that take direction from an outside source and make it work.
- Participation by the public has been terribly disappointing. That doesn't mean they are satisfied.
- This process needs to cool. If there is a financial burden from province, that is not our concern. What we face is that the concern in the room is we are not ready for this change.

3rd call for comments against the application

Micheal Wescott, Granville Ferry – against proceeding with second reading.

- If we follow mainstream or social media, sources of information, we are in an era of worsening housing crisis. Radical moves are being made from all levels of government

purchasing units not recognized in this document. Modular, container housing. All have technologies associated that are not recognized in the documents. Particularly sewage waste. New technology for off grid, small housing, that does not have to tie into existing infrastructure – composting toilets, incineration. Building laws on technology that is now becoming difficult to implement.

- We are stretching limits of the current infrastructure, alternatives that are available are not recognized or addressed in the document. There is further learning to look into to answer questions such as – do we plan for what we had 50 years ago versus what is available today or coming in the near future, without having to re write documents.

Derick Wiles, Bear River East – not for or against the document.

- Haven't read it. Only found out about it yesterday.
- Landowners in other provinces that own land here have no idea about this.
- Would like time to review it further in order to make a decision.
- Every landowner should have been contacted and given all the information before this process is finalized.

The Warden issued a call for comments in support of the application, followed by a second call and finally a third call for comments in support of the application. There were none.

Comments or Questions from Council

Councillor Gunn – thanked Stantec and planning staff for the job done for planning in the county. Attended all but 2 of the public meetings. Concerns heard by the consultant and staff have been compiled. It is the citizens of Annapolis County's words that they had to work with. That created the document. Citizens words that were worked with citizens that attended all the public meetings. All were well posted. People did show up.

After interruptions, Councillor Gunn added that we have to move on this and he is pleased with the document.

Councillor Connell – have had secondary plans for many years.

- Didn't believe in planning when first on council. After participating on the secondary plans, where citizens give their views on how they want to change the document.
- If in a SD people move there because that area is protected against that. Other areas allow it. Chooses to live in a rural area, not in a subdivision. People live in subdivisions for certain things. Have the plans been perfect? No. people have come forward with issues that were all dealt with and reviewed, to ensure it is what the people wanted.
- Secondary planned areas are more than pleased on how the LUB and MPS work.
- This plan was put on us by the province. We knew it would not be easy. We are asked by the province to zone all the lands in our county. Will we all agree? No. there will always be something that needs changing. It will not be perfect. The next generation will change things.
- Are we doing the best we can? We advertise the best we can. We held night meetings, where not a third or quarter of the people that are here today.

Lester Bartson, Carleton Corner – taught history.

- Towns had walls, a clearly defined urban area.
- Bridgetown was a town and Carleton Corner was part of the country.
- People are upset because nobody wants to see Carleton Corner concern itself with things that belong inside the walls of the town.
- Not against the process, but troubled by it.
- Wants agricultural land to stay agricultural.
- All you have to do is follow 201 up to Aylesford – a line of old folks one-bedroom places. Wants more public housing. A matter of great concern.
- Underlying issue is taking rural character of a good chunk of the county, and do something to the agricultural lands. Can't follow the agenda.

Debra Poole – Bridgetown – why this planning has come about?

- Concern is that she grew up here, lived next to grandparents. It was not subdivided, there were gardens - why is that being taken away? Why can't grow food like grandparents did.
- Why can't they put a house on their land for their son?
- This is my concern, 28 acres, but can't retire there and put a unit for their son?
- Generational. Shouldn't have happened in rural areas.
- If you want to live in a town, you don't want chickens, but outside these centres it is unnecessary. Doesn't understand why being implemented.

Michael Wescott, Granville Ferry - laws reflect a point in time.

- Things happen before and after.
- Changes occurred that require modification of laws.
- From a process perspective. Should you go forward with second reading? The people in this room say it is premature.
- If the process started 3 years ago, things are embedded from three years ago.
- Housing needs have changed. Things have changed.
- The concern that some things have happened since the initial mandate and where it stands now.
- Some things are happening during the process that need to be reviewed and considered for where the document sits today as opposed to where it was two years ago.

Councillor Prout – there are other existing zones in the county.

- Lives in the east end. Was a citizen member on that committee before becoming a Councillor. It is not perfect and changes constantly.
- Has met with many people inside and outside of the public meetings who shared their concerns, and there were comments regarding chickens!
- We choose where we live. No one rule is going to solve everyone's problems.
- This is where we are now, and we are doing the very best that we can.

Councillor Enslow – important for him to be able to attend via zoom.

- Thanked people for showing up.
- Agrees with a lot of Councillor Connell's comments.
- Heard a lot of concerns during this process. A lot of heated discussions – for example the last PAC meeting around chickens and horses.

- The plan today is a county-wide plan. The majority is not R1 or R2, it is mostly farmland or mixed use – those areas don't have many of the restrictions on livestock.
- Hears concerns around feeding family and looking to have chickens. Fortunately he will be in mixed use area. R1 or R2 are mostly subdivision areas. Is there more work that can be done? Yes.
- Farming areas and protection of them. This plan helps protect these lands from being changed and to keep farming the way that it is. Driving up the 201 you can tell when you leave Annapolis County that things change. This plan protects our farming communities.
- We will never have a perfect plan. At least we are heading in the right direction. Appreciates all the concerns voiced.

Councillor Longmire – recognized hardworking county employees who have helped us along with coming up with a plan.

- Quite an exercise. Sensitive people sitting at the council table. Not one of us have left meetings not torn in many directions. Thanked staff for guiding her.
- Has read and met with people who have expertise.
- Stantec replied to an RFP, and they were the expert, but they included our people and councillors.
- Many meetings held didn't have the great numbers. But they were attended.
- This is a framework to begin. Amendments and changes come at a cost.
- Employers are not as forgiving to let people take time from work.
- It cannot be perfect. We all have desires and wishes and see the future.
- Housing is a priority. We feel that desperation. Food security. Understands that. She doesn't want restrictions but she will also be affected.
- This is to create a plan to begin with and adjust as we work together. We can't work apart from each other. We feel that. We won't all agree. We have to agree with others to be able to have something for ourselves.
- We have done our very best. Be as patient with us as we are with you, as we were at public meetings. Not an easy task. Very difficult.

Deputy Warden Redden – privilege sitting on council to have many hours spent at meetings and in parking lots.

- Privileged to have spent time across the country before moving here.
- This is a complex document, and he has learned a lot from residents and staff. It refers to other documents, like building codes. You can do it if it is in the building code – we can't restrict that. We don't supersede those.
- Residential allows 3 dwellings – there are setbacks to be applied.
- Least restrictive area is Mixed Use – you can put up 4 units, but not an apartment building.
- They are complex documents. Takes a lot of time to cross reference them.
- Livestock – rural and agricultural area. At last PAC meeting discussion was extensive and not all were in agreement. He thinks we should permit more livestock and stated that in opposition to the majority. 25 is way too small a number. In October, at planning meetings he said he wasn't in any hurry to pass things in January. Then in November the province passed legislation that gave them authority to pass things without any public input in HRM. Still content to delay, but less content after that provincial move.

Mr. Baker made additional comments but had not been recognized by the Chair.

- **Planning Process Next Steps (Director)**

- a. MGA 205 (3): Council shall hold a public hearing prior to second reading.
- d. MGA 205 (7): Voting is by the majority of Council present at the Public Hearing.
- d. MGA 208: After motion to adopt four certified copies of the documents are sent to the Minister.
- e. MGA 208 (9): Upon ministerial approval, an advertisement is placed in the local paper. The date of the advertisement is the effective date of the documents.


Adjournment of Public Hearing

The Warden noted he has been a Councillor since 2012 and Warden for 2 years. He has learned a lot and learned more here today. He thanked those who spoke to the subject. Thanked those who gave reasoned opinions and suggestions, all of which will be considered by Council. He added a suggestion that you do all you can to find some way to read, listen, watch, what Council does and give us your viewpoints. We do consider them. Has seen many at the meetings held over the past two years, and received a few phone calls that were disjointed and jagged. Thank you. Doesn't say anything he doesn't mean. We value your participation, please keep it up.

The Warden declared the public hearing adjourned at 11:25 a.m.



Warden



Municipal Clerk