



MEDIA RELEASE

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Amherst town council 28 Nov 22 meeting highlights

AMHERST, Nova Scotia – The Amherst town council gave second and final reading on Monday, Nov. 28, 2022, to an amendment to the town's land-use bylaw that will rezone a 2.4-acre parcel of land off Paradise Avenue to a general residential zone from a low-density residential zone.

The amendment will allow four, four-unit townhouses to be constructed on the site. The units are similar to ones already in the area.

It was the subject of a public participation session on July 20, 2022, a first reading on Sept. 28 and a public hearing on Oct. 20. The town's planning advisory committee had previously recommended approving the amendment.

Council feels the project will help provide additional housing options that are needed in the community.

Development agreement second reading

The Amherst town council gave second and final reading to a development agreement between the town and NovaView Developments Ltd. that will permit the construction of three, 54-unit apartments buildings on a lot located south of E.B. Chandler Junior High School and north of Brown and Mosher streets.

The development agreement was the subject of a public participation session on Jan. 26, 2022, was given first reading on Sept. 28, 2022 and was the subject of a public hearing on Oct. 20, 2022. The town's planning advisory committee had previously recommended approving the amendment.

As part of the agreement, the developer must agree to build Building B, as shown on their map, first and must not have a direct pedestrian walkway going to Donald Avenue.





Council feels the project will help provide additional housing options that are needed in the community.

Development Officer appointed

The Amherst town council appointed Abiola Falaye as a development officer for the Town of Amherst.

Falaye's appointment fulfills a requirement of the Municipal Government Act that says councils must appoint a development officer to administer a town's land-use bylaw and subdivision bylaw. The appointment also gives Falaye the authority to sign development permits on behalf of the town.

Stadium canteen agreement

The Amherst town council approved an Amherst Stadium canteen concession agreement between the Town of Amherst and Dwayne Ripley.

The agreement will see Ripley operate the canteen at the Amherst Stadium from Dec. 1, 2022, to May 1, 2023.

The canteen was shut down because of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the past 12 months staff issued a request for proposals seeking someone to run the canteen, but none were received. Because of this, staff contacted several local community groups and small business owners to gauge their interest in operating the canteen.

While some groups initially showed interest, Ripley was the only one who presented a proposal to the town.

Gritty to Pretty

The Amherst town council approved a memorandum of understanding between the town and the Amherst & Area Chamber of Commerce when it met on Nov. 28, 2022.





The memorandum facilitates the continued administration of the Gritty-to-Pretty program, which has been a partnership between the town and chamber for several years.

The program, which is totally funded by the province, provides up to 50 per cent of the funds commercial businesses can use for exterior façade, sign or lighting improvements. The program also provides up to 50 per cent of the cost of street furniture, such as benches, which helps support community vibrancy by making public spaces more functional and inviting.

Capital budget adjustment

The Amherst town council approved amendments to its 2022-2024 general capital budget that resulted in the budgeted amount for a stormwater management study increased to \$80,000 from \$50,000.

The increase was required because four proposals received by the town to do a stormwater management study all came in well over the budgeted amount.

The study, when completed, will provide the town with recommendations on how to reduce the inflow of stormwater into the sanitary sewer system and provide recommendations to reduce the impact of localized flooding during heavy rainfall events, similar to the one the town experienced in February 2022.

The additional funding will come from the town's operating reserves.

Asphalt recycler purchase

The town council approved the purchase of a Bagela Asphalt Recycler from SNT Solutions Inc. at a cost of \$80,000.

The recycler will help improve the town's pot-hole repairing and service cut mending because the machine can be loaded with asphalt and be ready for use within 30 minutes. The previous machine had to be filled with asphalt and heated over night before the asphalt could be used.





As a result of the shorter heating period, town crews will be able to respond quicker to pothole complaints, increase the number of potholes that can be patched during a workday and allow staff to repair service cuts and potholes during the winter.

Territorial acknowledgement

The Amherst town council approved a change to the territorial acknowledgement read before the start of council meetings.

The new territorial agreement is: "I would like to acknowledge that our gathering today is taking place in Mi'kma'ki (MEEG-MA-GEE), the traditional, unceded and ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaw people. I would also like to acknowledge that Nova Scotia has another unique people. These are the Indigenous Blacks of Nova Scotia whose legacy and contributions date back over 400-plus years, predating confederation of this land. We are all treaty people."

It replaces: "We [I] would like to begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is the traditional unceded territory of the Mi'kmaw Peoples."

The council believes the change is more inclusive and better represents current diversity, inclusion and equity practices.

Special Election Date

The Amherst town council has approved Feb. 11, 2023, as the date for a byelection to fill a vacant seat on the council, with nomination day set for Jan. 17, 2023.

The seat became vacant earlier this year when Deputy-Mayor Sheila Christie resigned from council.

Council also approved the use of an electronic voting process for the byelection that involves telephone and internet voting only. This is same voting process as the one used in the last municipal election, which saw an increase in voter turnout.

Council felt forcing people to go to a polling station in mid-February was problematic due to unpredictable weather conditions, while the electronic voting process allows people to vote from anywhere, provided they have a phone or access to the internet.





Lastly, council approved using Election Canada's permanent list of electors for the byelection, something the town has done since 1997 because it is easy to use and very adaptable to the town's voting districts.

December meeting dates

The Amherst town council approved rescheduling the December committee of the whole and town council meetings to Dec. 19, 2022, with the committee of the whole beginning at 3 p.m. and the council meeting at 6 p.m.

The meeting date was changed because the regular meeting dates – the third and fourth Mondays of a month – conflict with the holiday season.

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Direct enquiries to:
Tom McCoag,
Corporate Communications Officer
902-694-6265
tmccoag@amherst.ca

