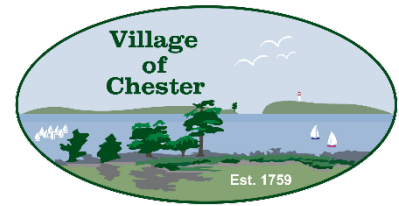


Agenda

Village Commission Monthly Meeting Wednesday, March 12, 2025 – 6:00 pm



In-Person & Virtual Meeting

VOC Office, 27 Pleasant Street, Chester

Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89085934666> or [YouTube Live](#)

1.0 Call to Order/Land Acknowledgement

- *As we meet today, we acknowledge that we live in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional and ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people. We are all treaty people with a responsibility to each other and to this land.*

2.0 Public Forum

- In-person or over Zoom: Members of the public are welcome to speak and/or ask questions of the Village Commission (10 min)

3.0 Approval/Amendment of Agenda

p. 1

4.0 Review/Approval of Minutes

- | | | |
|-----|------------------------------------------|-------|
| 4.1 | Special Commission Meeting: Feb 19, 2025 | p. 3 |
| 4.2 | Monthly Commission Meeting: Feb 19, 2025 | p. 5 |
| 4.3 | Committee of the Whole: Feb 26, 2025 | p. 11 |

5.0 Business Arising

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 5.1 | Municipal Code of Conduct: Appointment of Investigator | p. 12 |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------|-------|

6.0 Correspondence

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 6.1 | Municipality of the District of Chester (MODC) Planning re: Maple Cottage | p. 15 |
| 6.2 | MODC Planning re: Public Hearing on Village Secondary Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw | p. 18 |
| 6.3 | MODC Planning re: Short-term Rentals | p. 20 |
| 6.4 | Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE) | p. 21 |
| 6.5 | Chester Yacht Club: Invitation to Appreciation Social for Fire Department | p. 30 |

7.0 Reports

- 7.1 Report from the Chair p. 31
- 7.2 Clerk/Treasurer Activity and Financial Reports
- 7.3 Chester Fire Services Committee – *minutes for information* p. 68
- 7.4 Lunenburg County Accessibility Committee – Chair Pauley p. 76
- 7.5 Village Planning Advisory Committee (MODC) – Commissioner O’Malley p. 79
- 7.6 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Committee (MODC) – Commissioner L. Mulrooney

8.0 New Business

- 8.1 Property Tax Records from MODC
- 8.2 Spring Street Cleaning

9.0 In-camera – per Section 408B (2) of the *Municipal Government Act*

- (e) Contract negotiations

10.0 Resumption of Public Meeting

- Report in public session per Section 408B (3) of the *Municipal Government Act*, if applicable

11.0 Committee of the Whole Discussion

- 11.1 2025/26 Village Budget DRAFT - Revisions

12.0 Adjournment

Next Meeting(s)

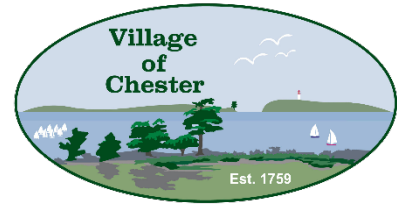
- ▶ Special Meeting: March 26, 2025 – 6:00 pm @ 27 Pleasant St & Livestream
- ▶ Monthly: April 9, 2025 – 6:00 pm @ 27 Pleasant St & Livestream

Schedule 4.1

Minutes DRAFT

Village Commission Special Meeting Wednesday, Jan 15, 2025 – 5:00 pm

In-Person Meeting
27 Pleasant Street, Chester



Present: Geraldine Pauley, Chair
Randall O'Malley, Vice-chair
Laura Mulrooney, Commissioner
Tom Mulrooney, Commissioner
Gloria Nauss, Commissioner

Staff: Heather McCallum, Clerk/Treasurer
Maxine Veinot, Recording Secretary

Guest: Sharon LeBlanc

1.0 Call to Order

Chair Pauley called the Feb 19, 2025 Special Meeting of the Village of Chester Commission to order at 5:02 pm.

2.0 Approval of Agenda/Additions to Agenda

The agenda for the February 19, 2025 Special Meeting was approved by consensus.

3.0 Business Arising

3.1 Sharon LeBlanc re: Commission Strategic Priorities

Ms. LeBlanc led a conversation based on the notes of the strategic priorities workshop the Commission held on Jan 23, 2025 ([Schedule 3.1](#)). Goals, roles and responsibilities, vision, communications, public engagement, risk management, and other subjects were discussed.

ACTION: Ms. LeBlanc will provide a proposal for next steps with an estimate for consideration.

4.0 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:07 pm.

Commission Chair
Geraldine Pauley

Clerk/Treasurer
Heather McCallum

DRAFT

Schedule 4.2

Minutes DRAFT

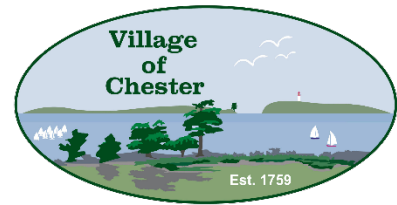
Village Commission Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, Jan 15, 2025 – 6:00 pm

In-Person & Virtual Meeting

27 Pleasant Street, Chester

Video Archive <https://www.youtube.com/@villageofchesterns>



Present: Geraldine Pauley, Chair
 Randall O'Malley, Vice-chair
 Laura Mulrooney, Commissioner
 Tom Mulrooney, Commissioner
 Gloria Nauss, Commissioner

Staff: Heather McCallum, Clerk/Treasurer
 Maxine Veinot, Recording Secretary

1.0 Call to Order

Chair Pauley called the Feb 19, 2025 Regular Monthly Meeting of the Village of Chester Commission to order at 6:14 pm.

Chair Pauley stated the Land Acknowledgement:

As we meet today, we acknowledge that we live in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional and ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people. We are all treaty people with a responsibility to each other and to this land.

2.0 Public Forum – Nil

3.0 Approval of Agenda/Additions to Agenda

The following items were added :

- Section 8.3: Visitor Information Centre – Chair Pauley
- Section 5.3: Maintenance Follow-up – Commissioner T. Mulrooney
- Section 10.0: In Camera – Commissioner T. Mulrooney

Motion #25-004: Commissioner Nauss moved; Vice-chair O'Malley seconded:
 That the Agenda of the Feb 19, 2025 Regular Monthly Meeting be approved as amended.

Motion carried unanimously

4.0 Review/Approval of Minutes

4.1 Monthly Commission Meeting: Wednesday, Jan 15, 2025

Motion #25-005: Commissioner T. Mulrooney moved; Commissioner Nauss seconded: That the Minutes of the Jan 15, 2025 Monthly Commission Meeting be approved as presented.

Motion carried unanimously

5.0 Business Arising

5.1 Municipality of Chester's Equity Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Advisory Committee: Representative Nomination

Clerk/Treasurer (C/T) McCallum reported that Municipality of the District of Chester (MODC) Council has approved the Village Commission's request for a seat on their EDI Advisory Committee (*Schedule 5.1*). An elected official representative is needed.

ACTION: Commissioner Laura Mulrooney volunteered to be the Village Commission representative on the EDI Advisory Committee.

5.2 Flower Basket Survey Results

C/T McCallum provided a report containing the full results of the January survey on street décor (*Schedule 5.2*). There were 110 respondents, 79 online and 31 on paper.

The majority of respondents were in favour of the flower baskets but there were many other good suggestions. The baskets have already been ordered for Summer 2025, but the Commission will consider street planters and locations for both. The discussion was tabled for the time being.

Commissioner T. Mulrooney said he could meet with the Clerk/Treasurer and go over the original sites for flower baskets, as they have changed and some original sites may be more appropriate or safer for maintenance staff.

5.3 Maintenance Follow-Up

The damaged electric room ceiling in the current fire station and 2019 damage to the communications tower has been brought to the attention of the Chester Fire Services Committee (CFSC). The C/T will follow up on status. She noted that funds have been allocated in the 2025/26 CFSC Draft Budget for building repairs. Discussion was held about where responsibility for maintenance lies, as the Village owns the building.

ACTION: Legal advice will be sought and brought back to the next meeting.

6.0 Correspondence

6.1 Association of Nova Scotia Villages (ANSV) re: Staff Position

The ANSV Board has requested a response to their memo and request by Feb 28, 2025 (*Schedule 6.1*).

Motion #25-006: Commissioner Nauss, moved; Vice-chair O'Malley seconded: That the Chester Village Commission approve the job description for an Association of Nova Scotia Villages staff coordinator and agree in principle to contribute financially to the position, dependant on the funding model proposed.
Motion carried unanimously

7.0 Reports

7.1 Clerk/Treasurer

Chair Pauley reported that she spoke with C/T McCallum regarding agenda packages and the C/T reports and noted two procedural changes.

- From now on, the C/T reports will be distributed at the meeting.
- Hard copy agenda packages will no longer be routinely printed to save on paper use. If a Commission would like a printout of something specific, please contact staff.

C/T McCallum presented her monthly activity report (*Schedule 7.1*). She noted that information provided by Nova Scotia Power on upcoming tree maintenance will be shared with the public.

7.2 Financial, including Budget Status

C/T McCallum presented the monthly financial overview report (*Schedule 7.2*). She recommended that Draft Budget discussions be held in Committee of the Whole, as last year.

- Committee of the Whole was scheduled for Feb 26, 2025 at 2:00 pm.

Commissioner Nauss requested that the March and April monthly meeting dates be rescheduled earlier to allow her to attend, as she will be out of town on the regular dates. The March and April Regular Monthly Meetings were changed as follows:

- March 19 changed to March 12, 2025; and
- April 16 changed to April 9th, 2025.

7.3 Chester Fire Services Committee (CFSC)

The CFSC's approved minutes of Jan 8 and Jan 22, 2025 were shared for information. (www.chesterfirecommittee.ca)

7.4 Lunenburg County Accessibility Advisory Committee (LCAAC)

The LCAAC has restarted with new members; their most recent agenda was shared for information. (www.accessiblelunenburgcounty.ca)

7.5 MODC Village Planning Advisory Committee (VPAC)

There was no VPAC meeting in January.
([Chester Village Planning Advisory Committee 2025](#))

7.6 MODC Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Committee (EDIAC)

C/T McCallum attended a Feb 4, 2025 meeting in lieu of an elected official, which was also the first meeting after a hiatus. The agenda was shared for information. She reported that discussion centred on the EDI plan being prepared for submission to the Province by April 1st. ([EDI Advisory Committee 2025](#))

8.0 New/Other Business

8.1 Chester Fire Services Committee: 2025/26 Fire & Emergency Services Budget DRAFT v. 5

An interim draft of the CFSC 2025/26 Budget was provided for information ([Schedule 8.1](#)).

C/T McCallum reported that the CFSC Treasurer, Kirk Collicutt, will attend the March 12, 2025 monthly meeting to present an updated draft for Village Commission approval, followed by the same at the March 13, 2025 Municipal Council meeting.

8.2 Request for Decision: Saltscapes Expo

C/T McCallum reported on an invitation for the Village to be represented at the Saltscapes Expo in May alongside Chester Tourism ([Schedule 8.2](#)).

Commissioner Nauss volunteered to represent the Village at the Tourism Chester booth, May 9-12, 2025. She will assemble giveaway baskets for prize draws.

Motion #25-007: Commissioner O'Malley moved; Commissioner T. Mulrooney seconded: That the Chester Village Commission accept the Municipality's offer to share their booth at the Saltscapes Spring 2025 Expo on May 9-12, 2025. Clerk/Treasurer McCallum is asked to provide estimated costs for promotional materials to Commissioners for selection.
Motion carried unanimously

8.3 Visitor Information Centre (VIC)

Chair Pauley reported that she has been looking into establishing an interim VIC this summer, as discussed at the strategic priorities workshop. (See minutes of Feb 19, 2025 Special Meeting.)

She investigated possible facilities, including shed buildings and the Chester Municipal Heritage Society's caboose, but the train is not accessible. The location will likely be in the present Village office this year while further investigation continues. The preferred location would be on Highway 3.

Chair Pauley has spoken to MODC's Economic Development team, and they may be able to contribute tourism summer student hours to the venture.

9.0 Commissioner Roundtable – Nil

10.0 In camera – per Section 408B (2) of the Municipal Government Act

Motion #25-008: Commissioner L. Mulrooney moved; Commissioner Nauss seconded: That the Commission move in camera as per Section 408B (2) of the Municipal Government Act to discuss the potential acquisition, sale, lease, and security of village property.

Motion carried unanimously

The Commission recessed at 7:25 pm.

11.0 Resumption of Public Meeting – report in public session per Section 408B (3) of the Municipal Government Act.

The Commission resumed the public meeting at 7:37 pm.

11.1 Village Property: Lido Pool

Motion #25-009: Commissioner T. Mulrooney moved; Commissioner L. Mulrooney seconded: That for the 2025 season, the Lido Pool will be available for swimming lessons from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm, Monday through Friday only. After 1:00 pm weekdays will be public swim time.

Motion carried unanimously.

Weekends will continue to be public swim only, as previous years.

12.0 Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:39 pm.

Next meeting(s):

- Committee of the Whole on Feb 26, 2025 at 2:00 pm
- Regular Monthly Meeting on March 12, 2025 at 6:00 pm
- Regular Monthly Meeting on April 9, 2025 at 6:00 pm

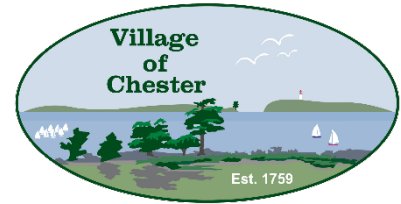
Commission Chair
Geraldine Pauley

Clerk/Treasurer
Heather McCallum

DRAFT

Schedule 4.3**Minutes DRAFT****Village Commission Committee of the Whole Meeting
Wednesday, Feb 26, 2025 – 2:00 pm**

In-Person Meeting
27 Pleasant Street, Chester



Present: Geraldine Pauley, Chair
 Randall O'Malley, Vice-chair
 Laura Mulrooney, Commissioner
 Tom Mulrooney, Commissioner

Staff: Heather McCallum, Clerk/Treasurer

Regrets: Gloria Nauss, Commissioner

1.0 Call to Order

Chair Pauley called the Feb 26, 2025 Committee of the Whole Meeting of the Village of Chester Commission to order at 1:59 pm.

2.0 Approval of Agenda/Additions to Agenda

The agenda for the February 26, 2025 Special Meeting was approved by consensus.

3.0 New Business**3.1 2025/26 Draft Village Budget – Working Session**

Clerk/Treasurer McCallum led a line-by-line review of the draft budget to date (v.1). The Commissioners discussed each item and provided direction.

Action: The Clerk/Treasurer will capture the feedback in the next version of the budget for the next budget meeting.

4.0 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 3:58 pm.

 Commission Chair
 Geraldine Pauley

 Clerk/Treasurer
 Heather McCallum



AMANS Qualified List of Investigators – Municipal Code of Conduct

The following is a list of investigators qualified through the Association of Municipal Administrators, Nova Scotia (AMANS) request for qualification (RFQ) process that closed on January 17, 2025.

AMANS worked with its internal Procurement Committee to evaluate all submissions received. Committee members evaluated each proposal and then met to form consensus on each proponent. The listed 10 investigators were qualified.

Unless otherwise indicated, all investigators met the Procurement Committee's evaluation thresholds for criteria related to investigations including corporate/financial, legal/adjudication, and human resources (HR). Each investigator has indicated capacity to administer potential complaints. Should a municipal unit choose to use this list, they will need to verify with the potential investigator if there may be capacity limits with client onboarding.

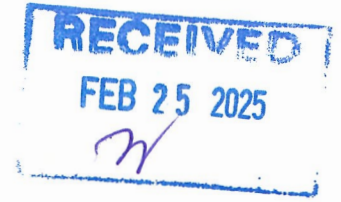
AMANS has not entered into either a Contract or an Agreement with any of the qualified investigators. The investigators included on this list have been vetted through an internal AMANS RFQ procurement process. **It will be the municipal unit's responsibility when determining an appropriate investigator as well as facilitating the process of entering into any Contract or Agreement should the municipality choose to use an investigator on the list.** Municipal units should also consider potential internal conflicts of interest if they choose to select a qualified investigator from the list.

AMANS may expand the list at a later point in time by re-issuing the RFQ. AMANS will inform members of any potential changes to the list of qualified investigators as they come forward.

If you have any questions about the list of qualified investigators, criteria when using the list, or on the RFQ process, please reach out to David Campbell, AMANS Executive Director at (902) 423-2215 x8 or at dcampbell@amans.ca.

<p>BDO Canada LLP</p> <p>Caroline Dixon Partner, Forensic Disputes & Investigations</p> <p>6940 Mumford Road, Suite 510 Halifax, NS B3L 0B7</p> <p>Tel: (250) 837-5225 Email: cdixon@bdo.ca</p>	<p>Stewart McKelvey</p> <p>Rick Dunlop Partner</p> <p>Queens Marque, 600-1741 Lower Water Street Halifax, NS B3J 0J2</p> <p>Tel: (902) 420-3384 Email: rdunlop@stewartmckelvey.com</p>
<p>Burchell MacDougall LLP</p> <p>Charles A. Thompson Partner</p> <p>710 Prince Street Truro, NS B2N 5H1</p> <p>Tel: (902) 896-7543 Email: cthompson@burchellmacdougall.com</p>	<p>Taylor McLellan Cochrane</p> <p>Jonathan G. Cuming Managing Partner</p> <p>50 Bridge Street Kentville, NS B4N 2E4</p> <p>Tel: (902) 678-6156 x234 Email: cuming@tmclaw.com</p>
<p>Burchell Wickwire Bryson LLP</p> <p>Noella Martin Partner</p> <p>1900-1801 Hollis Street Halifax, NS B3J 3N4</p> <p>Tel: (902) 482-7013 Email: nmartin@bwblp.ca</p>	<p>Bardsley Investigative Services (HR matters only)</p> <p>Claudine Bardsley Owner/Operator</p> <p>2733 Deacon Street Halifax, NS B3L 3J2</p> <p>Tel: (902) 293-5052 Email: investigate@claudinebardsley.com</p>
<p>MC Advisory Group Inc.</p> <p>Tanya Tynski Senior Advisor</p> <p>1969 Upper Water Street, Suite 1300 Halifax, NS B3J 3R7</p> <p>Tel: (902) 598-7423 Email: tanya.tynski@mcadvisory.com</p>	<p>Mobile Resources Group Inc. (HR matters only)</p> <p>Tracey Williams Senior Workplace and Human Rights Investigator</p> <p>500-1000 Innovation Drive Kanata, Ontario K2K 3E7</p> <p>Tel: (902) 266-3040 Email: info@traceywilliams.ca</p>

Nijhawan McMillan & Conlon Barristers Kelly McMillan Partner 200-5162 Duke Street Halifax NS B3J 1N7 Tel: (902) 407-2406 Email: kelly@nmbarristers.com	Power HR Inc. (HR matters only) Susan Power Founder & CEO 22 Chelmsford Place Halifax, NS B3M 4R2 Tel: (902) 719-6662 Email: susan@powerhr.ca
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The Municipality of Chester
151 King St, PO Box 369
Chester, NS B0J 1J0

Phone: (902) 275-3554
Fax: (902) 275-4771
www.chester.ca

[/ChesterMunicipality](#)
[@chestermun](#)

To: Area Property Owners (within 30m of subject property)
From: Paul Riley, CPT & MCIP, LPP (Candidate), Planner
Date: February 20, 2025
Subject: Amendments to the Chester Village Secondary Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law to permit one residential unit in the Institutional Area and Institutional zone specific to lands known as "Maple Cottage" at 75 Regent Street and PID# 60089398 (Lordly House Museum lands)

As a property owner within thirty (30) m of a site requesting amendments to the Chester Village Secondary Planning Strategy (VSPS) and Land Use By-law (LUB), you are being contacted directly to advise of an upcoming Public Hearing being held by Municipal Council. Before approving the amendments to the Land Use By-law, Council must hold a Public Hearing to solicit comments, questions, and input from nearby property owners and members of the public.

The proposed amendments would permit the landowner to apply for a Development Permit to allow one residential unit whereas this is not a permitted land use in the Institutional zone. Municipal Council directed Staff to draft amendments to permit one residential unit specific to the subject lands, where the landowner is the Chester Municipal Heritage Society, a non-profit seeking to offset costs to the Societies ongoing community heritage efforts. The amendments included a new preamble section and policy in the VSPS and a new site-specific permitted use of one residential unit at the subject lands in the LUB.

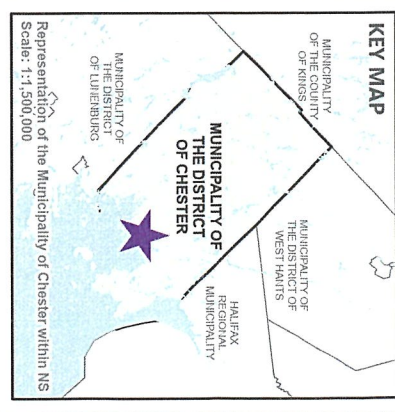
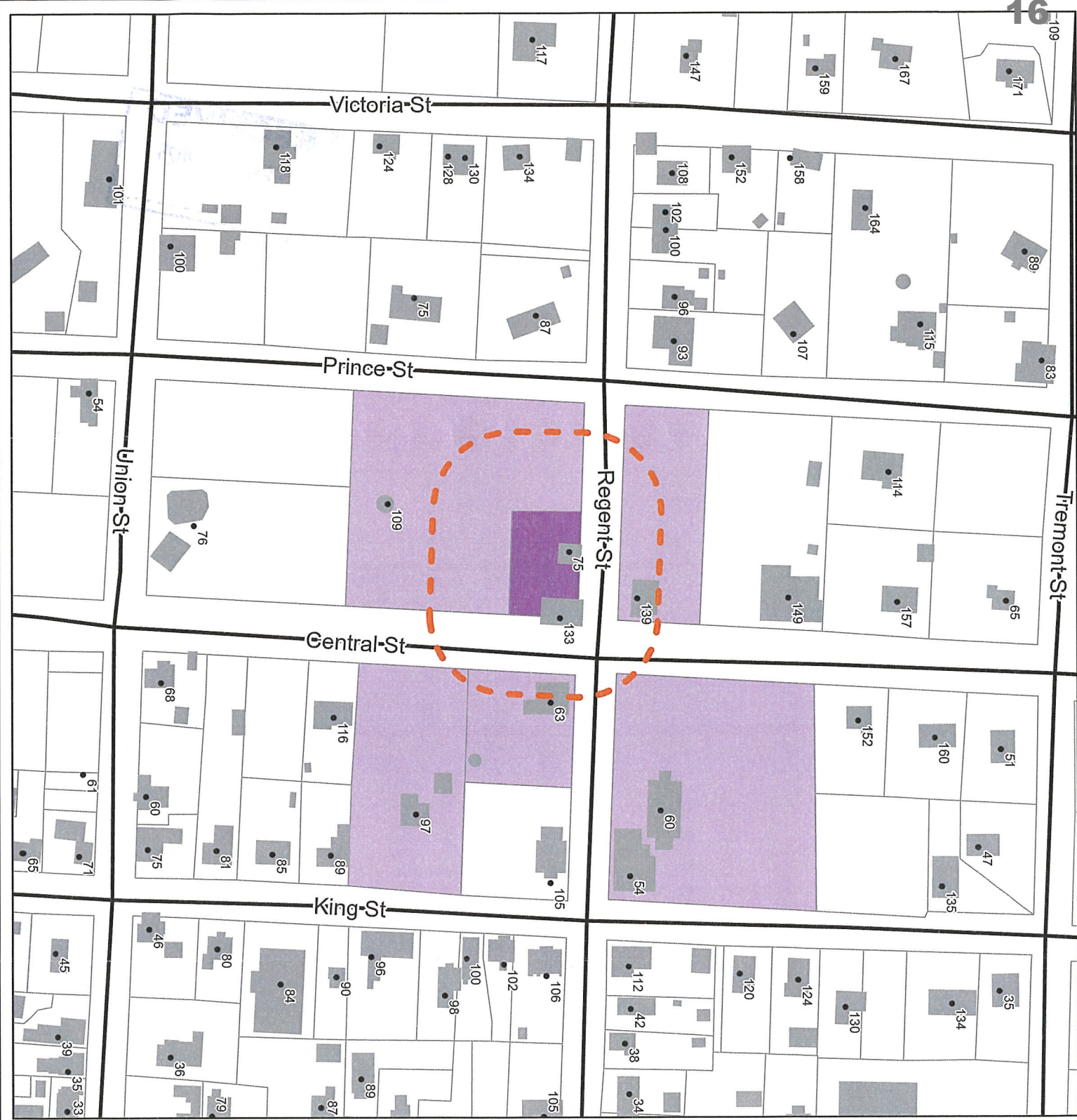
Enclosed with this letter you will find a copy of the advertisement outlining the details of the Public Hearing and showing a map identifying the subject property requesting the amendments.

You are invited to attend the Public Hearing on **March 13th, 2025** at 8:45am in Municipal Council Chambers or alternatively may submit written comments directed to Pam Myra, Municipal Clerk (pmyra@chester.ca) no later than March 6th, 2025.

If you have any questions about the proposed rezoning, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Paul Riley, CPT & MCIP, LPP (Candidate)
Planner, Municipality of Chester
priley@chester.ca



Location Map

75 Regent Street, Chester

Municipality of Chester

- Notification Area (30m)
- Property Boundary
- Area of Interest
- Properties in Notification Area
- Building Footprint
- Road
- Civic Address

1:2,000

50 25 0 50

Metres

Sources: Digital Base Map Data from Geomatics Information Services Division, Nova Scotia Department of Internal Services
Prepared by the Municipality of the District of Chester
Coordinate System/Datum: UTM NAD83 CSRS ZONE 20NMap

Disclaimer: Information shown on these drawings is compiled from numerous sources and may not be complete or accurate. The Municipality of the District of Chester is not responsible for any errors, omissions or deficiencies in these drawings. Date printed does not reflect the date of the map data.

Date Printed: 25/01/21
Digital File/Entry ID: 1540041
Actual Map Size: w 11" x h 8.5"



THE MUNICIPALITY OF CHESTER

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

In the matter of the Municipal Government Act and the
Municipality of the District of Chester

TAKE NOTICE THAT on Thursday, February 13, 2025, Chester Municipal Council gave “First Reading” to draft amendments to the Chester Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw. The purpose of the amendments being to amend Institutional Area policy and the Institutional Zone to permit one residential unit in an existing building specific to lands known as 75 Regent Street or PID # 60089398 (Lordly House Museum lands).

A **PUBLIC HEARING** will be held on **Thursday, March 13, 2025, beginning at 8:45a.m.** in Municipal Council Chambers (151 King Street, Chester).



Residents can give their opinions at the Public Hearing by speaking in person or sending written comments to: Pamela Myra, Municipal Clerk, 151 King Street, PO Box 369, Chester, NS B0J 1J0 or pmyra@chester.ca.

Comments must be received before 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 6, 2024

Council may vote to approve or reject the amendments at the Council Meeting which will follow the conclusion of the Public Hearing.

Copies of the proposed changes are available by contacting the Community Development Department, located at 186 Central Street, Chester.

This Notice was posted to the Municipal Website on February 20, 2025.

Call us!

902-275-2599

Email us!

planning@chester.ca

From: [Garth Sturtevant](#)
To: [Heather McCallum](#)
Subject: Notice of Public Hearing - Village Plan Review
Date: March 3, 2025 11:50:31 AM
Attachments: [image016664.png](#)
[image569336.png](#)
[image690389.png](#)
[image661493.png](#)
[image241466.png](#)
[image447622.png](#)
[Village Plan Review Public Hearing - Newspaper Ad \(March 5, 12, 19\).docx](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender.

Good Morning Heather,

Please see attached an ad for a Public Hearing scheduled for March 20th at 6pm at Chester District School. This is the Public Hearing for Draft #5 of the Village Secondary Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law.

If you could provide this notice to the Commission as correspondence it would be greatly appreciated.

Any questions, please let me know.

Thank you!

Garth



Garth Sturtevant
 Senior Planner
 Community Development & Recreation

Municipality of Chester
 186 Central Street, Chester, NS, B0J 1J0

Office: 902-275-4135
General Inquiries: 902-275-2599
Web: www.chester.ca



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I (we) respectfully acknowledge that I (we) live and work in Mi'kma'ki as a steward of the ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people. We are all treaty people.

This message contains confidential information and is intended only for the intended recipients in communication with the Municipality of Chester. If you are not an intended recipient you should not disseminate, distribute or copy this e-mail. Please notify the sender immediately by e-mail if you have received this e-mail by mistake and delete this e-mail from your system. E-mail transmission cannot be guaranteed to be secure or error-free as information could be intercepted, corrupted, lost, destroyed, arrive late or incomplete, or contain viruses. The sender therefore does not accept liability for any errors or omissions in the contents of this message, which arise as a result of e-mail transmission. If verification is required please request a hard-copy version.

PUBLIC HEARING

VILLAGE PLAN REVIEW



THE MUNICIPALITY OF
CHESTER
NOVA SCOTIA'S TREASURE

WHEN

March 20, 2025
Begins at 6:00 pm

WHERE

Chester District School Gym
202 Duke Street, Chester

Following two Public Hearings held in 2024 relating to Draft #3 and #4 respectively, Council and the Village Planning Advisory Committee (VPAC) reviewed a number of controversial topics and issues. VPAC provided recommended changes and Council considered those and gave final direction to staff to make agreed upon changes.

With this work now complete, the revised secondary planning strategy and land use by-law (Draft #5) have received 1st reading from Council. Members of the public are invited to attend the public hearing, which is the final meeting prior to Council voting to approve or reject the new documents.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:
engagechester.ca/villagereview

UPDATES INCLUDE

- ♦ Reduction in proposed density in the Commercial Zone from 10 units per lot to 4 units
- ♦ Changes to the zoning on Water Street to remove Commercial Zoning from 9 properties
- ♦ Removed exemption for existing structures, one and two-unit dwellings in the R5 Zone to require landscaping and parking locations at the side of rear of the lot
- ♦ Add allowance for one residential unit in Maple Cottage on Regent Street
- ♦ Revised definitions and policies to align with forthcoming Short Term Rental Licensing By-law and Marketing Levy

LET COUNCIL KNOW YOUR THOUGHTS

Members of the public may speak at the hearing and/or submit written comments to pmyra@chester.ca by Friday March 14, 2025 at 4:30pm.

From: [Paul Riley](#)
To: [Heather McCallum](#)
Subject: Early Notification MPS/LUB Amendments - Short-term Rentals
Date: March 5, 2025 9:56:07 AM
Attachments: [image874598.png](#)
[image507015.png](#)
[image247144.png](#)
[image578517.png](#)
[image888932.png](#)
[image413470.png](#)

You don't often get email from priley@chester.ca. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender.

Good Day,

In accordance with the Engagement Programs Content Regulations of the Municipal Government Act and Chester Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) Policy A-6, I am writing to advise that in accordance with direction from Council, municipal staff are preparing amendments to the MPS and Land Use By-law to consider changes to distinguish between Short-term Rental and other tourist accommodations.

This notice offers an opportunity to provide comments in relation to the proposal for consideration by Council as the file progresses.

This notice does not replace the standard practice of providing advance notice of a Public Hearing to adjacent municipalities per Section 206 (5) of the Municipal Government Act. Such notice will be provided if and when a date for a Public Hearing is set.

If you have any questions or wish to submit comments in relation to the attached, please let me know.

Thank you,
 Paul



Paul Riley
 Planner
 Community Development & Recreation

Municipality of Chester
 186 Central Street, Chester, NS, B0J 1J0

Office: 902-275-4149
General Inquiries: 902-275-2599
Web: www.chester.ca



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I (we) respectfully acknowledge that I (we) live and work in Mi'kma'ki as a steward of the ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people. We are all treaty people.

This message contains confidential information and is intended only for the intended recipients in communication with the Municipality of Chester. If you are not an intended recipient you should not disseminate, distribute or copy this e-mail. Please notify the sender immediately by e-mail if you have received this e-mail by mistake and delete this e-mail from your system. E-mail transmission cannot be guaranteed to be secure or error-free as information could be intercepted, corrupted, lost, destroyed, arrive late or incomplete, or contain viruses. The sender therefore does not accept liability for any errors or omissions in the contents of this message, which arise as a result of e-mail transmission. If verification is required please request a hard-copy version.

Schedule 6.4

From: [Tynette Deveaux](#)
Cc: [CAPE NS Chair](#)
Subject: NS physicians warn of health risks of fracking and uranium mining
Date: March 4, 2025 4:46:25 PM
Attachments: [Open letter to Premier Houston-NS physicians warn about health harms.pdf](#)
[CAPE NS submission Bill 6-Dr. Nancy Covington.pdf](#)

You don't often get email from tynette@cape.ca. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender.

Dear Mayors, Wardens, Councillors, and CAOs of Nova Scotia,

We are writing to you on behalf of the Nova Scotia committee of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment ([CAPE](#)) with an urgent matter.

As Nova Scotia physicians and healthcare providers, we are deeply concerned that Premier Houston's government is taking steps to repeal legislation protecting Nova Scotians from the development of hydraulic fracturing (fracking) and uranium mining in the province. Attached is an open letter we sent to the Premier on February 19, outlining the health threats posed by these industries.

We know from medical research that fracking is strongly linked to increased rates of birth defects, childhood leukemia and asthma, increased hospitalizations for cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, and higher overall mortality rates and reduced life expectancy.

In northeastern British Columbia, where fracking is already well established, physicians are closing their practice and moving their families away, privately identifying it's because of the adverse health and community impacts of the local fracking industry. ([Health professionals urge B.C. to stop investing in the LNG industry](#))

Uranium mining poses grave health and environmental risks as well. Uranium mining (and exploration) releases radioactive materials into the air and water, and leads to elevated levels of radioactive toxic metals in the environment. This can cause long-term contamination of soils, well water and other water resources, and wildlife. (See attached submission by Dr. Covington for more information).

Studies show increased rates of lung cancer and other respiratory diseases for those living in nearby communities, as well as workers in the industry. Radon, the radioactive gas that is released when uranium is disturbed or mined, is the second leading cause of lung cancer in Canada, after smoking.

The decisions made in the coming days could have long-lasting consequences for the health of Nova Scotians and our environment. As local leaders, you have a crucial

role to play in protecting the health and well-being of your communities. We urge you to speak out publicly against Bill 6, which would repeal the existing bans on these industries, and to communicate your concerns directly to Premier Houston and your local MLAs.

We stand ready to provide any additional information or support you may need in addressing this urgent matter. Please do not hesitate to contact us for further discussion or clarification.

Sincerely,

Dr. Laurette Geldenhuys

Dr. Nancy Covington

On behalf of the Nova Scotia committee of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE)

* CAPE is a non-partisan, physician-led organization with over 36,000 supporters across the country. It plays a unique role at the intersection of health and the environment, bringing a credible, evidence-based perspective delivered by doctors, other health professionals, and researchers to support community and planetary health and enhance equity. CAPE Nova Scotia represents more than 100 physicians and other healthcare providers in the province.

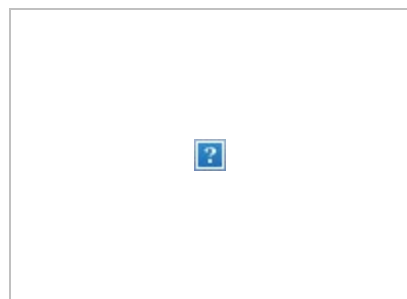
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Tynette Deveaux

Regional Program Manager & Atlantic Coordinator |

Gestionnaire des comités régionaux & coordonnatrice du Canada Atlantique

www.cape.ca | 902-719-9083 (Kjipuktuk | Halifax)



I live and work in Kjipuktuk (Halifax), on Mi'kma'ki territory, which is covered by the treaties of peace and friendship, guaranteeing the rights of Mi'kmaq to fish, hunt, and trade in perpetuity. These treaties are part of the Canadian Constitution and remain binding today. We are all treaty people.



February 19, 2025

The Honorable Tim Houston,
Premier of Nova Scotia
7th Floor, One Government Place
1700 Granville Street
Halifax, NS B3J 1X5

premier@novascotia.ca

RE: Repealing the Uranium Exploration and Mining Prohibition Act and amendments to permit hydraulic fracturing of natural gas in Nova Scotia

Dear Premier Houston,

We are writing on behalf of the Nova Scotia committee of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE) to express our deep concerns regarding your plans to remove bans on hydraulic fracturing (fracking) for natural gas and uranium mining exploration and research. As physicians and healthcare providers, we feel it is our duty to bring to your attention the latest medical evidence of the health harms associated with these extractive industries.

CAPE is a non-partisan, physician-led organization with over 36,000 supporters across the country. It plays a unique role at the intersection of health and the environment, bringing a credible, evidence-based perspective delivered by the trusted voices of doctors, other health professionals, and researchers to support community and planetary health and enhance equity. CAPE Nova Scotia represents more than 100 physicians and other healthcare providers across the province.

We understand the economic challenges facing Nova Scotia, including US tariffs and uncertainty around federal funding. We are also acutely aware of the high rates of poverty in our province and how this profoundly affects the communities we serve. However, we strongly believe that pursuing resource extraction activities that contribute to significant health and environmental harms is not the solution to these challenges.

The medical evidence on the health impacts of unconventional oil and gas development, including fracking, is clear and growing. Recent studies have found strong correlations between proximity to fracking sites and:

- Increased rates of preterm births, low birth weight, and congenital defects



- Higher incidences of childhood asthma and leukemia
- Increased hospitalizations for cardiovascular and respiratory diseases
- Higher overall mortality rates and reduced life expectancy

For example, a 2022 study in *Environmental Health Perspectives* found that children living near fracking sites had 2-3 times higher odds of developing acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Another study in *JAMA Pediatrics* showed significantly increased risks of spontaneous preterm birth and low birth weight for pregnancies within 10 km of fracking wells.

Many of the chemicals used in fracking are known carcinogens, endocrine disruptors, or have other toxic effects. Groundwater contamination from fracking chemicals can persist for decades, impacting drinking water supplies and soils, and, in turn, adversely affecting human health.

Uranium mining poses its own set of health hazards, related to radiation exposure from radioactive materials released into air and water, and elevated levels of toxic metals. Historical evidence from uranium mining regions shows dramatically increased rates of lung cancer and other respiratory diseases among miners and nearby residents. While modern safety practices have improved, workers and those living in nearby communities face increased health risks from radon gas, radioactive dust, and potential water contamination.

The long-term environmental impacts of uranium mining is equally concerning. It leaves a toxic legacy of radioactive waste with a half-life of tens of thousands of years. Eighty-five percent of the radioactivity in the uranium ore is left behind as tailings, including many radioactive poisons – such as radium, polonium, and radioactive lead-210 – that are far more toxic than uranium itself. These uranium mining and milling wastes will constitute an everlasting health hazard and will have to be monitored and managed in perpetuity at public expense. The Church Rock uranium tailings spill in New Mexico, which released 94 million gallons of such radioactive waste, remains largely unremediated more than 40 years later. A power outage at a uranium mine in Elliot Lake, Ontario, resulted in the spill of two million litres of contaminated water from a tailings site.

We are also deeply concerned about plans to expand fossil fuel extraction and consumption in the province, at a time when we urgently need to transition away from fossil fuels. Building pipelines and other new fossil fuel infrastructure would only exacerbate the root cause of the severe flooding, monster wildfires, and heatwaves we are experiencing in Nova Scotia. The medical journal *The Lancet* has identified climate change as the greatest global health threat of the 21st century. As healthcare providers, we are already seeing the health effects of climate change in our communities.

The health impacts of fracking, uranium mining—and more broadly, climate change—disproportionately affect Indigenous and African Nova Scotian communities and vulnerable populations, including children, pregnant women, the elderly, disabled people, and



people with pre-existing conditions or biological susceptibilities. Rural and low-income communities also often bear a heavy burden of environmental contamination and health effects. These factors position this as a matter of social, racial, economic and environmental justice. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the UN declaration on the right to a healthy environment, and Canada's *National Strategy Respecting Environmental Racism and Environmental Justice Act* should guide decision-making.

We recognize the need for economic development and healthcare funding. However, the boom-and-bust cycle of fossil fuel resource extraction and uranium mining offers only short-term gains at the expense of long-term public health and environmental costs. Instead, we encourage focusing on sustainable industries like clean renewable energy projects, which create more jobs per dollar invested than fossil fuels, while protecting our air, water, and climate. Such projects will need to be undertaken with community consultation and support, and at a scale that does not harm the local environment.

Nova Scotia has some of the most ambitious climate targets in North America. Expanding fossil fuel infrastructure would be a major step backwards and incompatible with our climate goals. Moreover, repealing laws that protect against the development of fracking and uranium mining would undermine the province's commitment to improve health care for all Nova Scotians.

Therefore, we respectfully call on your government to:

1. Maintain and strengthen existing restrictions on fracking, uranium mining, and other high-risk resource extraction activities
2. Invest in community-supported clean renewable energy and green infrastructure as a path to sustainable economic growth
3. Require comprehensive health impact assessments for any proposed resource extraction projects
4. Prioritize protection of drinking water sources and ecologically sensitive areas
5. Respect UNDRIP; engage in meaningful consultation with Mi'kmaw communities and ensure there is free, prior, and informed consent for any activities impacting Mi'kmaw territory.
6. Engage in meaningful consultation with rural communities, and work collaboratively with them to find shared solutions.
7. Respect the UN Declaration on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment

We recognize the immense challenges you face as Premier during these difficult times. The pressures of US tariffs, healthcare funding gaps, and the need to ensure prosperity for all Nova Scotians are significant burdens to bear. However, we must be careful not to trade one crisis for another. The health of our communities and the natural environment that sustains us are



essential foundations for any lasting economic solution. By maintaining our commitment to environmental protection while pursuing sustainable economic development, Nova Scotia can lead the way on innovative solutions that preserve the health, environmental, and economic legacy we wish to leave for future generations.

Sincerely,

Laurette Geldenhuys, MBBCH FFPATH MMED FRCPC MAEd
on behalf of CAPE Nova Scotia

c.c. Claudia Chender, Leader of the Opposition
Derek Mombourquette, Leader of the Liberal Party



March 3, 2025

Submission by Dr. Nancy Covington to the Standing Committee on Public Bills concerning Bill 6: An Act Respecting Agriculture, Energy and Natural Resources

Good morning, honourable members of the Legislature. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. I am Dr. Nancy Covington, a retired family physician, a grandmother, and a member of the Nova Scotia committee of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE NS).

I was involved in the work that led to Nova Scotia's 2009 ban on uranium mining and exploration. This ban grew out of the long-standing moratorium, and was the result of extensive research and public engagement. In the end, it garnered support from all political parties, the medical society, and many citizen groups.

Shortly after this, mining companies started exploring for uranium near Sept-Îles in Quebec. When petitions to halt the exploration were ignored, 23 doctors in the community publicly announced that they were prepared to resign en masse and leave town if the project moved forward. They stated that the threat to their water supply posed too much risk to their families and communities. With 23 doctors representing a third of the area's total physicians, their stance had significant weight. As a result, in 2013, Quebec imposed a moratorium on uranium mining, becoming the third province to take this step, following British Columbia and Nova Scotia.

It's disheartening that today, Nova Scotia's ban on uranium mining is being challenged. However, I welcome the opportunity to refresh our thinking on this critical issue.

Even the act of exploring for uranium with boreholes can release radon. Radon is a radioactive gas arising from uranium underground. Radon has a half life of 3.8 days. As it decays, it emits radioactive particles which, if inhaled or ingested, can damage our DNA and other cellular components, potentially leading to cancer. Radon and its eight decay products are all classified as carcinogens.

The decay chain continues with each new radioactive product, having the potential to attach itself by electrostatic charge to dust particles. These can get blown around, washed away into ponds or wells, or settle on vegetation and crops. Of interest, one of the elements in this decay chain is Polonium 210, which was the substance slipped into a teacup that killed Litvinenko by radiation poisoning in 2006. (Litvinenko was a double agent spy in the UK). Only 10 micrograms of Polonium was needed to kill him; his body was so radioactive it had to be buried in a lead coffin.

Uranium mining is typically done through open-pit or underground methods, and occasionally by leaching. In Saskatchewan, uranium concentrations are high—up to 20%—so the mining is often carried out by robots due to the extreme danger to workers. While no leaching has been done in Saskatchewan so far, it has been used in Wyoming, where it resulted in major contamination of an aquifer. More commonly, uranium is found in lower concentrations, which requires crushing the rock to extract the ore, leaving piles of radioactively contaminated rock exposed to the weather. Tailing ponds created to contain the waste do breach, as happened in Elliot Lake.

Milling of the ore is usually done on site to reduce transportation costs. The resulting yellowcake is transported to Blind River (top of Lake Huron) for refining, and then sent to a “Conversion Facility” in Port Hope (Cameco) where it is made into uranium hexafluoride and some pellets made for Bruce Power. Every step in the process risks more scatter of the radioactive laden dust particles.

Most mining has historically taken place in remote, sparsely populated areas such as northern Saskatchewan. One study showed that lichens close to uranium mining sites are sufficiently contaminated by radioactivity that caribou that eat the lichens become contaminated, thus entering the food chain. This study calculated the additional risks of cancer for people eating different amounts of this traditional meat. Other studies show fish in the area have heavy metal concentrations. Watersheds near mines in both Saskatchewan and Ontario remain contaminated.

Saskatchewan is 12 times as large as Nova Scotia with approximately the same size population. Most Saskatchewanians live in the south and mines are in the north. Nova Scotia is the second most densely populated province in Canada with 40% of people dependent on wells. This means that a uranium mine anywhere in Nova Scotia would affect most of us – as would uranium exploration.

After the mine is closed, the tailings site with radioactive remnants and other toxic heavy metals would require monitoring for an indefinite period of time. The responsibility and cost of this care would be the province’s. Another long-term cost would be health care costs for delayed onset cancers.

Radon gas is the second leading cause of lung cancer after smoking and is why measuring radon in our basements is advised and remedial action recommended over a certain level.

Many of our buildings, including schools, have readings above this level, which is why an industry has developed in the province to help homeowners do remediation.

Uranium is used for either nuclear power or nuclear weapons. A minuscule amount ends up as radioisotopes for medical use. Most medical isotopes can be made in a cyclotron without using radioactive material. Large nuclear power plants like Bruce Power are not needed to make these tiny amounts.

The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission regulates the mining industry. Of note, permissible levels of radon in Canada – that is, what the industry is allowed to release into the environment – are twice as high as many other countries and twice as high as what the World Health Organization recommends.

Permissible levels are derived from data from survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These levels are based on “Reference Man,” ignoring the fact that low level ionizing radiation causes disproportionate harm to women and children.

The bottom line is that even with newer mining techniques, uranium mining and exploration will negatively affect our health and the environment in much of Nova Scotia for a long time. This will further strain the health care system and increase costs.

Lastly, after uranium is used in a nuclear power plant, it’s transformed into waste that is much more radioactive than the original uranium. It’s so radioactive, in fact, that it has to be kept out of the biosphere for hundreds of thousands of years. Nobody in the world has figured out how. This toxic legacy will haunt future generations.

On behalf of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment, I respectfully call upon the government to maintain Nova Scotia’s uranium mining ban.

For our health and for the environment, leave uranium in the ground.

Nancy Covington, MD, BSc Physics
on behalf of Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment Nova Scotia
n.i.covington@icloud.com

Recommended resources

https://www.pembina.org/reports/ClearingAir_UraniumMining.pdf

<https://www.ippnwcanada.ca/medical-isotopes>

For more information, contact:

Tynette Deveaux, Atlantic Regional Coordinator, CAPE
tynette@cape.ca, 902-719-9083

From: [CYC Manager](#)
To: [Geraldine Pauley](#); [Geraldine Pauley](#)
Cc: [Heather McCallum](#)
Subject: Invitation: Thank You Appreciation Social for Chester Volunteer Fire Department at Chester Yacht Club
Date: March 6, 2025 8:44:36 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender.

Dear Geraldine Pauley, Chair VOC Commission:

Chester Yacht Club is hosting a **Thank You Appreciation Social** for the **Chester Volunteer Fire Department** on **Friday, July 4th**, from 6 – 8pm, and we would love for you and the Village of Chester Commissioners to join us.

Our community is incredibly fortunate to have the Chester Volunteer Fire Department, a dedicated team that serves with unwavering commitment. This event is our way of expressing sincere gratitude for their service.

Please join us at Chester Yacht Club for an evening of appreciation, camaraderie, and complimentary appetizers.

We also want to recognize and thank VOC and the Municipality of the District of Chester for their role in supporting fire and emergency services in the Village.

Please let me know if you and the commissioners can attend. We look forward to thanking our local CVFD firefighters and hope to see you there!

Best regards,

Kim

Kim Johnson
ChesterYC Manager
CHESTER YACHT CLUB
Phone Club 902-275-3747 **Mobile** 902-275-7824
21 South Street, PO Box 290, Chester, NS B0J1J0
www.chesteryachtclub.ca

Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan

~~Perfection~~
progress

2025-2028

Submitted to the Province of Nova Scotia on April 1, 2025



Acknowledgements

First, we acknowledge the Mi'kmaq, the First People of this land they've nurtured, that experienced the first and continuous inequities. As we acknowledge the Peace and Friendship Treaties signed, we recognize that as we do this work as Treaty People, we have a responsibility to intentionally, thoughtfully, and deeply engage to move forward this work of truth, reconciliation, diversity, equity and inclusion.

Often in the presence of inequity lies resilience. We acknowledge the resilient African Nova Scotian community we also serve, that has been in Nova Scotia for over 400 years. We not only honor and offer gratitude to those ancestors of African descent who came before us to this land but also continue to work to dismantle the centuries long hate and racism that has shaped present day inequities. We acknowledge that, to do this work and move forward, one must acknowledge true history, which is often unwritten. So, we continuously work towards respectfully engaging with and hearing the experiences of the descendants of these communities.

We acknowledge that we work in affirmation that accessibility is a human right. We also recognize that barriers to accessibility are greater for people who are typically marginalized in our society.

Introduction

The five municipalities in Lunenburg County are working together to improve and develop equity within in our region. The five municipalities include: Municipality of Chester (including the Village of Chester), Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (including the Village of Hebbville), Town of Bridgewater, Town of Lunenburg, and Town of Mahone Bay.

Background

In 2021, we worked with the Lunenburg County Accessibility Advisory Committee to develop the Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan. The plan outlined the overarching commitments for improving accessibility in all of Lunenburg County and some of the actions we would take to reach those commitments.

Objective

We know that inclusive communities are stronger communities and we are committed to working individually and as a region to make our municipal programs, services, initiatives and facilities more accessible, equitable and inclusive.

This plan looks ahead to the next three years (April 2025-March 2028). The Accessibility Plan updates the commitments from the original Plan and adds more detail about what we will do to meet those commitments.

Provincial Legislation

Under the Accessibility Act (2017), we must update the Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan. The focus is development of a strategy that will identify and address barriers to access in public policies, programs and services.

Key strategies

We commit to taking actions to encourage a culture of equity in our organizations and communities. We believe in supporting staff, Councils, and the people in our communities to not only become aware of inequities but become educated and equipped on how to remove and prevent barriers, while creating a culture of continuous learning.

Note: We recognize that language around equity work is always evolving and that people have different preferences about how to describe themselves. Although we intend to be respectful and inclusive, we know our language choices may not fit for everyone. If you have feedback about our choices, please let us know.

What We Believe

The first Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan was created using some key principles. We have continued to use and add to the list of these principles as we do our work around equity development. We plan to use them as we implement the 2025-2028 Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan

1

Equitable Access

Working towards equitable access for everyone in our community means that every person has access to opportunities and is treated fairly. Equitable access means understanding that a person's individual circumstances will impact what barriers they might face and what we can do to remove those barriers. Creating equity doesn't mean treating everyone the same.

2

First Voice

It is essential to include first voice perspectives of people who have lived experience in our work. That means hearing first voice perspectives on our plans, the work we have already done, and our decision-making processes.

It also means working to make our processes more accessible and equitable so we hear from persons from equity deserving groups about all our work, not only related to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA). This work is a lens to all the work, not its own separate project.

3

Flexibility

We know that things change and that we need to be flexible to respond to changes. Various Acts and Standards will come into effect and legislation may change in the coming years. Things like technology and world occurrences will also change. We understand that this plan must be flexible to make sure we can respond to these changes, take advantage of opportunities and respond to the emerging needs of community. We consider this plan to be a living document.

4

Collaboration

It is essential to continue to collaborate with other municipal units, the regional committees, organizations at the provincial level, and community partners to advance this plan and work towards a community of belonging.

5

Intersectionality

We know that people have multiple identities and that can mean they face multiple barriers to feeling belonging in our communities. These might be related to cultural or ethnic background, gender, disability, sexuality, or other identities people may have. When these identities overlap, it can magnify the impact of the barriers that person faces overall. We must consider intersectionality and align our plans for broader equity, diversity and inclusion work.

Lunenburg County Strategy for Belonging

Glossary of

Terms

We recognize that language around equity work is always evolving and that people have different preferences about how to describe themselves. Although we intend to be respectful and inclusive, we know our language choices may not fit for everyone. If you have feedback about our choices, please let us know.



Glossary of Terms

Accessibility Act (2017): The provincial law enacted to achieve accessibility by preventing and removing barriers for people with disabilities. The law defines the role and responsibilities of the Accessibility Directorate and the Accessibility Advisory Board, and addresses standards, compliance, and enforcement.

(nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/accessibility.pdf)

Accessibility Lens: An Accessibility Lens is a tool for identifying and clarifying issues affecting persons with disabilities used by policy developers and analysts to assess and address the impact of all initiatives (policies, programs or decisions) on persons with disabilities. It is also a resource in creating policies and programs reflective of the rights and needs of persons with disabilities.

Accessibility Standard: Under the Accessibility Act (2017), standards are the laws that will be developed to increase accessibility in Nova Scotia. Standards will be developed in six areas; Built Environment, Education, Employment, Goods and Services, Public Transportation, and Information and Communications. As standards are enacted into law, they will include who needs to comply with them.

Barrier: Something that makes it harder for some people to participate. Nova Scotia's Accessibility Act defines a barrier as "anything that hinders or challenges the full and effective participation in society of persons with disabilities, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy, or a practice."

Disability: As defined in Nova Scotia's Accessibility Act: "a physical, mental, intellectual, learning or sensory impairment, including an episodic disability that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders an individual's full and effective participation in society."

Diversity: Diversity is the range of human differences, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes, religious or ethical values system, national origin, and political beliefs. Differences in racial and ethnic, socioeconomic, geographic, and academic/professional backgrounds. People with different opinions, backgrounds (degrees and social experience), heritage and life experience.

Equitable/equity: A commitment to fairness. Equitable access is different from equal access. Equality means everybody is treated the same; equity means everybody is treated fairly, based on their needs and abilities. Equity recognizes and values differences, removing systemic barriers and accommodating individual differences, as needed.

Equity Deserving Groups: A group of people who, because of systemic discrimination, face barriers that prevent them from having the same access to the resources and opportunities that are available to other members of society, and that are necessary for them to attain just outcomes (Canada.ca)

Glossary of Terms

Intersectionality: How a person’s identities, such as their gender, ethnicity, and sexuality, affect their access to opportunities and privileges.

Lunenburg County Accessibility Advisory Committee (LCAAC): The committee established by the five municipalities in Lunenburg County that is responsible for advising the municipal councils on identifying, preventing, and removing barriers to people with disabilities in municipal programs, services, initiatives, and facilities. The LCAAC is made up of one elected official from each of the five municipalities and the Village of Chester and six community members. At least half of LCAAC members must be persons with disabilities or represent an organization that represents persons with disabilities.

Lunenburg County Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination Advisory Committee (ARADAC): The committee established by the five municipalities in Lunenburg County that is responsible for advising the municipal councils on identifying, preventing, and removing barriers to people underserved and underrepresented groups in municipal programs, services, initiatives, and facilities. The ARADAC is made up of one elected official from each of the five municipalities, six community members and two indigenous members (1 each from Acadia and Sipekne’katik First Nation). A matrix is used to have wide diversity of representation from equity deserving groups.

Meaningful: In the context of our work, the term meaningful is used to ensure the efforts being made are deemed valuable by those affected by the efforts.

Plain language: Clear, conversational communication that makes sense to the intended audience. The goal of plain language is to communicate so clearly that the intended audience can easily find what they need, understand what they find, and use the information (plainlanguagenetwork.org/).

Prescribed: The Accessibility Act and Dismantling Racism and Hate Act enables the government to use the regulations to identify which organizations must comply with certain requirements. The use of the word “prescribed” in legislation is intended to give wide authority for regulations to be made that set down a specific rule or direction.

Letter from Mayors & Warden

Dear

Signature

Evaluation

In the Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan, we have identified 17 actions we will take to increase accessibility within our community. We will track our progress on these actions and update on progress to the community every year.

We will continue to connect with the community, especially persons from equity deserving communities, to learn about their experiences and if what we are doing is making a meaningful difference. We will do this through community engagement sessions, surveys, and monitoring complaints and comments from the public.

We will also ask municipal staff, volunteers and elected officials about equity in our organizations to make sure we are increasing understanding over time.

As this work is both change focused and human-centred, we will continue to partner with organizations that specialize in data and evaluation. This makes sure we are not duplicating efforts and we engage with organizations that specialize in this area.

Diversity in our Community

Trends in the past 5 Years

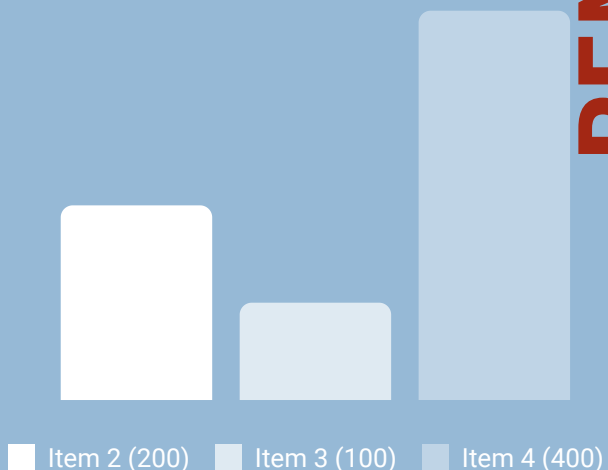
This will encompass stats around current diversity in our community along with emerging trends.

Our current community

The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog into a shimmering pool of rainwater that had gathered since the last frost. Soft clusters of leaves fall without a plan to the ground, mirroring the unhurried chestnut thatch of the fox's dense coat. The fox looks to the west, only then realizing the horizon has begun to curve towards them. Perhaps they should not have jumped so soon.

Target audience

The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog into a shimmering pool of rainwater that had gathered since the last frost. Soft clusters of leaves fall without a plan to the ground, mirroring the unhurried chestnut thatch of the fox's dense coat. The fox looks to the west, only then realizing the horizon has begun to curve towards them. Perhaps they should not have jumped so soon.



PENDING UPDATED DATA
TO REFLECT ACTUALS

Lunenburg County Accessibility Advisory Committee

Name	Relationship to Community
Louise Hopper	Community Member
Peggy McCalla	Community Member
Teresa Alexander-Arab	Community Member
Scott Lutes	Community Member
Vacancy	Community Member
Vacancy	Community Member
Kacy DeLong	Councillor, Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
Abdella Assaff	Deputy Warden, Municipality of Chester
Jennifer McDonald	Deputy Mayor, Town of Bridgewater
Gale Fullerton	Councillor, Gale Fullerton
Penny Carver	Councillor, Town of Mahone Bay
Geraldine Pauley	Chair, Village of Chester Commission

Progress

Since 2021, many things have changed in the way we incorporate accessibility into our work. Using the first plan as a guide, we have made changes to policies, processes, bylaws and spaces to improve accessibility. As a region we continue to build and support processes that help ensure these improvements continue.

Regional Progress

Regional Committee

The Lunenburg County Accessibility Advisory Committee (LCAAC) continued meeting following the completion of the first plan and has provided accessibility advice to municipalities on multiple projects. They currently meet 10 times per year.

Regional Collaboration

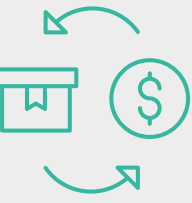
Following the first plan, we hired a Regional Accessibility Coordinator to support accessibility work. Since August 2021, the coordinator has worked to support accessibility in each municipality and across the region. This contract position became permanent in fall 2024, showing a commitment by our region to continue to prioritize accessibility improvements. Starting in 2024, we created a group that meets regularly to focus on equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility issues. This group includes senior staff from each municipality, the Regional Accessibility Coordinator, Regional Anti-Racism and Diversity Coordinator, and additional staff who are responsible for equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility work within their own organizations. By meeting regularly, we can make sure we are sharing updates, concerns, and successes, working together where we can, and keeping issues of equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility a priority.

All five municipalities have been working to meet the commitments outlined in the first accessibility plan. You can read a summary of progress from each municipality in the appendix at the end of this plan.

Key Findings

The first plan organized information into five categories that were taken from the Standard areas in the Accessibility Act. We continued to use these categories to guide our questions to community and to help organize what we heard. However, we found there was a sixth idea that people consistently mentioned. We have called this “Awareness” and it is woven through the other five categories.

Goods & Services



People told us the goods and services they receive from us do not consistently meet their accessibility needs. This includes interactions with us (for example, paying a bill, getting a permit), meetings and events, and recreation programming.

People said that they may not participate in recreation programs because the programs and facilities are too far away, they don't know if their accessibility needs will be met, don't feel safe trying something new with unfamiliar staff, or they have had experiences in the past when their accessibility needs were not met.

Although the accessibility of businesses is not a municipal responsibility, we heard that people continue to face barriers to accessing businesses in our region.

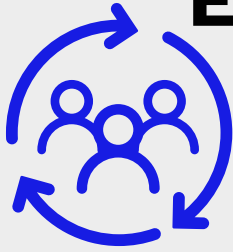
Information & Communications



Many people said they can find, access, and understand information from their municipalities. For others who faced barriers accessing information, finding what they need when visiting the website, knowing where to find information about the accessibility of municipal spaces and events, and knowing how to share a concern or complaint about accessibility were all mentioned as problems. Many people also said they cannot always access and understand emergency communications from their municipality, or that there is a lack of information shared with the public about urgent and non-urgent issues.

continued ->

Key Findings



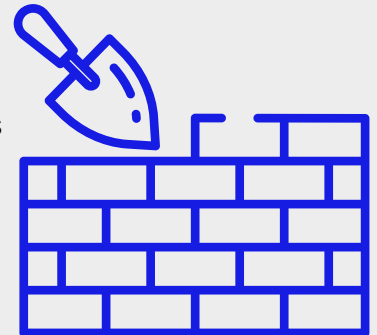
Employment

People told us that negative attitudes of employers and others toward disability is a major barrier to getting a job. Difficulty learning about job opportunities, lack of flexibility in working hours, accommodations, and other supports are also barriers to getting and keeping a job. Of those who described positive employment situations, they said it was because their employer provided flexibility or they are self-employed and can make decisions to support their own needs.

Built Environment

Although some people told us they can access municipal facilities without encountering accessibility barriers, many are still encountering barriers in these spaces. This tells us that, although we have been working to increase accessibility in our buildings, we still have work to do. In particular, access to accessible washrooms is a challenge, with more than half of people in our survey saying that these facilities sometimes or rarely meet their needs.

Several people mentioned the improvements that are happening in parks and outdoor spaces. For example, LaHave Sunset Park and Mushamush Beach Park in MODL and Wild Rose Park in MOC, which have each had significant improvements to accessibility in the past year.



continued ->

Key Findings



Transportation

People identified getting to where they need or want to go as a challenge. Public transportation is limited in Lunenburg County and does not meet the needs of many people with disabilities. People described being grateful for accessible transportation services but that they still have trouble getting everywhere they want or need to go, especially on evenings and weekends.

People told us that getting around using sidewalks and road shoulders can be challenging or impossible, especially with a mobility disability. They also said that events like snow and construction can create barriers to getting around and that we don't always manage these situations in ways that meet their accessibility needs.

Accessible parking is also a concern. People said there is not always enough accessible parking and when they are available, they are sometimes too far from destinations, making them less accessible. The design of the existing accessible parking spaces only works for some people and not others. In particular, people who use accessible vans described having difficulty finding appropriate places to park.

Feedback

Wins

People also had positive things to share about accessibility in Lunenburg County. Some examples are:

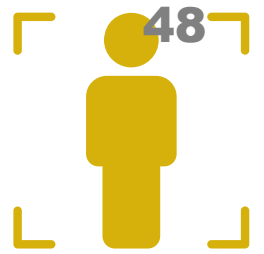
- Interactions with municipal staff who really listen and follow up when there is a problem
- Asking persons with disabilities for input and having it taken seriously
- Improvements to the physical spaces in municipal buildings (Municipality of Chester, District of Lunenburg)
- The DesBrisay Museum in Bridgewater
- Improvements to outdoor spaces accessibility
- Wheelchair basketball in Town of Lunenburg

Areas of Growth

We know we can never hear from everyone in the community but we want to make sure we are hearing from people with different experiences so we can make good decisions about accessibility. We recognize that our public engagement did not include enough diversity of experience and that this means we may be missing important information about the barriers people are facing.

We need to hear more from people and organizations with experiences related to:

- Youth with disabilities
- Persons who are blind or low vision
- Persons who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- Persons with intellectual disabilities
- Persons with episodic disabilities
- Persons from the 2SLGBTQAI+ community
- Persons who are Black, Indigenous, or persons of colour



Areas of Focus

The findings from community engagement tell us that the five areas we used to organize our actions in the first Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan are still areas where people with disabilities are facing barriers and where we can focus our efforts. In addition, we have added Awareness as a sixth area of focus. This is a way to acknowledge we have a role to play in raising awareness both in our own organizations and in the broader community about accessibility and disability. This is also an area that can overlap with our regional Anti-Racism and Diversity Plan.

Each of the six areas of focus are shown here with their long term goal.

Goods & Services

Residents and visitors with disabilities have equitable access to goods and services provided by our municipalities.

Information & Communications

People with disabilities can equitably access information and communications provided by our municipalities.

Transportation

Residents and visitors with disabilities have equitable access to transportation provided by our municipalities.

Employment

Our municipalities are accessible and equitable employers and support the careers of employees with disabilities. We will seek to attract and retain a skilled workforce that reflects the diverse residents of the municipalities.

Built Environment

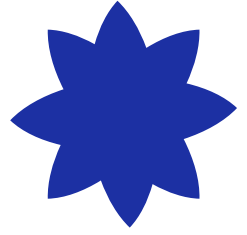
Municipal buildings and outdoor spaces within the municipalities provide meaningful and equitable access for users with disabilities.

Awareness

Municipal staff, volunteers, and elected officials consider accessibility in decision making and encourage a culture of accessibility and equity in their organizations and in the community.

Commitments

There are also commitments that help point the way toward reaching those goals. All our Lunenburg County municipalities have agreed to work toward these 28 commitments.



List of commitments by category :

Goods and Services	
Services	Enhance services provided by municipal units by making municipal services and events more accessible to persons with disabilities
Physical Space	The entrance areas of our municipal buildings should support positive accessible customer service experiences.
Programs	Deliver programming to people of all ages and abilities.
Meetings and Events	Improve accessibility of public meetings and events planned and delivered by a municipal unit by using an accessibility lens including location, event delivery, and participation.
Procurement	Apply an accessibility lens to all procurement processes, including creating common accessibility language, accessibility requirements, and including accessibility into the scoring process for procurement.
Policy	Apply an accessibility lens to all policy, by-laws, procedures, and practices.
Emergency Management	Municipal planning for emergencies will consider the needs of persons with disabilities. This means considering accessibility barriers in how we prepare for and respond to emergencies.

Commitments

Information and Communications

Communications Delivery	Improve communications about existing municipal programs, services, and events by delivering communications in a wide range of accessible formats.
Advertising/Marketing	Create and use a standardized symbol system when we communicate about public programs and events. This will let people know what accessibility features and barriers they can expect.
Wayfinding	Improve signage and wayfinding for municipal buildings and public facilities by having new signage and wayfinding projects designed using best practice in accessibility.

Transportation

Pedestrian Infrastructure	Make it easier for people to move around our communities while walking, cycling, and using mobility devices. This may include building and improving sidewalks, improving lighting, adding seating where people can rest, and including tactile attention indicators, curb ramps, and accessible pedestrian signals at pedestrian crossings.
Snow Removal	Prioritize snow clearance at transit stops, public buildings, and in municipally managed parking areas.
Parking	Ensure all municipal parking areas and municipally managed parking areas have accessible parking spaces and appropriate drop-off locations for larger vehicles. Accessible parking shall meet the Accessibility Act's Built Environment Standard (when implemented).
Transit Connectivity	Where possible, support improving transit connectivity by expanding public transportation systems.
Transit Infrastructure	Improve existing transit infrastructure and ensure transit vehicles, transit stops, and signage are accessible to people with disabilities.

Commitments

Employment	
Job Opportunities	Improve opportunities for persons with disabilities to gain employment at the municipality by ensuring job postings clearly state they are open to persons with disabilities, accommodations may be available in the workplace, and/or advertise job postings across different platforms.
Hiring	Improve processes, policies, and practices to remove accessibility barriers and encourage the recruitment, selection, transition, and advancement of persons with disabilities in their employment at the municipalities. Update job standards to make sure they reflect the actual standards of the job.
Flexibility	Improve support and flexibility in the workplace by ensuring municipal staff and Council with disabilities have access to assistive technology, possible accommodations in the workplace, appropriate and supportive leave practices and return to work plans, and a flexible work environment such as the ability to work from home.
Culture of Inclusion	Build capacity among staff and senior leadership to cultivate a culture of inclusion that supports, retains, and provides opportunities for career growth to persons with disabilities.
Representation	Actively recruit persons with disabilities on all municipal committees and working groups. Review committee and Council recruitment materials to ensure they are accessible.

Commitments

Built Environment	
Buildings	Improve and maintain the accessibility of municipal buildings and outdoor spaces to comply with the Nova Scotia Building Code, and the Accessibility Act's Built Environment Standard (when implemented), aiming to exceed them when feasible.
Public Spaces	Improve access to public spaces and opportunities for recreation by improving access to parks and playgrounds, lakes and beaches, diversifying recreation equipment, and creating accessible parks, playgrounds and trails. Municipalities will comply with the Accessibility Act's Built Environment Standard (when implemented).
Washrooms	Look for opportunities to construct and maintain more accessible public washrooms and retrofit existing washrooms where possible.
Temporary Disruptions	Put processes in place to ensure accessibility is maintained during temporary disruptions including emergencies, evacuations, and special events.
Emergencies	Ensure emergency management and building evacuation plans are reviewed with accessibility in mind.
Construction Mitigation	Municipalities should ensure accessible detours are available and communicated to the public when a sidewalk is affected by construction.

Awareness	
Internally (Organizationally)	Support new and existing municipal staff and Councils to increase knowledge and understanding of accessibility, equity, human rights, disability rights, and accessibility barriers in our community by providing ongoing awareness and training programs.
Externally (In Community)	Build an understanding and awareness of disability and accessibility within our community by supporting development of programming and awareness materials and events that highlight the experiences of people with disabilities in our community.

Regional Actions

To work toward meeting the commitments in this plan, we will work together on 17 actions.

Goods and Services	
Action	Commitment
Create or adopt a guide to be used by staff that provides guidance on how to plan a meeting or event using equitable best practices, including accessibility.	4. Meetings and Events - Improve accessibility of public meetings and events planned and delivered by a municipal unit by using an accessibility lens including location, event delivery, and participation.
Provide support to community members who face barriers to participating in municipal meetings and events to enable engagement. We will explore how to do this within the scope of our role as municipalities.	4. Meetings and Events - Improve accessibility of public meetings and events planned and delivered by a municipal unit by using an accessibility lens including location, event delivery, and participation.
Meetings and Events - Improve accessibility of public meetings and events planned and delivered by a municipal unit by using an accessibility lens including location, event delivery, and participation.	6. Policy– Apply an accessibility lens to all policy, by-laws, procedures, and practices.
Develop an Anti-Hate & Anti-Discrimination Policy to support regional municipal units for anti-hate and anti-discriminatory efforts until all policies can be reviewed with an equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility lens.	6. Policy– Apply an accessibility lens to all policy, by-laws, procedures, and practices.
Ensure that emergency information from the Lunenburg County Regional Emergency Management Organization (REMO) is communicated using Plain Language.	7. Emergency Management – Municipal planning for emergencies will consider the needs of persons with disabilities. This means considering accessibility barriers in how we prepare for and respond to emergencies.
Schedule regular meetings between REMO staff and the Regional Accessibility Coordinator to support considering accessibility in emergency management.	7. Emergency Management – Municipal planning for emergencies will consider the needs of persons with disabilities. This means considering accessibility barriers in how we prepare for and respond to emergencies.
Look for opportunities to provide emergency preparedness information to persons with disabilities through digital and written materials and presentations.	7. Emergency Management – Municipal planning for emergencies will consider the needs of persons with disabilities. This means considering accessibility barriers in how we prepare for and respond to emergencies.

Information and Communication

Action	Commitment
Collect and share information about the accessibility of municipal facilities and outdoor spaces using a standardized symbol system.	9. Advertising/Marketing – Create and use a standardized symbol system when we communicate about public programs and events. This will let people know what accessibility features and barriers they can expect.
Create a website dedicated to equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility work in Lunenburg County to create a consistent space for people to find information about accessibility in the region.	9. Advertising/Marketing – Create and use a standardized symbol system when we communicate about public programs and events. This will let people know what accessibility features and barriers they can expect.

Transportation

Action	Commitment
Collaborate regionally to learn more about what barriers people face related to transportation access as they move within, between, and beyond our municipalities.	14. Transit Connectivity – Where possible, support improving transit connectivity by expanding public transportation systems.

Employment

Action	Commitment
Explore the development of a safe space for municipal employees who belong to equity deserving groups. This could be in the form of an affinity group or employee resource group where employees can explore shared experiences, barriers, and solutions.	19. Culture of Inclusion – Build capacity among staff and senior leadership to cultivate a culture of inclusion that supports, retains, and provides opportunities for career growth to persons with disabilities.
Assess Municipal/Town physical spaces for opportunities to display signs of inclusion and belonging.	19. Culture of Inclusion – Build capacity among staff and senior leadership to cultivate a culture of inclusion that supports, retains, and provides opportunities for career growth to persons with disabilities.
Create opportunities for youth with disabilities to provide feedback to municipalities on accessibility matters.	20. Representation – Actively recruit persons with disabilities on all municipal committees and working groups. Review committee and Council recruitment materials to ensure they are accessible.

Awareness

Action	Commitment
<p>Review our governance processes related to equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility. This includes determining responsibilities for decision making, accountability and how we interact with other organizations doing similar work in the community.</p>	<p>27. Building Awareness in our organizations) – Support new and existing municipal staff and Councils to increase knowledge and understanding of accessibility, equity, human rights, disability rights, and accessibility barriers in our community by providing ongoing awareness and training programs.</p>
<p>Create an awareness plan to support our organizations to learn about and comply with the Built Environment Accessibility Standard when it is released.</p>	<p>27. Building Awareness in our organizations) – Support new and existing municipal staff and Councils to increase knowledge and understanding of accessibility, equity, human rights, disability rights, and accessibility barriers in our community by providing ongoing awareness and training programs.</p>
<p>Create a community awareness plan outlining how to engage the community on equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility.</p>	<p>28. Building Awareness in Community – Build an understanding and awareness of disability and accessibility within our community by supporting development of programming and awareness materials and events that highlight the experiences of people with disabilities in our community.</p>
<p>Encourage awareness about accessibility and disability through participating in Access Awareness Week and the United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities.</p>	<p>28. Building Awareness in Community – Build an understanding and awareness of disability and accessibility within our community by supporting development of programming and awareness materials and events that highlight the experiences of people with disabilities in our community.</p>

Community Collaboration

As we conducted engagement and continue to do so, we have partnered with many community organizations to implement actions and have wider community impact. Some of these partners are:



South Shore
Regional Centre for Education



nsc
Lunenburg Campus

**YOUR ORGANIZATION
HERE**

We understand as this is community work, we need to grow in collaboration. We anticipate tracking the additional partners we engage with over the years to capture larger community ownership and awareness of equity work

If you are interested in working with us, please connect with the regional coordinator: ejohnson@chester.ca.

PARTNERS

Next Steps & Conclusion

As we have identified opportunities to begin this work, it is only the start...



- ➔ Each municipality in Lunenburg County will prepare and make public an implementation plan showing what they will do to meet the commitments in this plan.
- ➔ We will continue to ask the community for feedback as part of our evaluation process.
- ➔ We will support the LCAAC, ARADAC, Regional Accessibility Coordinator and Regional Anti-Racism and Diversity Coordinator to work together to make sure we learn more about barriers faced by persons with disabilities who are also Black, Indigenous, persons of colour, and part of the 2SLGBTQAI+ community.
- ➔ Seek opportunities to connect with people and organizations who have experience and knowledge of barriers faced by people with experiences of disability that we did not hear enough from in our public engagement (people who are blind or low vision, Deaf or Hard of Hearing, have intellectual disabilities, or experience episodic disabilities).

Appendix

Areas of Growth

We know that we can never hear from everyone in the community but we want to make sure we are hearing from people with different experiences so we can make good decisions about accessibility.

We recognize that our public engagement did not include people from some communities. For example, everyone who answered our survey described their gender identity as male, female, or preferred not to share. Similarly, 89% said they have an ethnic or cultural background that is white or of European descent. This tells us that there is a gap in the experiences of persons with disabilities who also have other identities such as being part of the 2SLGBTQAI+ community or a person of colour.

We also have not heard from persons with some types of disabilities. Our survey heard mainly from people with mobility, pain, mental health or identify as neurodivergent/neurodiverse . We did not hear enough from people with disabilities related to hearing, people with vision loss, intellectual disabilities, or those with episodic disabilities (disabilities that can impact a person's life differently at different times).

To help make sure we aren't missing the experiences of people from these groups as we continue our work, we will be taking several steps:

- Continue to ask the community for feedback as part of our evaluation process
- Support the Regional Accessibility Coordinator and Regional Anti-Racism and Diversity Coordinator to work together to make sure we learn about barriers faced by persons with disabilities who are also Black, Indigenous, persons of colour, and part of the 2SLGBTQAI+ community.
- Seeking opportunities to connect with people and organizations who have experience and knowledge of barriers faced by people who are blind or low vision, Deaf or Hard of Hearing, have intellectual disabilities, or experience episodic disabilities.

Appendix

Summaries

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- Seeking opportunities to connect with people and organizations who have experience and knowledge of barriers faced by people who are blind or low vision, Deaf or Hard of Hearing, have intellectual disabilities, or experience episodic disabilities.

Summaries

Summary of Progress: Town of Lunenburg

The Town of Lunenburg has been working to improve accessibility in a variety of ways.

Our town is a unique, historic community with a built heritage dating back more than 270 years. This, along with our location on a steep hill, means there are barriers to accessibility in our built environment. We have been working hard to identify, prevent and remove barriers where it is possible. Examples of some of our efforts include:

- Applying an accessibility lens to our updated Heritage Conservation Policy and Bylaw
- Working closely with the business community to support accessibility improvements
- Working with the Province of Nova Scotia to support the development of education materials about new accessibility requirements for restaurants.
- Incorporating accessibility reviews into key community development and engineering projects
- Including tactile attention indicators and curb ramps in new and redesigned sidewalks and crosswalks
- Completing accessibility audits of the arena and community centre
- Adding a ramp to the arena entrance
- Adopting an accessible housing unit incentive policy

We also took steps to make parking more accessible. We incorporated accessibility into our parking and traffic study in 2024. The study mapped all existing accessible parking spaces and gave recommendations on how to improve parking and access. New designated accessible parking spaces have been placed on Bluenose Drive and meet a higher standard of accessible design than we have used in the past. We also hired a full-time bylaw enforcement officer, who monitors and enforces accessible parking use, making it easier for people who need accessible parking to find it.

To make sure more people can access and participate in our council meetings, committee meetings, and public engagement, we have made several improvements. Some examples include:

- Adding an accommodation request process to the planning and public input policy
- Hosting our first focus group specifically to hear from persons with disabilities about a major project
- Recording and livestreaming all council, committee and working group meetings so they can be accessed in different ways

We know there are challenges to increasing accessibility in our historic town and are committed to taking steps to ensure that all residents and visitors can access and enjoy our community.

Summary of Progress: Town of Bridgewater

In 2017, the Province of Nova Scotia passed the Accessibility Act with the goal of creating an accessible province by 2030. The Town partnered with the Municipal Districts of Lunenburg and Chester, Village of Chester, and the Towns of Lunenburg and Mahone Bay to create the Lunenburg County Accessibility Advisory Committee (LCAAC) in 2019 and the Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan in 2021.

The Province is developing standards in six areas, including education. The other five areas of accessibility standards are:

1. Goods and Services
2. Information and Communications
3. Transportation
4. Employment
5. Built Environment

As part of the regional effort, since 2020 the Town of Bridgewater has been focused on these five areas and has made significant progress.

Goods & Services

There have been several modifications made to the Council Chambers and Committee room to improve public accessibility. There has been accessibility awareness training delivered to the new Council and some planning staff have undergone specialized accessibility training. When people come to the main counter in Town Hall, there is a Speech Transfer system for staff to better hear people and there is technology available to which people can connect certain personal hearing devices. When purchasing significant software systems, accessibility requirements were included as part of the procurement process.

Information and Communication

Some staff have had further training in using plain language when writing. We have changed our communications standards to ensure website and social media posts include either alt text or that all information embedded in image files is also included in postings in screen-reader compatible format. We have also made some changes to the printed Recreation Guide to improve accessibility.

- Improved the municipal website to meet the public's needs as well as applied accessibility practices to social media posts, such as contrast, language, and alt text, etc.

- Upgraded tennis court parking lot by paving and designing accessible parking
- Revised all road side accessible parking spaces to align with the CSA B-651 standard
- Assessed and plan to renovate public washrooms on Edgewater Street to increase accessibility and include an adult change table
- Incorporate accessibility standards into all new built infrastructure projects
- Ordered various styles of chairs for Council Chambers and front entrance

Education

- Provided social media accessibility training to community groups to increase accessibility of posts shared by the Town

Information and Communication

- Adopted in-house communication standards for print communications internally and externally
- Livestream and record Council meetings with ability to add auto-generated captioning if needed

Transportation

- Provided financial support to Lunenburg County Wheels

Governance

- Update Human Resources Policies and procedures and use CAN/ASC-1.1:2024 National Standard of Canada- Employment as a reference guide
- Adopted the Accessibility Implementation Plan
- Adopted CSA/ASC B651:23 Accessible Design for the Build Environment to inform design of accessible parking spaces

Summary of Progress: Municipality of Chester

The Municipality of Chester made a commitment to improving accessibility in 2018. Since then, we have worked on how we can translate that commitment into action. We have paid particular attention to our public spaces, our municipal buildings, and delivery of services.

Facilities and public spaces

In 2022, we completed an accessibility audit of our municipal buildings, where the public comes to attend meetings, pay taxes, apply for permits, and access other services. As expected, the audit showed that we have a lot of work to do. We used (and continue to use) the recommendations from the report to plan and implement improvements. Some examples of our improvements include:

- Added accessible signage and automatic soap and paper towel dispensers to washrooms.
- Repaved an outdoor pathway to improve the surface quality.
- Improved signage for accessible parking spaces.

We are also making efforts to increase the accessibility of the physical environment of trails and outdoor spaces and to share information about accessibility of these spaces so people can decide for themselves if they want to visit. Some examples include:

- Reviewed wayfinding and information signage using an accessibility lens.
- Adopted consistent, high colour contrast and intuitive pictograms to communicate information about parks and trails such as difficulty level.
- Incorporated information about a trail's level of difficulty in the communication on signs, websites, etc. so people can make decisions about where to go.
- Purchased trail rider adaptive equipment to facilitate access to trails for persons with disabilities.
- Upgraded Wild Rose Park to include universal washrooms, adult change table, and improved walking paths with additional improvements to come.



Communicating

We identified large gaps in the way that we share information and invite feedback. Recognizing that we still have quite a bit of work to do (as outlined in our Action Plan), these are some examples of what we have put in place so far:

- Upgraded Council Chambers technology to improve audio and visual quality for in-person and virtual meetings, including an assistive listening system and arranging equipment to provide an optimal location for ASL interpreters when needed.
- Added speech transfer systems/hearing loops to reception desks and our two meeting rooms.
- Livestream and record council meetings so people can view remotely or at a later date.
- Use more accessible online platforms when we do community engagement.
- Had a number of staff participate in plain language training.
- Supported three staff to complete Presentation Skills training which included an accessibility component.
- Apply Braille to 20% of business cards printed.

Governance

In terms of governance, we continue to create avenues and support for services that provide accessible options. Leading up to 2025, we have already implemented some actions, such as:

- Support for Chester Community Wheels through an annual financial contribution.
- Developed an Outdoor Dining By-Law using an accessibility lens.
- Reviewed our Village of Chester Land Use By-Law and Secondary Planning Strategy with an accessibility lens. After approval, we have made a commitment to create the lengthy document as an accessible pdf.
- Added medical, dental, and life insurance benefits for Councillors and regional employees, which removes some barriers for people and encourages retention.
- Created a draft policy to minimize scents in the workplace and will implement a plan to educate employees, Councillors, and the public.
- Revised our Human Resources Policy to include accessibility language and provisions.

Transportation

In 2020 we purchased two low-floor buses with accessible ramps, and we are now installing an accessible bus shelter near the Regional Hospital and on North Street. When designing bridges, sidewalks and other aspects of active transportation, accessibility considerations have been incorporated. In 2022, we installed our first rectangular rapid flashing beacon at a crosswalk on Jubilee Avenue and we now include Tactile Walking Indicator Surfaces (TWIS) at crosswalks. From a planning perspective, we have incorporated accessibility design requirements into the Sidewalk Café By-law. The Traffic Operations study, that included accessibility review, is foundational work for future projects.

Employment

As part of our attraction and retention strategy we have embraced a flexible work policy that enables our people with different life needs to contribute effectively to delivering our services. We have incorporated our communications standards into our onboarding guide for new staff. Recognizing that sometimes people just need a little extra support, we now provide menstrual products in all washrooms. We have also added automatic door openers.

Built Environment

While it is challenging to change what has already been built, we have taken advantage of certain renovation opportunities. At the Bridgewater Memorial Arena, we have included an exterior ramp, an accessible door and an elevator. There are now accessible, gender-neutral, washrooms at Town Hall. We have conducted an accessibility audit of the Town's outdoor pool and improvements to signage, contrast painting and pool accessibility modifications are ongoing. At Shipyard's Landing, cobble-type pavers have been replaced with accessible-standard concrete sidewalks. Finally, Shipyard's Landing Public Washrooms will soon be open to the public!

While there is still lots of work to do to improve the life of our residents, accessibility thinking will continue to be integrated into our everyday work.

Summary of Progress: Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Since 2020, the District of Lunenburg has made significant strides in accessibility, ensuring that all residents can participate fully in community life. It began with the construction and opening of the new Municipal Services Building, a transformative milestone. The old facility lacked wheelchair access at one of the customer service entrances or an elevator, and visitors with mobility challenges had no access to public washrooms. Today, the new building features fully accessible doors, assisted hearing technology, bariatric seating, and more, welcoming everyone with fully accessible amenities and services under one roof.

The District also adopted a proactive approach by integrating an accessibility lens into the development of proposed capital projects. Accessibility audits for five park facilities uncovered barriers and opportunities for improvement, guiding thoughtful changes. For example, Mushamush Beach now features a Mobi-mat, providing all users seamless access to the water. At Church Lake, visitors can enjoy accessible picnic tables, promoting inclusive outdoor recreation.

Digital accessibility has also been a priority. In 2020, the District's website, modl.ca, achieved 99% accessibility. Collaborating with the Association of Municipal Administrators' Municipal Website Venture and digital accessibility experts Access Changes Everything, the District ensured the site met Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) standards. The result is a platform where residents can access vital information with ease, regardless of ability.

Council operations have also embraced inclusivity. Meetings are now livestreamed, enabling residents with mobility or transportation challenges to participate remotely. Council agendas include contact information for accessibility inquiries, and all reports, bylaws, and policies are prepared using accessible templates. Training in accessible social media practices has further enhanced the reach and inclusivity of District communications.

Inclusivity extends beyond infrastructure and digital spaces. Expanded recreation programs cater to diverse abilities, reflecting the District's commitment to providing opportunities for all. Advocacy and funding efforts have also transformed Senior Wheels into Lunenburg County Wheels, a dial-a-ride service now available across the entire municipality. This door-to-door service has become a lifeline for residents with mobility challenges, fostering independence and community connection.

Each improvement reflects the District of Lunenburg's dedication to breaking down barriers and building a more inclusive community. We look forward to more opportunities to consider accessibility in major capital spending plans and everyday operational decisions.

Summary of Progress: Town of Mahone Bay

The Town of Mahone Bay is a place for people to live, work, and play, and with that the Town recognizes the importance of having accessible spaces and services. Since the passage of the *Accessibility Act*, the Town has worked diligently to improve access for those living in or visiting Mahone Bay. The following is a broad overview of accomplishments made since 2020 in this vein.

Built Environment

The Town has had a large focus on accessibility in its built environment via the upgrading of facilities and adoption of regulations including:

- Built a new, accessible fire station
- Town Hall Upgrades
 - Barrier free entrance
 - Accessible washroom
 - Painted door frames for greater contrast
 - Replaced/added colour contrast strips on stairs
 - Added colour contrast strips on glass gates
 - Removed plexi glass barriers in the public section of Town Hall
 - Replaced the debit machine with a more accessible one
 - Added a building directory at all public entrances
 - Added room identifying signage in consistent places in relation to doors for intuitive location
 - Replaced all door knobs with lever handles
 - Purchased lamps for staff to have better control over lighting in work spaces (as requested)
 - Purchased adjustable height desk additions (as requested)
- Added RRFBs at trail/road intersections
- Upgraded pathway along waterfront
- Upgraded field track surface
- Audited nine (9) outdoor spaces for accessibility
- Upgraded Aquatic Garden Park bridge
- Community Orchard Design
 - Benches and picnic tables on concrete pads
 - Paths have gentle slopes and crushed gravel surface with planned paving
 - Currently addressing concerns about drop off areas and visibility of tree guards.
- Added accessible picnic table at the Visitor Information Centre
- Painted slopes on curb ramps



Minutes

Chester Fire Services Committee (CFSC) Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, Feb 5, 2025 at 5:00 pm

Village Commission Boardroom (27 Pleasant Street, Chester)

- Present** Norm Countway, Vice-chair
Kirk Collicutt, Treasurer-Secretary
Wilson Fitt
Nancy Hatch
- Other** Cody Stevens, Fire Chief, Chester Volunteer Fire Department (CVFD)
Heather McCallum, Clerk/Treasurer, Village of Chester (VOC)
Maxine Veinot, Recording Secretary
- Regrets** Colin MacDonald, Chair
Greg Conron, Deputy Fire Chief, CVFD
- Guest(s)** Tom Bremner, Chester Municipal Councillor, District 3
Randy O'Malley, Chester Village Commissioner

#	Agenda Item
1	<p>Call to Order</p> <p>The meeting was called to order by the Vice-chair at 5:05 pm.</p>
2.	<p>Approval of Agenda</p> <p>Motion: Moved by Ms. Hatch; seconded by Mr. Collicutt: That the Committee approves the Agenda of the Wednesday, February 5, 2025 Monthly Meeting as presented. <i>Motion carried.</i></p>
3.	<p>Approval of Minutes</p> <p>3.1 Regular Meeting: Jan 8, 2025</p> <p>Motion: Moved by Mr. Collicut; seconded by Ms. Hatch:</p>

	<p>That the Committee approves the Minutes of the Wednesday, Dec 4, 2024 Monthly Meeting as presented. <i>Motion carried.</i></p> <p>3.2 Special Meeting: Jan 22 2025</p> <p>Motion: Moved by Ms. Hatch; seconded by Mr. Collicutt: That the Committee approves the Minutes of the Wednesday, Jan 22, 2025 Special Meeting as amended. <i>Motion carried.</i></p>
<p>4.0 Business Arising</p> <p>4.1 Fire Station Annual Costs</p>	<p>Mr. Fitt reviewed various rough calculations for the overall project and for the 2025/26 fiscal year and the potential impact on the tax rate. He noted that identifying an overall project ceiling on costs is needed. It was discussed that the Project Manager should work for CFSC, not the architect or builder.</p> <p>Mr. Fitt also noted that this is an uncertain economic climate, particularly with possible United States tariffs coming into effect, which would affect the costing of this project.</p> <p>4.2 Draft 2025/26 Budget</p> <p>Mr. Collicutt reviewed the updates to the draft budget. The Committee agreed by consensus that this draft is approved to go to the AGM for presentation and to Municipal Council and the Village Commission for information. (Note: See AGM Agenda package.)</p> <p>There remain a number of “TBDs” in this draft. Another version will be prepared for final approval in March.</p> <p>4.3 Annual General Meeting (AGM) Planning</p> <p>Mr. Countway reported that plans and presentations are in progress for the AGM. The Agenda and ad were provided for information.</p>
<p>5.0 Chester Volunteer Fire Dept: Activity Report</p>	<p>Chief Stevens presented his monthly report (<i>Schedule 5.0</i>).</p>

6.0	Reports
6.1	Treasurer-Secretary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly Financials <p>Mr. Collicutt presented his monthly report (<i>Schedule 6.1.a</i>).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reserve Funds & Investment Policy – for approval <p>Ms. McCallum re-presented the draft policy for approval (<i>Schedule 6.1.b</i>).</p> <p>Motion: Moved by Mr. Collicutt; seconded by Mr. Fitt: that the Reserve Funds & Investment Policy be approved as presented. <i>Motion carried.</i></p> <p>Action: The policy must go to the Minister of Municipal Affairs for approval.</p>
6.2	New Fire Station Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Swap Update <p>Mr. Countway reported that the delay continues with the other property owner’s lawyer. The other owner may have to re-start with a different representative.</p> <p>Action: Mr. Robert continues to reach out/wait for lawyers’ responses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RFP Status <p>Ms. McCallum reported the Phase 2 RFPs are close to completion thanks to Mr. Fitt’s assistance and will be sent to Procurement at the Municipality for review in the coming days. There are two RFPs: one for the architects/engineers, and another for project management.</p>
6.3	Communications Sub-Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request for Decision: Michael Broley Development Contract Renewal <p>Mr. Countway presented a request to extend Mr. Broley’s contract to the end of this fiscal and renew for the 2025/26 fiscal (<i>Schedule 6.3.a</i>).</p>

	<p>MOTION: Moved by Vice-Chair Countway; seconded by Mr. Collicutt: That the Chester Fire Services Committee extend the 2024/25 contract of Michael Broley Development to the end of the fiscal year for a total cost of \$2,300.00 + HST. Further, that the Committee pre-approve his proposal dated Jan 15, 2025 for a cost of \$14,452.20 + HST in the 2025/26 Draft Fire & Emergency Services Budget. <i>Motion carried.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates Analytics <p>The online analytics for the month of February for Facebook, Instagram, and the website was provided for information (<i>Schedule 6.3.b</i>).</p>
6.4	<p>Fundraising Sub-Committee</p> <p>Ms. McCallum reported that she contacted the Canada Revenue Agency regarding the status of the Committee’s application to be registered as a “qualified donee” but was told it was too soon for a decision.</p>
7.	<p>New Business</p>
7.1	<p>Minor Vehicle Collision</p> <p>Chief Stevens reported on an incident where a vehicle was ‘rubbed’ by a fire truck as it was proceeding to a call. The car was on the side of the road, which left very little room to get by. There was minimal damage. Insurance was notified.</p>
8.	<p>In Camera – None</p>
9.	<p>Resumption of Public Meeting – N/a</p>
10.	<p>Other Business – None</p>
11.	<p>Adjournment</p> <p>The meeting was adjourned at 6:23 pm.</p>

Next Meeting(s):

- **Annual General Meeting:** Feb 11, 2025 at 6:30 pm; St. Stephen’s Community Centre, 54 Regent Street
- **Regular:** March 5, 2025 at 5:00 pm; Village Commission Boardroom, 27 Pleasant Street

CFSC Secretary
Kirk Collicutt

VOC Clerk/Treasurer
Heather McCallum

DRAFT

Schedule 7.3 (b)**Minutes****Chester Fire Services Committee (CFSC) – Annual General Meeting****Tuesday, Feb 11, 2025 at 6:30 pm**

St. Stephen's Community Centre (54 Regent Street, Chester)

Video archive: <https://www.youtube.com/@ChesterFireCommittee>

- Present** Norm Countway, Vice-chair
Kirk Collicutt, Treasurer-Secretary
Wilson Fitt
Nancy Hatch
- Other** Cody Stevens, Fire Chief, Chester Volunteer Fire Department
Greg Conron, Deputy Fire Chief, Chester Volunteer Fire Department
Heather McCallum, Clerk/Treasurer, Village of Chester (Committee Administrator)
Maxine Veinot, Recording Secretary
- Regrets** Colin MacDonald, Chair
James Robert

#	Item
1.	<p>Welcome and Opening Remarks</p> <p>Ms. McCallum read the land acknowledgement and reviewed the meeting agenda (<i>Schedule 1, p. 1-2</i>).</p> <p>The 2025 Annual General Meeting (AGM) was called to order by Vice-chair Countway at 6:30 pm. He provided some opening remarks on the role of the Chester Fire Services Committee, its goals, and the changes and growth in the service area with new developments, etc. (<i>Schedule 1, p. 3-9</i>).</p>
2.	<p>Chester Volunteer Fire Department (CVFD) – 2024 Activity Report</p> <p>Chief Stevens delivered his annual activity report for the CVFD (<i>Schedule 1, p. 10</i>).</p>
3.	<p>New Fire Station Project - Status</p>

	<p>Mr. Fitt, who will be the Committee’s Project Director on the fire station project going forward, reviewed where we are in the process and put it in context including the need for a new building, cost and funding considerations, and a rough timeline <i>(Schedule 1, p. 11-12)</i>.</p> <p>This is meant to be a 50-year building. The Phase 1 concept design and functional plan set a benchmark but are not the final design.</p>
4.	<p>Financial Report 2024/25 and DRAFT Fire & Emergency Services Budget 2025/26</p> <p>Mr. Collicutt, the Committee Treasurer, discussed planning considerations for the 2025/26 budget and the proposed fire rate <i>(Schedule 1, p. 13-16)</i>.</p> <p>Ms. McCallum noted that the 2025/26 budget document includes the current 2024/25 fiscal year actuals to the end of Q3, the most recent reporting period. She reviewed the budget <i>(Schedule 1, p. 17-25) and (Schedule 2)</i>.</p> <p>Mr. Collicutt made some final comments on the draft budget <i>(Schedule 1, p. 26)</i>.</p>
5.	<p>Q & A</p> <p>Vice-chair Countway facilitated the question-and-answer session.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philip Stevens questioned if the project would be a ‘design build’ approach. Mr. Fitt said not with the unknowns such as tariffs, product needs made outside of Canada, etc. • James Barkhouse questioned if the hall would be built to accommodate a future aerial truck. Chief Stevens said yes. With the history of the Chester Playhouse fire, it is clear that an aerial truck is essential in close proximity of homes and businesses with greater density. • Sharon Cornelius-Church asked if there are plans to replace the fire boat for the islands. A rescue boat report with options to discontinue or replace the boat will come before Municipal Council shortly for decision. • Andre Veinotte suggested the tax rate could be raised more to be able to have reserves more quickly for the new fire hall build and a replacement pumper truck. • Both Mr. Collicutt and Mr. Countway stated that as the fire service area (Districts 3, 7 and part of 1) grows, the demands on the fire department will also grow.

6. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

The Vice-chair thanked the attendees for coming and commented that there will be further opportunities for public consultation as the fire station project progresses.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 pm.

Note: Visit the CFSC's website for agendas, minutes, and more:

<https://www.chesterfirecommittee.ca/>

CFSC Secretary
Kirk Collicutt

VOC Clerk/Treasurer
Heather McCallum

Schedule 7.4

Minutes of the Meeting of Lunenburg County Accessibility Advisory Committee (LCAAC)

Held online via Zoom.

February 5, 2025, from 7-8:30pm

Members Present:

Louise Hopper (Community Member), Peggy McCalla (Community Member), Scott Lutes (Community Member), Teresa Alexander-Arab (Community Member), Councillor Penny Carver (TOMB), Councillor Gale Fullerton (TOL), Chair Geraldine Pauley (VOC), Councillor Jennifer McDonald (TOB), Councillor Kacy DeLong (MODL).

Staff Present:

Tammie Bezanson (CET-MOC), Ellen Johnson (Regional Accessibility Coordinator), Tissy Bolivar (Recreation-MODL), Dylan Heide (Policy-TOMB), Heather McCallum (VoC).

Guests Present: None.

Regrets:

Councillor Abdella Assaff (MODC), Mark Flint (Deputy CAO-TOB)

The meeting began with a land acknowledgement read by Chair Penny Carver.

1. Meeting Called to Order:

Meeting called to order by Chair Penny Carver.

2. Acknowledgements and Protocols:

2.1 Penny read reminder of accessibility as a human right.

2.2 Penny also reminded participants to please raise their hand (virtually or physically) and wait to be called on to speak and to also state their name before speaking.

3. Welcome

3.1 Penny noted that there are several new members on the committee following the 2024 municipal election and subsequent committee appointments. New elected official members and alternates are as follows:

- MOPDL: Councillor Kacy DeLong, Alternate: **Councillor Morgen Reinhardt**
- MB: Councillor Penny Carver, Alternate: **Councillor Rebecca Twanow**
- TOB: Councillor Jennifer McDonald, Alternate: **Councillor Stacey Colwell**
- TOL: **Councillor Gale Fullerton**, Alternate: **Councillor Debbie Dauphinee**
- MOC: Councillor Abdella Assaff, Alternate: **Councillor Tom Bremner**

3.2 There is also a new staff resource representing recreation and MODL, Tissy Bolivar.

3.3 All present introduced themselves.

4. Approval of Agenda:

MOTION TO APPROVE the agenda, moved by Gale Fullerton, seconded by Kacy DeLong. ALL IN FAVOR, SO MOVED.

5. Approval of Minutes:

MOTION TO APPROVE previous meeting minutes for October 2, 2024, moved by Teresa Alexandra-Arab, seconded by Scott lutes. ALL IN FAVOR, SO MOVED.

6. Accessibility Coordinator's Update

- Ellen explained that the new LCAAC Community Member appointments will take place at the Mayors and Wardens meeting on March 5.
- Ellen also noted that she has reached out to MODL for an update on the letter the committee sent to MODL Council about the MARC Playground. Kacy added that her understanding is that the issue that happened with this process has been recognized by MODL and that accessibility is now more embedded in projects.
- Community Engagement Sessions: Ellen explained that she and Gem Roberts, the Regional Anti-Racism and Diversity Coordinator, have been doing community engagement sessions around the region regularly. There has been good attendance and lots of feedback. They will continue to do these sessions with the intention of having four per month. Kacy noted that she attended one of the sessions and found it impactful. Sessions are scheduled for February and March.

7. Matters Arising

7.1 Lunenburg County Accessibility Plan Update: Ellen explained that the update to the plan is well underway and that it must be submitted by the provincial deadline of April 1, 2025.

Ellen presented the outline of the plan including:

- Introduction: who is involved in the regional work, what is the purpose of the work
- What we Believe: Shares several statements about the guiding values that shape this work. Most of these were in the 2021 plan: Equitable Access, First Voice, Flexibility, Collaboration, Intersectionality (added in this update).
- Glossary of Terms
- Evaluation: Annual progress reports, tracking specific actions
- Progress: what has happened to improve accessibility since the last plan?
- Plan Development: public engagement
- What we will do 2025-2028: What will each municipality do and what regional actions are planned.

- Conclusion
- Appendices: Progress from each municipality

Feedback from the committee included:

- Recommendation to add a recognition of accessibility as a Human Right in the plan.
- It is important to ensure progress is reported to the community, which contributes to accountability.
- Recommend reaching out to the Ark or Bonny Lea for more feedback.

Ellen will send out a draft of the plan to the committee by February 14 and requests that members send any feedback.

8. New Business

None.

9. Roundtable Discussion

Teresa asked about whether services would be relocated from the hospital to the new health centre in Osprey Village. This area does not have as many transportation options. Kacy and Louise responded that their understanding is that the new health clinic is intended to be complementary, not a relocation and that transportation is certainly an issue to ensure access to health care. Tissy volunteered to ask MODL about this for clarity.

Tammie from Municipality of Chester provided an update on the Wild Rose Park project in Western Shore. Most pathways have been completed in addition to the accessible washroom upgrades. Additional work will complete the pathways through the entire park, fix stairs, add a ramp to the beach, and add Mobi mats. Work will happen this summer.

Dylan described some work happening in Mahone Bay Town Hall. Following an accessibility audit, Public Works staff have been carrying out work to address the identified accessibility barriers. Examples include painting doorframes to increase colour contrast, installing lever door handles, putting colour contrasting strips on the stairs, adding signage and wayfinding, replacing mats, and exploring options for new chairs in Council Chambers. He noted that Public Works staff are enjoying this work over the winter and also increasing awareness about accessibility issues. An additional project planned for the summer is renovations of the public washrooms on Edgewater Street.

10. Date of Next Meeting: March 5, 2025

11. Meeting was adjourned as all items on agenda were completed.

19
 MUNICIPALITY OF THE DISTRICT OF CHESTER
 Minutes of Meeting of the
VILLAGE PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
 Council Chambers
 Tuesday, January 14, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 P.M by the Chair.

PRESENT

- | | | |
|---------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Members | Sara Filbee
Randy O'Malley
Syd Dumaresq
Brenda Mulrooney | Carol Nauss
Hassen Hammond
Tom Bremner |
|---------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|

- | | |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Staff | Garth Sturtevant, Senior Planner
Chad Haughn, Director of Community Development & Recreation
Lori-Ann Harnish, Administrative Assistant |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Regrets: Hassen Hammond

Gallery: 5 persons

2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

2.1 We respectfully acknowledge that we live and work in Mi'kma'ki as a steward of the ancestry territory of the Mi'kmaq people. We are all treaty people.

3. PUBLIC INPUT SESSION (15 MINUTES TOTAL)

- 3.1 Do any members of the public wish to address the Committee?
- 3.2 None

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

2025-023 MOVED by Randy O’Malley SECONDED by Brenda Mulrooney to approve the agenda. ALL IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

5. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS (CONFIRMED APPOINTMENTS)

5.1 None

6. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

6.1 Approval of Minutes dated December 10, 2024

2025-024 MOVED by Randy O’Malley, SECONDED by Brenda Mulrooney to accept the minutes from December 10, 2024 of the Village Planning Advisory Committee as presented. ALL IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

7. BUSINESS ARISING:

7.1 Coastal Protection Regulations Discussion (materials circulated in advance)

A discussion was held surrounding how the Committee would move forward with a recommendation to Council regarding the Coastal Protection Regulations. Senior Planner Garth Sturtevant explains that Council has identified Coastal Protection as an issue in which they want to review and consider. Prior to the Provincial election, following the axing of the Coastal Protection Act, the Province hired a consultant to work on a Model By-law that would be available to Municipalities for consideration. It was put on hold right before the Provincial election. After a discussion with the project lead for the Consultant team doing the work, it’s been determined that it is being discussed as a priority again. There was not an exact timeline given by the project lead. Council previously discussed that they would like to wait until the Model By-law is available to see if we should adopt it as is, if changes need to be made, and if we should be referencing the Municipality of Lunenburg’s Model.

Comments from the Committee

- Work should be carried out proactively to protect the coastline, such as public input, assessments, and surveys to understand the circumstances that we are dealing with.
- Areas were highlighted across the Municipality where flooding, drainage problems and high-water levels already exist.
- A living and longstanding document will need to be created.

- This is a province wide issue. The responsibility should not reside solely on the Municipalities.
- We want to ensure that our neighboring Municipalities Acts are cohesive. Highlighting the importance of waiting for the Model By-law.
- It was strongly suggested to urge the Provincial Government to pick up the act again and adopt the Coastal Protection Act.
- The issue of infilling in coastal areas was brought forward.

The Senior Planner explains that this is cross jurisdictional between the Municipality and the Province's Department of Nature Resources. Enforcement and regulations were discussed, and how they would be incorporated into the Land Use By-law with a new Coastal Protection Act coming.

We are taking a different approach in the Land Use By-Law Draft by proposing not to regulate infill anymore because it has always been a difficult jurisdictional piece where normally our jurisdiction ends at the high-water mark. When the new document gets adopted, we will have the shoreline mapped very precisely with GIS mapping. Any lands presumably created through infill beyond the high-water mark will be marked with a new zone which will not permit them to do anything on the infilled land. They can still infill, but they won't be permitted to build, it won't count towards their yard setbacks, so they won't be able to relocate a structure closer to the water. By doing this it allows the infill to be regulated by the Department of Natural Resources. We are hoping in taking a different approach it will create a precedent for infilling.

2025-025 MOVED by Syd Dumaresq and SECONDED by Carol Nauss for the Village Planning Advisory Committee to recommend to Council to urge the Province to adopt the Coastal Protection Act, to start preparing, conducting research, and collecting data for the whole Municipality if required, and to reference the Municipality of Lunenburg's Model. ALL IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

7.2 Definition(s) for density for consideration

A discussion took place surrounding the definition for density, examples of the definition were circulated to the committee members in advance. For interpretation purposes, committee members expressed that they would like to see it in the Secondary Planning Strategy. The importance of understanding and viewing it through a water shortage lens, how fire protection plays an important role, and the stress it puts on the environment. In terms of density as a definition, Committee members agreed that it does not need to solely focus on water. Senior Planner suggests that this issue should be viewed as regulations and policies as opposed to a

definition in the Land Use By-law. Currently we do not have a definition section in the Secondary Planning Strategy. It was suggested that the definition be added to part of the section on page 84 pertaining to Potable Water, it could also be added to various other sections in the Secondary Planning Strategy to address it at multiple angles. It was clarified that we don't require a definition in the Land Use By-law for it to be effective, and for it to regulate how many units per lot. We can't regulate the number of people per lot, therefore even if we define population density, it is not in our authority to limit how many people per lot. If the committee feels we have a unique definition of density that differs from the standard dictionary, and they also feel it is important to be included with the other terms in the Land Use By-law, then it is suggested to add it in. The Senior Planner suggests in terms of the discussion being held; it may be better suited in the policies section of the Secondary Planning Strategy. It was then determined that it should be added to policy SI-5, looking at overall water stress on the environment.

2025-026 MOVED by Carol Nauss, SECONDED by Brenda Mulrooney for the Village Planning Advisory Committee to recommend to Council to add a definition for density to policy SI-5 in the Secondary Planning Strategy, and to include the term and understanding of water stress in terms of density, not solely in terms of potable water but also in terms of Fire Safety and other factors. ALL IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

7.3 Water Strategy Discussion

A discussion was held identifying the importance of Water Strategy and how it is a municipal wide issue. A suggestion was made for a ground water study to be conducted. During the previous ground water study, conducted in 2018, it was reported that the Village take a cautious approach to density, and that certain areas of the Village are not appropriate for higher levels of density. The question was proposed as to how a Water Strategy can be incorporated in the most effective way. The urgency of this matter was highlighted.

The Senior Planner explains the previous work done called the "Chester Water Strategy" only reached as far as a resident survey and then work was abandoned. That work has been sitting there inactively since 2020-2021. The Water Strategy then became part of several projects such as the Well Improvement Program and the Community Well Program. The question was raised about the quality of the outflow of effluent from the sewer treatment plants. The Public Works Department would have to speak on the specifics of this matter, the outflow into the ocean would be meeting standards and compliant with regulations.

2025-027 MOVED by Carol Nauss, SECONDED by Brenda Mulrooney for the Village Planning Advisory Committee to recommend to Council to restart work on a Water Strategy for both the Village and the Municipality. ALL IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

7.4 Any other issues or topics related to the draft Village SPS and LUB

7.5 Council has provided direction for the committee to finish up the work by January 31, 2025. This will be the final meeting before it concludes. A discussion was held surrounding the draft amendments to the Village SPS and LUB and it was determined that the Senior Planner will provide a summary report to Council with each motion that was made, also referencing which meeting the motion occurred in, and including the highlighted paragraph of the minutes where it is referenced.

8. CORRESPONDENCE:

8.1 Nicola and Brett Mudford – Email correspondence: Lot coverage & what is included in lot coverage calculations (email)

The Senior Planner gives an overview of the email received. A discussion was held, and it was determined that historically we have always counted decks as part of lot coverage, as well as anything within five feet of the main building. It affects the character and streetscape which is why we limit them. The R1 Zone is proposed to have a new lot coverage of 25% of the total lot area, there is also a maximum allowable footprint.

Following some recent Developments, we received some public feedback through the office and through Council, and it was thought that some buildings constructed were too large. An architectural study was conducted by a consulting company, the recommendations that followed included the 25% lot coverage, maintaining lot coverage in that zone. In the R2 Zone we have always maintained a form of lot coverage as well, but we changed it to a flat number of meters squared rather than a percentage of a lot. This moves us away from a formula that was based on the size of the lot, the larger the lot, the smaller percentage of lot coverage allowable. There were some conflicts in table 5.6.2 CVR Zone in the current Village Land Use By-Law which resulted in some lots falling under two categories.

In making this change and using a flat number versus a table, the consulting team felt it was more equitable and reflects the existing character of the Village. The Senior Planner suggests that if we change it to a consistent 30% lot coverage across the board which was outlined in Brett's email, it will create incentives for property owners to amalgamate lots and tear down

existing homes. Although it is understood and admired to keep the coverage simple, it is suggested to keep lot coverage on the zones the way they are, which is different in each zone. The committee agreed that lot coverage laid out in the draft Village Land Use By-law should remain the same.

8.2 Response from Nova Scotia Environment – Request for information on On-Site Well Regulations (email)

The email response was circulated. No further discussion was held.

8.3 Direction from Council – conclude recommendations to Village Review Drafts by January 31, 2025

Q. Can we circulate a draft report to the Village Planning Advisory Committee with the motions attached?

A. Chad Haughn, Director of Community Development & Recreation, explains that there won't be an appropriate time to meet and give feedback on the report before it goes to Council. The Senior Planner suggests a representative from the Village Planning Advisory Committee go to Council and speak before the recommendations are given to them. The Senior Planner can then provide any context when necessary.

Q. Is public circulation of the agenda and related documents in advance of the meeting date, similar to what Council does, possible?

A. The Senior Planner explains that the committee will require Council approval for this topic. This is a matter in which all committees are treated equal so a request to Council would need to be made. Director of Community Development & Recreation, Chad Haughn, explains that even though it may be challenging and there may be delays, it is possible. It is not something that has been previously done. The Village Planning & Advisory Committee does need to be consistent with how other committees operate and function.

After a brief discussion, the committee determined that they would be more comfortable with discussing this at a future meeting, when they've had more time to think about it, as well as the impact it may have on staff and Council.

A question was raised about the frequency of future meetings for the Village Planning Advisory Committee. The Senior Planner explains that the standard practice has always been that if

nothing is received from staff, a notice would be sent out saying that the meeting is cancelled. There is always an open call in that email for future agenda items, so we could still hold a meeting without receiving any applications as per the mandate, to discuss planning related issues and make recommendations to Council. We will keep in touch and make that decision before cancelling.

9. NEW BUSINESS:

9.1 Proposed amendments to add residential use permission for “Maple Cottage” at the Lordly House Museum lands, Chester Municipal Heritage Society.

Planner Paul Riley gives an overview of the proposal provided by the Chester Municipal Heritage Society to permit one Residential Rental Unit in the Maple Cottage Building. Current Policies and Zoning do not permit this use in the Institutional Area. This was brought forward to Council for direction in November and the decision was made specifically to permit this one unit in the Institutional Zone as opposed to making a change to the entire Institutional Zoning. The property is a designated Heritage property but there are no proposed changes to the exterior of the building, ensuring that the character of the building remains intact. Currently, there is a washroom accessible to the public that will now serve the Residential Rental Unit. One parking space is required, which will be reviewed by a Development Officer at the time of the Permit Application.

Based on the nature of the proposed use, it doesn't appear to create any land use conflicts with the surrounding uses. A public information session was held on December 4th, 2024, with no public in attendance. There have been no comments received from the public on the proposal. The draft amendments pertain to section 3.5 -Parks, Recreation & Institutions in the Secondary Planning Strategy, and will include adding a couple sentences to the section to describe the proposal and what the rationale was for Council approving the proposal. There will also be a new policy within that section that states one Residential Rental Unit may be permitted through the Land Use By-law on the property. The draft amendment in the Village Land Use By-law is proposed to add to the permitted uses in section 8.2.1 -Institutional (I) Zone, a subsection (C) to permit one Residential Rental Unit with a maximum permitted square footage. The options are, to make a recommendation to Council, to request more information or, to have Council re-consider whether they want to proceed or not.

Q. I thought the washroom was for the use of the Lordly House. So, if that becomes part of the Residential Unit, Lordly House will have no washroom.

A. Representative of the Municipal Heritage Society, Wayne Cameron, explains the intent was to explore the ability to install a washroom in Lordly House, however that option was very costly. Alternatively, the option to install a washroom in the basement of Maple Cottage was more cost effective as the plumbing is pre-existing. We will be proceeding with the alternative option to install one in the basement of Maple Cottage which will serve Lordly House.

Q. It says with maximum floor area, but it doesn't say floor area 'of' so many, is that intentional or how is it to be interpreted?

A. Senior Planner clarifies the proposed draft amendment to the Land Use By-Law, which is a maximum floor area on the main floor of 52 square meters. The policy amendment doesn't specify the number, it is included in the Land Use By-law amendments sent to committee members.

Q. Is the person in the Residential Unit going to go to the basement to use the washroom?

A. Representative of the Municipal Heritage Society, Wayne Cameron explains, no, there is currently a washroom on the main floor of Maple Cottage utilized by Lordly House & Maple Cottage. With the Residential Unit being created, we will no longer have a public washroom available.

Q. Why is it being done by changing Land Use By-Laws versus a Variance?

A. Senior Planner explains that the MGA which gives us our authority specifies what is eligible as a Variance and the number of dwelling units on a lot is not something that is eligible for a variance.

2025-028 MOVED by Syd Dumaresq and SECONDED by Tom Bremner for the Village Planning Advisory Committee to recommend to Council to approve one Residential Rental Unit at Maple Cottage without a square footage limit. ALL IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

10. ANY OTHER PLANNING MATTERS:

10.1 Call for any other Planning Matters

10.2 None

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

11.1 February 11, 2025 (tentative) - beginning at 3:00 in Municipal Council Chambers

12. ADJOURNMENT:

2025-029 MOVED by Syd Dumaresq meeting adjourn 5:15 P.M. MOTION CARRIED.

Sara Filbee
Chairperson

Lori-Ann Harnish
Administrative Assistant