

**NORTH WEST PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
PUBLIC MEETING**

January 12, 2006

PRESENT: Mr. Joel Matheson, Chair
Mr. Walter Regan
Mr. George Murphy
Ms. Ann Merritt
Mr. Warren Hutt
Mr. David Grace
Ms. Gloria Lowther

REGRETS: Councillor Len Goucher
Ms. Barb Grant

STAFF: Mr. Andrew Bone, Planner I
Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant

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1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Cafeteria of Basinview Drive Community Elementary School, 273 Basinview Drive, Bedford.

2. Case 00790 - Proposed Amendments to the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law for Bedford relative to flag lot provisions.

A report dated October 12, 2005, originally submitted at the October 25, 2005 meeting of Halifax Regional Council was submitted.

Mr. Andrew Bone, Planner 1, provided a presentation outlining why staff was considering amendments to the Bedford Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw as it relates to flag lots. Mr. Bone began his presentation with an explanation of a Flag Lot; and referring to Policy R-27, he elaborated on what the Bedford Municipal Plan presently permits in regard to Flag Lots. Mr. Bone reviewed the options staff are considering. In his remarks, Mr. Bone advised that as a result of concern expressed at a Public Hearing held in March 2005 concerning a flag lot on Shore Drive, Community Council passed a motion for staff and the North West Planning Advisory Committee to review this matter.

Mr. Bone advised that staff are not recommending removal of the policy, recognizing that there are some planning advantages to flag lots, but are proposing a combination of the policies that would maintain flag lots and ensuring better protection to surrounding neighbours. He suggested aspects the Committee may want to consider are: zoning, i.e. permit only R-1 zoning. Mr. Bone noted that, at the present time, technically, a semi-detached building or townhouse could be placed on a flag lot if it met the requirements. Mr. Bone pointed out that putting a 'cap' on flag lots in a particular area may be worthwhile to consider in the policy. Mr. Bone advised that infilling may also be a consideration for the policy, explaining that a number of water lots along Shore Drive are pre-confederation and, as such, if they receive approval from Department of Fisheries and Oceans, then they are permitted to infill. Mr. Bone noted the possibility of someone infilling their water lot to create extra land, and then submitting an application for a flag lot.

In concluding his remarks, Mr. Bone advised that this matter is not a large problem, adding that staff have only received three or four applications over the past 10 years. He noted that when an application does come up though, it creates significant discussion in the community. Mr. Bone added that once he completes a thorough analysis on the exact number of flag lots which would meet the minimum requirements, he believed it would be significantly lower than the potential 267 lots which are shown on the maps. For purposes this evening, he suggested a more realistic number is approximately 160.

The following comments were put forward by Committee members and members of the public:

Mr. George Murphy (NWPAC Member) advised that he was supportive of the Development Agreement approach to flag lot applications, and he was also supportive of addressing in the policy the issue of infilling of water lots in attempt to create additional land for a Flag Lot.

Mr. David Grace (NWPAC Member) indicated he did not support flag lots.

Susan O'Boyle, addressed the Committee and advised that she was a real estate agent in the area. Ms. O'Boyle advised that she was very surprised to hear of the potential to create approximately 160 additional flag lots and she suggested the general public is unaware of this aspect. Ms. O'Boyle advised that the mapping made available to the public by staff should note which properties have flag lot potential. She also suggested that future meeting notices which staff provide to the newspaper should be more descriptive. Ms. O'Boyle advised that the ad for this meeting was quite vague.

Mr. Hugh MacPherson, Bedford, addressed the Committee and advised that he bought his home on First Avenue in 1972 and, at that time, he also purchased the lot behind his house, and which fronted on Second Street. Mr. MacPherson noted that he purchased the additional lot for a retirement investment; however, Second Street has now been closed. He advised that he was now looking toward retirement and, with a landlocked piece of property, he questioned how the proposed recommendation would impact him. Mr. MacPherson pointed out the low turnout of concerned people at this meeting, therefore, he suggested staff maintain status quo.

A gentleman addressed the Committee and indicated that he was a resident of Sackville. He advised that he was attending the meeting for information purposes, noting that he owns a piece of property in Sackville which he was considering for application for a flag lot.

3. Adjournment

There being no one else wishing to speak, the Chair thanked members of the public and staff and the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Sheilagh Edmonds
Legislative Assistant

