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**TO:** Western Region Community Council

**SUBMITTED BY:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Wayne T. Stobo, Chair, Halifax Watershed Advisory Board

**DATE:** May 21, 2004

**SUBJECT:** Recommendations - Case 00531:Woodhaven R.V. Campground

### **ORIGIN**

On 17th March, 2004, an application for a development agreement for the Woodhaven R.V. Campground on Hammonds Plains Road was presented to the Board by Planning staff. This proposal was first reviewed by the Board in 1997. Although a development agreement was approved at that time, the applicant did not sign it. Since then, the campground has expanded several times without the necessary approvals. The owner is now applying for a development agreement in order to rectify the situation.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Watershed Advisory Board appreciates this opportunity to review the Woodhaven Campground Application and to make the following recommendations which are related specifically to the protection of the watershed and the natural environment. The Board is concerned that the effluent from the sewage treatment plant (STP) on the site is piped directly into a low-flowing watercourse about 60 metres away.

1. a) The Board recommends that the effluent from the STP no longer be piped directly into the watercourse, but rather that a contour disposal field be constructed in the vicinity of the sewage treatment plant to allow for the dispersal of the effluent through the soil before it enters the watercourse. The contour bed should be located as close to the STP as possible to maximize the distance that the effluent will travel through the soil prior to entering the watercourse.

- b)** If the recommendation for the contour disposal field (1a) is not included as part of the development agreement, the Board still recommends cessation of direct piping of the effluent into the watercourse. To achieve cessation without a contour disposal field, the Board feels that the status of the sewage treatment effluent outflow must be assessed and a receiving water study be conducted on the brook to determine if an effluent/receiving water ratio of no more than 1:5 (the standard ratio with the NSDE&L) can be maintained. If that ratio does not exist, or cannot be maintained, then an engineered wetland should be created to polish the effluent before it enters the watercourse.
2. The Board recommends that, if the campground is extended again, or converted to year-round use, HRM should require that an enhanced STP be installed.
3. The Board feels that the level of sampling at the STP is inadequate because this is a seasonal operation and thus the STP will most likely not be functioning optimally for the first month or so of the camping season. Under these circumstances monthly monitoring should be mandatory and sampling should occur on weekends due to the higher level of usage of the campground on weekends.

The Board **also recommends the following, related to the STP:**

- a)** the plant should be operated by a licensed STP operator, and that it be monitored on a monthly basis. Annual reports should be submitted to HRM Planning Department, the NSDE&L and the Halifax Watershed Advisory Board.
- b)** a monitoring/assessment report including the classification, capacity and type of the plant, operating conditions, and possible requirement for "seeding" each Spring, should be provided and signed by the certified operator or, preferably, an independent third party.
- c)** operational reports should be provided in accordance with the requirements of NSDE&L as part of the permit to operate. Sampling should be conducted monthly and reports should include sampling for both influent and effluent, as well as flow rates. Samples should be confirmed as 24 hour composites and testing for fecal bacteria should be included.
- d)** a review should be undertaken under the Department of the Environment and Labour's new regulations that provide for the review of existing permits for the upgrading of a sewage treatment plant to meet changing conditions and any new standards, and if possible upgrading of the STP be required.
4. The Board further recommends that the brook be tested for fecal coliform downstream from where the filtered effluent would be entering the watercourse, on a monthly basis from April to September, and if levels exceed NSDE&L standards, that the owner be required to institute

further remedial action.

5. The Board recommends that the entire remaining woodland area between the campground and the wetland to the West of the site be maintained as an undisturbed buffer zone to protect the watercourse from surface run-off.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The campground has 250 campsites, of which about half have full services (water & sewage hook ups), half partial services (water only) or no services. The terrain is fairly level where the camp sites are situated. On the western side of the site there is a partially wooded slope which descends to a low-lying wetland bordering a watercourse. The change in elevation is about 12 metres.

The effluent from the sewage treatment plant on the site is piped directly into a low-flowing watercourse about 60 metres away. This watercourse then runs into a fairly extensive wetland before passing beneath the highway, across some agricultural land, into a larger wetland and eventually into Baptising Lake.

The plant itself is an older model and would not meet today's standard for discharge into a small watercourse, though it does currently operate under an approval in accordance with its approved design capability for secondary treatment. At the request of the HRM Planning Department, the campground began to monitor the effluent from the STP in 2003.

Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-6520.

c.c: Richard Harvey, Planner II  
Woodhaven R.V. Campground