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North West Community Council
July 8, 2010

TO: Chair and Members of North West Community Council

SUBMITTED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ken Reashor".

Ken, Reashor, P.Eng., Acting Director, Transportation and Public Works

DATE: May 18, 2010

SUBJECT: **Truck Traffic on Hammonds Plains Road between Pockwock Road
and Stillwater Lake**

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Northwest Community Council meeting, public participation, March 25, 2010.

BACKGROUND

Dorman Thomas Skinner, White Hills, asked why the road that runs from the Pockwock Road to Stillwater Lake is being utilized as a controlled access highway section. The road is dangerous and there are problems with heavy truck traffic. He commented that controlled access highways are areas such as Akerley Boulevard, Wright Avenue and Cogswell Street and noted that his area is designated residential with a commercial atmosphere. He requested Community Council contact staff to identify whether the truck bylaws can be enforced. The speed has been reduced on the Hammonds Plains Road from 90 km/hr to 80 km/hr, which is still higher than most residential areas.

Ms. Byrne commented that there is signage at the end of the Kearney Lake Road indicating the area is a non-truck route.

Mr. Skinner further commented that the Hammonds Plains Road has well over 20,000 vehicles travelling on it daily. It is difficult for residents within the neighbouring subdivisions to get in and out of their streets.

Deputy Mayor Johns advised that Mr. Skinner's concern is similar to a concern raised by Nick Antoff, Chair of the Waterstone Neighbourhood Association. He requested Mr. Skinner's concerns be forwarded to the RCMP and staff. He further requested this matter be added to the Status Sheet and indicated he would follow up with Mr. Antoff regarding this matter.

DISCUSSION

Mr. Skinner raised a number of items:

1. What is meant by a "controlled access highway"?
2. Can "heavy truck traffic" be reduced in volume?
3. The number of vehicles per day on this section of Hammonds Plains Road.

Controlled Access Highway

In the HRM Controlled Access Highway By-Law the intent is defined as:

The purpose of this by-law is to promote the safe and efficient ingress and egress to specific Halifax Regional Municipality streets in the interest of public safety, convenience and general welfare; to protect the public investment in streets by preventing premature functional obsolescence; to reduce accidents caused by frequent and poorly designed points of access; to promote the balanced use of land for the mutual protection of land owners, motorists and Halifax Regional Municipality; and to enhance the street appearance by making street travel more pleasant. This by-law also provides for the review and approval of proposed new points of access onto streets designated as "controlled access."

As shown, the purpose of making a roadway "controlled access" is not to govern what sort of

vehicles are permitted to use that street, but instead what sort of driveways or side roads are allowed to connect to it. Mr. Skinner cited as examples of controlled access roadways Akerley Boulevard, Wright Avenue, and Cogswell Street. In all of these cases there is no restriction on truck traffic. Akerley Boulevard is not a controlled access street in HRM By-Law S-900, Wright Avenue is controlled access only between Burnside Drive and Highway 118, and only the Cogswell Interchange (not Cogswell Street) is controlled access.

Heavy Truck Traffic

The HRM Truck Route By-Law, By-Law T-400, generally prohibits trucks over 3,000 kilograms weight from operating on Hammonds Plains Road anywhere between Highway 102 in Bedford and Highway 103 in Tantallon.

There is an exemption in the By-Law to allow for local service. This lets trucks be operated along that section of Hammonds Plains Road to make deliveries or pickups, or to be stored overnight.

The actual language in the By-Law is:

- 4 (3)(i) A person may, for the purpose of making a delivery or collection of goods or supplying a service at a location off a truck route and while using truck routes until unable to continue to do so, drive the truck on those highways forming the most direct accessible connection between the nearest truck route and the delivery point, collection point or service point for merchandise or materials, and shall also return to the truck route by those highways forming the most direct accessible connection.*
- (ii) Where the person has a subsequent delivery or collection to make, or subsequent service to provide, in the same area, he may proceed to make the subsequent delivery or collection or service before proceeding by the most direct accessible connection to the nearest truck route.*
- (iii) If any truck is stored at a location off the truck route, a person may drive the truck to and from the place where it is stored, and in so doing shall drive it on those highways forming the most direct, accessible connection between the storage location and a truck route.*

It is key to note the phrase “most direct accessible connection” repeated in each part. That requires the truck driver to use the shortest route that the vehicle can travel from the service point which is off a truck route back to a truck route. So, for example, a driver of a truck over 3,000 kilograms weight servicing construction at the four-pad arena must return to Highway 102 – he cannot drive to Tantallon because he is “already off of the truck route”.

Enforcement officers, typically Halifax Regional Police, RCMP, or Province of Nova Scotia Vehicle Compliance officers, are allowed to require truck drivers to stop and show their bills of lading or similar papers, to prove that their trip is not in violation of the Truck Route By-Law. They do not have to follow the truck from one end of the no-through-trucks section to the other.

There are two ways to penalize a violating driver. One, a Summary Offence Ticket can be written

for violating the HRM By-Law. That has a penalty of \$225.21 and no demerit points. Another method is to write a Summary Offence Ticket for violating a sign or signal under Section 83(2) of the Motor Vehicle Act. That has a penalty of \$167.71 (first offence) and 2 demerit points, plus the driver is required to notify his or her employer. (The Registrar sends out an annual driver's abstract anyway.)

For the first Summary Offence Ticket to be written no signs are required. Signs are required for the second method. The second method is preferred by enforcement agents in spite of the lower fine because of the demerit points – a professional driver will be wary of collecting these.

At the Highway 102 and Highway 103 connections of Hammonds Plains Road there are five large signs stating that through trucks are prohibited. At the Bedford end there are signs on each approach of Highway 102 as well as on Hammonds Plains Road itself coming from Bedford. In Tantallon there is a sign on inbound Highway 103 and on Hammonds Plains Road coming from Highway 3. There is no sign on Highway 103 outbound because the signs are expensive and such a sign is not needed because for through trucks another route would have been chosen back in Halifax – i.e. Highway 102. There is also a sign where Kearney Lake Road meets Hammonds Plains Road showing drivers of through trucks they should be turning right.

Traffic Volumes

A traffic count taken in November, 2009 on Hammonds Plains Road adjacent to Nottingham Drive showed a 24-hour weekday traffic volume of 11,200 vehicles, not 20,000 as Mr. Skinner said. Also in November 2009 a traffic count on Hammonds Plains Road at Giles Drive, much closer to Bedford, was 20,000 vehicles per day. A May 2008 traffic count on Hammonds Plains Road taken between Rockcliffe Crescent and Northwood Road showed a 24-hour weekday volume of 10,960 vehicles. A volume of 11,000 vehicles per day is consistent with the design and designation of this part of Hammonds Plains Road as a rural arterial. The idea of restricting new driveways and side road connections (“controlled access designation”) to allow for good traffic flow fits with this concept.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

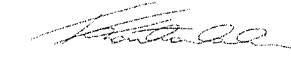
This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

Truck Traffic on Hammonds Plains Road between Pockwock Road and Stillwater Lake
North West Community Council Report - 5 - **July 8, 2010**

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/cc.html> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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Report Approved by:



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