



**REGIONAL WATERSHEDS ADVISORY BOARD
REVISED MINUTES
APRIL 9, 2014**

PRESENT: Richard Hattin, Vice-Chair
Adam Fancy
Walter Regan
Tom Mills
Peter Lund
Mark McLean
Dr. Dusan Soudek

REGRETS: Allan Billard, Chair
Pierre Clement
Timothy Hayman
Dr. Barry Thomas

STAFF: Cameron Deacoff, Environmental Performance Officer
Marcus Garnet, Senior Planner
Jane Crosby, Legislative Support

The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.

The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to the Board are available online: <http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/rwab/index.php>

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m., and the Board adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Vice-Chair called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. in the Helen Creighton Room, 2nd floor, Alderney Public Library, 60 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – March 12, 2014

A typographical error was noted. It was also noted that the meeting location was incorrect.

MOVED by Mr. Regan, seconded by Mr. Lund, that the Regional Watersheds Advisory Board minutes of March 12, 2014, be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

Mr. Regan asked if it was possible to get an update on HRM's water quality testing program. Mr. Deacoff responded that the program has been cancelled.

Mr. Mills indicated that perhaps the major forest fire in the Lake Echo - Mineville area would impact the Preston area watershed study that was presented to the Board by AECOM. The Board agreed that this event would perhaps have an impact on the watershed.

Additions:

- 8.1 Forest Fire Impact on the Preston Lake Watershed Study

MOVED by Mr. Regan, seconded by Mr. Fancy, that the agenda be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES - None

5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS

5.1 Model Community Environmental Section

This item is deferred until the May 14, 2014 meeting.

5.2 Musquodoboit Harbour Watershed Studies

The following information was before the Board:

- A staff recommendation/information report dated February 24, 2014

Regional Watersheds Advisory Board Minutes
April 9, 2014

Mr. Marcus Garnet, Senior Planner with HRM introduced himself and Mr. Gordon Smith, Planner with CBCL. Mr. Garnet provided the Board with an introductory presentation of the Musquodoboit Harbour watershed studies.

Mr. Garnet noted that the origin of the study was Policy E-17 of the 2006 Regional Municipal Planning Strategy and also the Community Vision Action Plan Goal I-1, exploring options for water and sewer in the Musquodoboit Village core. He explained the two watershed studies and what each one involved. He noted that the initial study looked only at medium growth scenarios. The follow-up study, at the request of the community, examined low, medium and high growth scenarios.

Mr. Garnet explained that the first study was to identify opportunities for development in the community and on the peninsula between Musquodoboit Harbour and the Petpeswick Inlet. The study would also develop a plan showing all land suitable for development, with recommended densities and services. The second study was initiated to optimize the general concepts and costs presented in the 2007 study. Mr. Garnet indicated that the second study would also integrate local knowledge and expertise, as well as recommend potential servicing schemes for the area. He then presented the objectives of the follow-up study.

Mr. Gordon Smith began his presentation and noted that he would be providing the Board with an overview of the two studies.

A map showing the location for the studies was presented and Mr. Smith indicated that it isn't the entire watershed. He then described some of the component studies that were completed, including groundwater, receiving water quality, and surface water. Various maps were presented showing sensitive areas and marine habitat.

Mr. Smith indicated that CBCL completed a survey of the people living in the area. He presented the findings of this survey but noted that participation was low. He noted that participants were asked what they felt were potential sources of contamination. Replies included concerns with agricultural run-off from the Musquodoboit Valley, failing septic systems, and an old landfill site.

The study also looked at residential and industrial desirability. Mr. Smith presented a development suitability map and noted areas that were better locations for development, as well as areas that should be considered "no-go" areas. Mr. Smith presented the conclusion of the original study noting that there was sufficient developable land, and with essential service systems a population of approximately 7050 could be supported. He also noted the constraints in the area such as potable water and the lack of assimilative capacity. Mr. Smith explained the highlights of the follow-up study to the Board and concluded his portion of the presentation.

Mr. Garnet presented a technical overview, available servicing options, as well as configurations and costs. He indicated that three serviceable parcels of land were identified by CBCL. The technical options that were explored for the area were presented and include the following for servicing: Water only, sewer only, and sewer and water. The technical options for sewage

treatment plant were presented and include: Secondary with trunk corridor extension, tertiary with no corridor extension.

Mr. Garnet then presented the potential servicing plan developed by CBCL. He noted that the water only scenario was looked at more earnestly as it was considered to be one of the more feasible servicing options. He explained the estimated minimum capital costs associated with the various scenarios that were explored. Mr. Garnet indicated that piped services would technically be feasible; however they are very expensive and risk arises from uncertainty about future growth.

In conclusion, Mr. Garnet explained that although servicing would be ideal, there is too much risk associated with implementing services. As a result of the findings of this project, a decision was made during the RP5 review that HRM could not provide piped sewer or water services to the area. Thus, it was recommended that Musquodoboit Harbour be downgraded from a rural district centre to a rural local centre. Mr. Garnet concluded his presentation and invited questions from the Board.

The Vice-Chair asked for a review of the study objectives. Mr. Smith reviewed the follow-up study objectives and noted that the assimilative capacity could be increased by addressing faulty sewer systems. He also indicated that the Musquodoboit and Little Rivers could be used as surface water provided they were treated. In response to a question from Mr. McLean, Mr. Smith explained that there was enough flow in the rivers that you could draw from them without having negative impacts.

Mr. Lund asked if pesticides were explored as a possible contaminant, considering there is so much impact coming from upstream agricultural activities. Mr. Smith explained that they didn't look specifically at pesticides. Mr. Mills asked who the existing wells were being used by. Mr. Smith explained that they found two of the three wells, but they are not currently being used for water supply.

Mr. Regan asked if CBCL conducted any floodplain mapping. Mr. Smith explained that they did not, however they created a buffer based on the standards presented in the HRM Regional Plan. Mr. Regan asked about the sewage treatment at the High School, the Hospital and The Birches. Mr. Smith indicated that there is one sewage treatment plant for all three facilities. CBCL did not perform any tests there; however they looked at the records from the treatment plant and it was found to be operating within the parameters. Mr. Regan expressed that there should be mandatory pump out of septic tanks. Mr. Mills asked why a wastewater management district wasn't considered. He expressed that this would correct some of the historic problems that have occurred. He noted that there is no assimilative capacity for growth; however development would likely still occur. Mr. Smith explained that if properties were properly developed, there should not be a problem.

Mr. Fancy asked if there was an ideal population growth identified for the area. Mr. Garnet responded that they looked at low, medium and high scenarios. The low or medium scenario would be more likely. Dr. Soudek commented that it is disappointing that pipe servicing is not feasible for the area.

Mr. Lund asked if sampling was done for the wells that serve the Hospital and High School. Mr. Smith responded that no testing was done for this well. Mr. Lund expressed concern with regards to water quality due to the bedrock found in the region. Mr. Garnet explained that water quality is likely an issue considering the High School has their water trucked in. Mr. Mills added that arsenic in the water is an issue in the area.

Mr. Regan asked if the old landfill site was investigated as a potential source of contamination. Mr. Smith indicated that they attempted to explore it, but they were not able to find any evidence of the landfill site. Mr. Mills noted that there is substantial development occurring just outside the study area. He explained that this development would have an impact on both the Musquodoboit and Little Rivers. He added that a wastewater management district would be necessary to increase the assimilative capacity.

The Board entered into a brief discussion on the staff report recommendation. Several members proposed supplementing the suggested recommendation with additional items. After concluding their discussion the following motion was put:

MOVED by Dr. Soudek, seconded by Mr. Lund, that the Regional Watersheds Advisory Board recommends that Harbour East-Marine Drive Community Council:

- 1. Accept the Musquodoboit Harbour Watershed Study Final Report and the Musquodoboit Harbour Follow-Up Study Final Report as background for future community planning.**
- 2. Recommend that the Environment & Sustainability Standing Committee request a staff report to consider the following further recommendations, including identifying any policy changes that would be required, financial implications associated, or jurisdictional issues that may arise through these recommendations:**
 - a) The Musquodoboit Harbour area study area be considered as a wastewater management district in order to improve the assimilative capacity of the Musquodoboit and Little Rivers. This wastewater management district is to include both the Musquodoboit and Little River watersheds.**
 - b) HRM conduct a floodplain mapping study of the Musquodoboit and Little River watershed.**
 - c) Discharges from all constructed wastewater treatment plants and stormwater management systems be routinely sampled and tested to ensure no net impact on receiving waters, including all HRM owned and operated facilities.**
 - d) HRM develop a plan for regular maintenance of on-site septic systems, to include a schedule for mandatory septic tank pump-outs.**
 - f) HRM consider water quality monitoring within the Musquodoboit and Little River.**

- g) HRM write a letter to the Province of Nova Scotia recommending that they upgrade the water systems on their properties to meet current standards.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS - None

7. REPORTS/DISCUSSION - None

8. ADDED ITEMS

8.1 Forest Fire Impact on the Preston Lake Watershed Study

The Board discussed the impact that the forest fire in the Lake Echo area may have on the Preston area watershed study that was presented by AECOM. The Board asked if staff could ask AECOM whether this was considered during the study. Mr. Deacoff indicated that he could direct the question to the consultants.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – May 14, 2014, 5:00pm, Helen Creighton Room, 2nd floor, Alderney Public Library, 60 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

Jane Crosby
Legislative Support

INFORMATION ITEMS

- 1. Correspondence from Soil & Water Conservation Society of Metro Halifax dated February 23, 2014, re: Morris Lake, Dartmouth
 - 2. Subdivision Transmittal Form dated March 19, 2014, re: Lynnett Road Subdivision, Spryfield
 - 3. HRM Reports of Interest to the Regional Watershed Advisory Board, dated April 3, 2014
-