



**REGIONAL WATERSHEDS ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
February 10, 2016**

PRESENT: Mr. Walter Regan, Chair
Ms. Kelly Schnare, Vice Chair
Ms. Darlene Fenton

REGRETS: Ms. Meredith Clayden
Mr. Russell Dmytriw
Mr. Pierre Clement

STAFF: Peter Duncan, Manager, Infrastructure
Andrew Reid, Legislative Assistant
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/>*

The meeting was called to order at 5:07 p.m., and the Board adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:07 p.m. in the Helen Creighton Room, 2nd floor, Alderney Public Library, 60 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth.

Mr. Reid and The Chair indicated that Mr. Dmytriw would be taking a short leave of absence from the Board for work related reasons.

MOVED by Ms. Fenton, seconded by Ms. Schnare

THAT Mr. Dmytriw be permitted to take a three month absence from the Board.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 13, 2016

MOVED by Ms. Fenton, seconded by Ms. Schnare

THAT the Regional Watersheds Advisory Board minutes of January 13, 2016, be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

MOVED by Ms. Fenton, seconded by Ms. Schnare

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE

5. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST – NONE

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS – NONE

8. INFORMATION ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD – NONE

9. REPORTS/DISCUSSION

9.1.1 Lot Grading Bylaw and Storm Water Bylaw – Update

The Chair welcomed Mr. Peter Duncan, Manager of Infrastructure, Policy and Standards with Planning and Development. Mr. Duncan provided the Board with an update on the Lot Grading and Storm Water Bylaw.

Mr. Duncan shared background information on the Storm Water Functional plan and Policy SU-7 from the Regional Plan. He explained amendments made to the Regional Plan in 2014. He indicated that the

policy's purpose is to protect existing development from flooding, as well as the environment and water resources from adverse effects associated with land development. He noted that the policy did not scope out what the contents of the bylaw should be and indicated that he has been working on this. Mr. Duncan also explained that prior to the Regional Plan amendments in 2014, several white papers were completed. One paper, in particular, recommended that a lot grading bylaw is all that is necessary for low density residential development. The storm water bylaw would focus on higher density developments.

Mr. Duncan provided information on the lot grading bylaw noting that Halifax County had a bylaw which was used as a starting point and Council requested that it be extended to the municipality as a whole with several changes. Mr. Duncan indicated that a set of standards has been created and he believes a report on this bylaw will be going to Council on February 26th, 2016.

Ms. Fenton inquired about timelines for soil exposure during the development and landscaping of a lot. Mr. Duncan responded that there is a nine month time period of allowed exposure and indicated that it is likely that these time frames will be reviewed and revised. Mr. Duncan noted that a nine month period is given due to seasonal timing. Ms. Fenton asked if the lot grading bylaw would apply to an entire subdivision property before it is divided into individual lots. Mr. Duncan replied that it would be the individual homeowner lots that will need to comply with the lot grading bylaw. Ms. Fenton commented that in some cases a development will strip a large area of vegetation all at once and that this type of activity can lead to sedimentation. She asked if the lot grading bylaw would address this issue. Mr. Duncan answered that the storm water bylaw would speak to this issue rather than the lot grading bylaw.

Ms. Fenton asked if the lot grading bylaw would apply to existing lots. Mr. Duncan replied that the bylaw would only apply to new construction and development. He added that at some point in the future the bylaw may apply to older, existing lots due to the addition of features such as swimming pools and sheds.

Mr. Duncan provided the Board with information on the storm water bylaw and explained that the bylaw would apply to everything other than 1 unit, 2 unit and townhouse developments. He provided examples of the type of developments to which it would apply. Mr. Duncan explained that the storm water bylaw will cover sedimentation and erosion control plans for all development. He added that it will also regulate best management practices in certain circumstances and ensure that a watershed study be carried out. In addition, it will regulate the maintenance of privately owned storm water systems.

Ms. Fenton commented on some of the problems with paved surfaces and storm water management. She noted that this often has to do with the design of a development and asked if the storm water bylaw would speak to this issue. Mr. Duncan indicated that there is already a provision in the engineering standards that addresses this issue; therefore it is not included in the storm water bylaw.

Ms. Fenton asked if the municipality was ahead of the rest of Canada on these bylaws. Mr. Duncan responded that the municipality is ahead on planning, but slightly behind on implementation. The Board held a brief discussion on this issue.

The Chair shared that he is concerned with silt getting into the Sackville River. Mr. Duncan commented that these issues would be handled through the storm water bylaw. Ms. Fenton asked if the bylaw enforcement officers would be handling sedimentation and erosion controls. Mr. Duncan responded that these officers would most likely be handling the bylaw; however they might also consider deputizing other staff members.

The Chair commented that the Board would like to see a master storm water management plan. He added that the master plans for specific developments do not take the entire watershed into account. He asked if the bylaws would address this issue. Mr. Duncan commented that he would like to attempt this; however he hasn't fully considered how it could be done. The Board entered into discussion on how to stop clay and silt from getting into storm water and who would be held responsible for such events. The Chair mentioned the importance of the various groups involved with a development working together to manage storm water. He expressed the importance of coordination to prevent problems.

The Chair asked if there would be standards for storm water management and lot grading. Mr. Duncan responded that he expects them to be addressed through the bylaw. The Board briefly discussed the challenge with enforcing standards.

The Chair asked what the 100 year flow is considered to be within the municipality. Ms. Fenton asked if any research has been recently completed analyzing the changes to the 100 year flow relating to climate change. Mr. Duncan explained that much of this methodology applies a number of assumptions. The Board and Mr. Duncan briefly discussed storm events.

The Chair inquired about water being directed into the ground. Mr. Duncan confirmed that the bylaw would encourage this. The Chair asked if storm water quality would be defined. Mr. Duncan responded that this would be done through sedimentation parameters and the trophic status of a lake via phosphorous levels. He noted caution in using the phosphorous levels because there are other inputs into such levels beyond new development.

The Board discussed naturalizing retention ponds so they could be used as a habitat. Mr. Duncan agreed that this would be desirable. Ms. Fenton shared some examples used in Winnipeg. The Board discussed having the naturalization of holding ponds being part of the standards.

The Chair commented on the importance of stream gauging. He indicated that it should be part of the bylaw and the standards. The Board discussed the importance of this measure and where these measures could be applied. Ms. Fenton asked if there would ever be an opportunity to work with Academia on an initiative such as stream gauging. Mr. Duncan responded that this would be a good idea; however it is out of his program area.

The Chair asked about including guidelines and regulations for silt clean-up in the bylaw. Mr. Duncan indicated that he is not aware of any at this point. The Chair also asked if floodplain studies could be included as part of the bylaw. Mr. Duncan responded that this could be done and shared some of the work currently being done on floodplains.

Ms. Schnare commented that the update and discussion was very informative. Mr. Duncan shared that the municipality would also be working with Halifax Water on these bylaws.

The Board concluded their discussion and thanked Mr. Duncan for the update on the bylaws. The Board looked forward to having Mr. Duncan return for an update in the Spring.

9.1.2 Approval of 2016 Schedule

The Board unanimously approved the 2016 Regional Watershed Advisory Board meeting schedule.

10. ADDED ITEMS – NONE

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – March 9, 2016.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:45pm.

Jane Crosby
Legislative Support