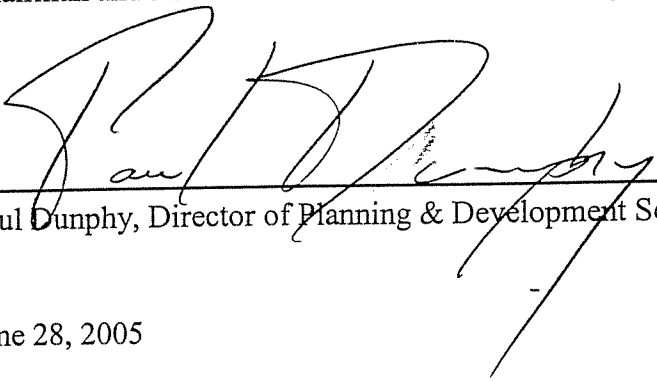




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North West Community Council
July 7, 2005

TO: Chairman and Members of North West Community Council

SUBMITTED BY: 
Paul Dunphy, Director of Planning & Development Services

DATE: June 28, 2005

SUBJECT: Policy P-71, Beaver Bank, Hammonds Plains and Upper Sackville MPS

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

At the June 18, 2002 meeting of North West Community Council, Councillor Johns requested that staff respond as to how Policy P-71 of the Beaver Bank, Hammonds Plains and Upper Sackville Municipal Planning Strategy will be implemented.

BACKGROUND

On August 24, 2000, North West Community Council referred Policy P-71 of the Beaver Bank, Hammonds Plains and Upper Sackville Municipal Planning Strategy to the North West Planning Advisory Committee. At their September 6, 2000 meeting, the North West Planning Advisory Committee asked staff to begin implementation.

Policy P-71 states:

“ With regard to the environmental sensitivity of Springfield Lake, it shall be the intention of Council to take additional measures to protect the lake by establishing the watershed of Springfield Lake as a priority for storm drainage master planning as outlined in Appendix PA of the “Province of Nova Scotia, Municipality of the County of Halifax Recommendations and Stormwater Policy” prepared by Halifax County Storm Drainage Task Force. In order to minimize the impact of stormwater upon natural and manmade environment until such time as the Master Plan is prepared, it shall be the intention of Council to require storm drainage information and design of subdivision and development within the designation, to ensure compliance with municipal policies and criteria.”

Policy 7 of the Stormwater Policy, prepared in February 1982, states:

“ It is the intent to formulate Drainage Master Plans. Plans will be prepared on a priority basis as related to the magnitude of existing storm drainage problems and in rapidly urbanizing areas, mechanisms will be developed in conjunction with the Province, to fund the preparation of Drainage Master Plans.”

DISCUSSION

The former County of Halifax did not allocate funding in the budgetary process to implement Policy P-71 and carry out Storm Drainage Master Plans. However, as per Policy P-71, Halifax County staff and subsequently HRM staff have required storm drainage designs for all subdivisions and new development to ensure compliance with HRM specifications and policies.

In 2000, North West Community Council requested an update on the progress of the implementation of Policy P-71. At that time, staff reported that a major HRM-wide Water Resources Management Study was being conducted. Notwithstanding that there may not be similar policies for other areas, there are similar concerns in other areas of HRM. Therefore, staff undertook the Water Resource study to review stormwater issues across all of HRM. Staff indicated that it would be premature to do any work on a drainage plan specifically for the Springfield Lake until the Water Resources Management Study was completed. The Water Resource Management Study was completed in fall 2003. This document has given staff a framework under which to work.

Staff are in the process of implementing many of the recommendations through the Regional Plan and other initiatives. Notwithstanding Policy P-71, there are numerous competing priorities in HRM. Once approved, the draft regional plan will set future priorities for HRM. The draft regional plan has several proposed policies which incorporate recommendations from the Water Resource Study. Options currently being considered by the Regional Planning team include reviewing all primary watersheds in the near future since watershed analysis will form the basis for future community planning. As a primary watershed, it is anticipated that Springfield Lake would be included in a review. Reviewing all primary watersheds at once would allow for a more efficient process and therefore be more cost effective overall. As well, a comprehensive review would provide valuable information about our watersheds and allow staff to respond to similar inquiries about all watersheds.

The lake monitoring is one outcome of the document which will be initiated as part of the Regional Plan. It is the intention of EMS staff to begin the program in the 05/06 fiscal year. The budget for this work is available under the Regional Planning budget and a terms of reference and scope of work is being prepared by staff in EMS and Regional Planning. Once this work is complete, staff will finalise a list of priority sampling sites. It is anticipated that Springfield Lake may be one of the areas sampled. As well, in master plan study areas, staff are requiring developers to complete baseline analysis of lakes within the master plan areas. There are currently two master planning areas being reviewed. Any priorities for any new master plan areas would be brought to Regional Council for approval.

Irrespective of Policy P-71, staff are currently reviewing the feasibility of decommissioning small sewage treatment plants. EMS staff recently had a consultant complete an engineering design for extension of services from Millwood Drive to Lively Subdivision. Staff will also be reviewing whether it is economically feasible to further extend services to Springfield Lake area and decommission the Springfield Lake sewage treatment plant. The replacement of the sewage treatment plants would provide as much, if not more benefit to the water quality than a stormwater master plan. If determined to be feasible, these projects would have to be prioritized with all other capital projects, through the capital budget process.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications at this time. Options involving capital work will be brought forth to Regional Council for future decision.

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.

Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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