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Item No. 10.1.6

Halifax Regional Council
March 31, 2009

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Dan English".

Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Wayne Anstey".

Wayne Anstey, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer - Operations

DATE: March 17, 2009

SUBJECT: Extension of Central Water Services, Middle Musquodoboit

ORIGIN

- Water main extension along Hwy 224 by Province, 2004, to service the new Musquodoboit Rural High School.
- Petition from property owners along Hwy 224 requesting permission to hook up to the water main tabled with Regional Council on October 28, 2008.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council request staff to:

1. Initiate the process to consider amendments to the Regional Subdivision By-Law and the Musquodoboit Valley/Dutch Settlement MPS to establish a Water Service Area along Highway 224 in Middle Musquodoboit; and
2. Follow the public participation program as approved by Council in February 1997.

BACKGROUND

History:

Middle Musquodoboit is a rural community located on the Musquodoboit River of HRM and acts as a service centre for citizens of the Musquodoboit Valley. The core of the community is serviced by public central water and sewer systems, servicing approximately 300 properties within a defined 'urban service area' boundary (see Map 1).

In 2004, a 150 mm diameter water main was extended to two public schools (Musquodoboit Rural High and Musquodoboit Valley Education Centre) to ensure an adequate supply of potable water for the facilities. The main extends approximately 1150 m easterly along Hwy 224 from the end of the existing water system at Hospital Road. There was no extension of the sewer system, and properties continue to be serviced with on-site septic systems.

This project was undertaken by the Province at its expense. The water main extension took place outside the service boundary as defined in the HRM Regional Subdivision By-Law. At this time the system is defined as a private water lateral.

In discussions held between the Province and HRM during the design phase of the project, it was generally anticipated by the parties that the new system would be taken over by the Halifax Water Commission, thereby becoming a public system, and that connections by abutting property owners would be considered, pending future service boundary amendments. Currently, there are approximately 20 properties along this section of Hwy 224 still using private wells.

The Request

In October 2008, Regional Council received a petition from residents along Hwy 224 requesting permission to access the new water line, citing water quality and quantity issues with existing dug and drilled wells.

Planning Policies

Regional Plan Policy SU-14 outlines criteria for Council's consideration of water service extensions (refer to Attachment 1). The policy criteria speak to the proximity of the lands to a trunk water main, that the area is experiencing water quality or quantity issues or malfunctioning on-site sewage disposal systems.

The Musquodoboit Valley/Dutch Settlement MPS Policy EC-7 states that consideration should be given to extending central services to the Musquodoboit Rural High School upon upgrading the system in the future.

DISCUSSION

In order for properties abutting the new water main to connect to the system, staff advises that amendments are required to the Regional Subdivision By-law: Service Requirement Map Schedule “B”.

From a preliminary analysis, and given the particular circumstances regarding this matter, the proposed amendments to the Regional Subdivision By-law and MPS would appear to be relatively straight forward, for the following reasons:

- water line exists and is in use (as a private water lateral serving the schools)
- water line was designed and installed to Halifax Water standards
- capacity exists in the system to supply the potable water needs for residents abutting the system
- residents have submitted a petition requesting permission to access the water main
- other than relocation of water meters by Halifax Water, the system would be acceptable for take-over as a public system

The primary purpose for this amendment process is to determine the size of the area to be included within the Water Service Area. The current thinking is that this will generally be confined to the approximately 20 properties that abut the water main, however, this will be discussed with the public as part of the consultation program.

In order for Halifax Water to take over the system as a public system and administer the desired connections by the abutting properties, the Subdivision By-law and MPS must be amended, as described above.

The proposed public participation program for this exercise will entail the following:

- Public Meeting with affected property owners to describe the process, determine size of water service area, and confirm their request for hook-up
- Preparation of staff report for recommendation by Marine Drive, Valley and Canal Community Council
- Public Hearing at Regional Council

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

At this time it is understood that the Province will not be seeking compensation from property owners abutting the water main. Therefore, there is no need to introduce a Local Improvement Charge By-law in this case.

To hook up to the system, property owners will be responsible for costs to bring a water lateral from the water main to the dwelling. In addition, a current Capital Cost charge-type of fee exists

within the Middle Musquodoboit service area at a value of \$1,250.00 per new connection to the central system. This will be administered by, and payable to, Halifax Water.

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.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Council could choose to initiate the process to amend the Subdivision By-law and MPS to extend a Water Service Area along Highway 224 in Middle Musquodoboit, as described in this report. This is staff's recommendation.
2. Council could choose to not initiate the process, thus ending any further action on this matter. This alternative is not recommended by staff for reasons described herein.

ATTACHMENTS

Map 1: Existing Middle Musquodoboit Service Boundary and Water Main Extension

Attachment 1: Regional Plan Policy SU- 14

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

Report Prepared by: Roger Wells, Supervisor, Regional and Community Planning, 490-4373

Report Approved by:



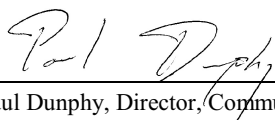
Austin French, Manager, Planning Services, 490-6717

Financial Approval by:

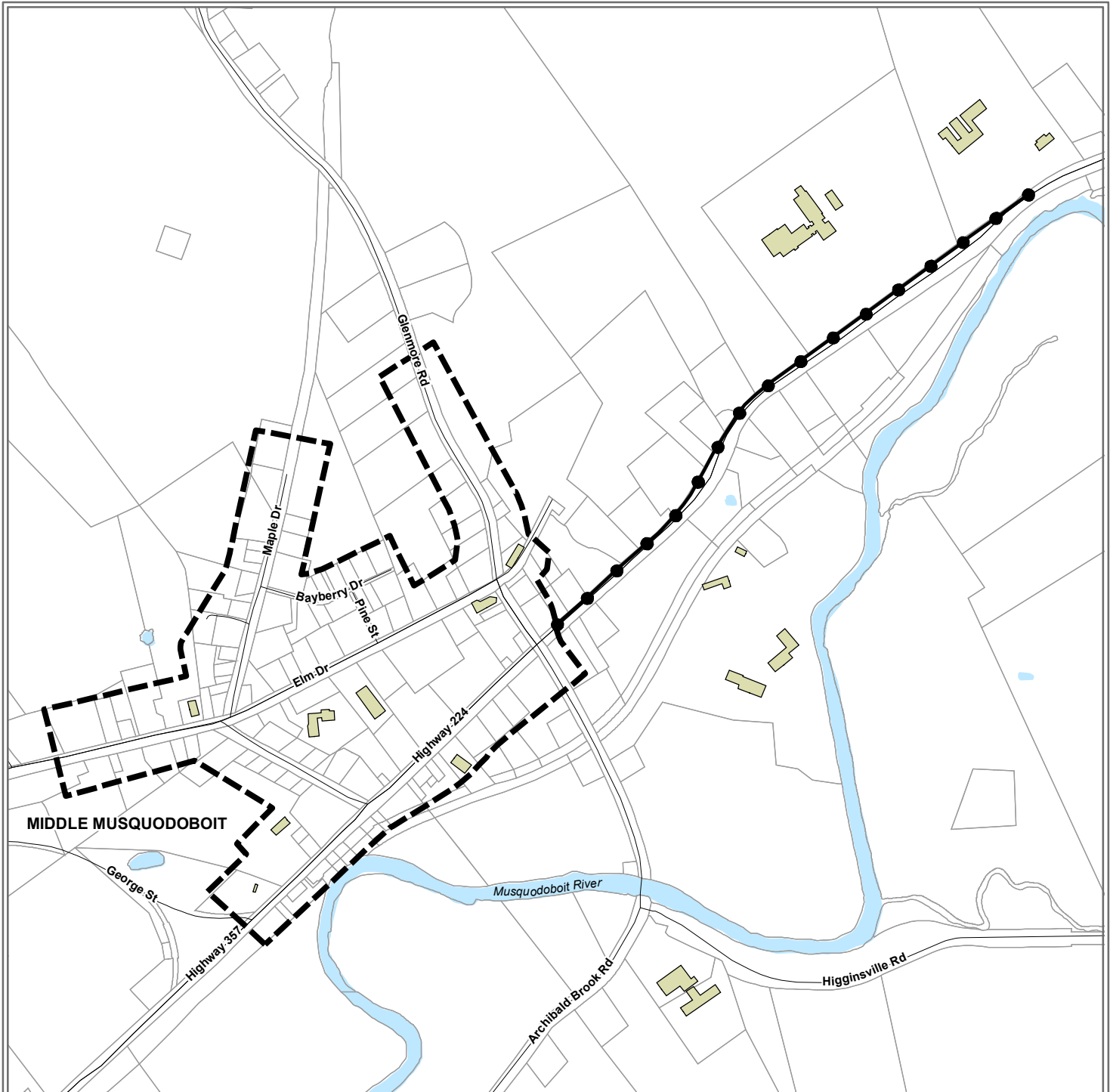


Catherine Sanderson, Senior Manager, Financial Services, 490-1562

Report Approved by:



Paul Dunphy, Director, Community Development



MAP 1

Middle Musquodoboit Serviceable Boundary

March 20, 2009

Legend

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| — Local Streets | Urban Service Area (water and sewer) |
| +++ Active Rail Lines | Property Boundaries |
| Building footprints | Lakes |
| Existing Watermain Extension | |



0 50 100 200
Meters

The following is a graphical representation and although care has been taken to ensure the best possible quality, HRM does not guarantee the accuracy of this document.

HALIFAX
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Attachment 1
Regional Plan Policy SU-14

SU-14 HRM may consider expanding existing Water Service Areas to existing communities, subject to the financial ability of HRM to absorb any costs related to the expansion, if:

- (a) the lands are in proximity to a trunk water main planned or constructed by the Water Commission to improve the performance of the water distribution system;
- (b) a study has been prepared by a qualified person verifying that there is a water quality or quantity problem that cannot reasonably be rectified by an alternative means; or
- (c) there are environmental concerns related to the long-term integrity of on-site sewage disposal systems and a wastewater management plan is also considered in accordance with Policy SU-20.