

FRENCH RIVER SOURCE WATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE

A meeting of the French River Source Water Protection Committee was held at the Tatamagouche Fire Hall on June 24, 2019 at 10:00 am.

Present: Councillor Mike Gregory, Chair
Mayor Christine Blair
Deputy Mayor Geoff Stewart
Perry Swan, Village Commission Rep
Greg Watson, Citizen Rep
Doug Bastow, North Shore River Restoration Group
Kim Baldwin, Citizen Rep
Crawford Macpherson, Director of Community Development
Michelle Newell, Director of Public Works
Michael Allen, Nova Scotia Environment (Watershed Planner)

Regrets: Garth Demont, Department of Natural Resources

Approval of Agenda: The meeting was called to order at 10:15am.

The agenda was approved.

Moved by Greg Watson, Seconded by Doug Bastow.

Item 5b was added to the agenda – ‘Presentation by Mr. David Swan’.

Moved by Greg Watson, Seconded by Perry Swan.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the meeting of May 13, 2019 were approved.

Moved by Mayor Blair, Seconded by Kim Baldwin.

Business Arising: There has been no response from the Province regarding the Mayor’s May 3 letter and the capping of the exploration wells

Review of Open House Sessions: Each Committee member provided their feedback on the two open house sessions.

- Since the draft regulations had not been circulated before the sessions, it was difficult for residents to fully process the information, may have led to some negativity
- There was no intent to hide information by not circulating the draft regulations before the public sessions – the sessions were simply our first step in the consultation process
- The wording of the draft regulations may require some clarity
- The second session appeared to go better than the first
- Many residents felt the regulations weren’t necessary
- A number of items in the proposed regulations are already covered by provincial regulations
- There appeared to be support for proceeding with regulations relating to mining only
- Although there was some opposition to the general concept of regulation, there was little feedback on the

specific components of the draft regulations which were a concern

- There were concerns that the regulations would affect property value
- Outside of the meetings, some Committee members had received feedback in support of protecting the watershed area with regulations

Draft Regulations

The Committee reviewed the draft regulations to discuss which items were already covered by existing provincial regulations.

Mining is regulated by the Province via the Department of Energy and Mines, however other watersheds in the Province have included a prohibition on mining as an added level of protection. In regulating mining, we are stating our position on the level of risk and even if the Province decides to proceed, this approach may get us to the table to provide feedback and input.

Mike Allen to check if any approved regulations will show up as a restrictive covenant or in a title search for any affected properties.

The possibility of property owners seeking compensation was discussed. The general sense was that the draft regulations do not substantially affect land use.

If the regulations are approved and changed at a later date, the changes will still trigger the need for a public consultation process and Council/Provincial approval. De-regulation at a later date is also an option.

Public Survey

The Committee decided to issue a public survey to gain more detailed feedback on the proposed regulations. There was discussion on whether the survey should go to watershed residents only, or also to utility customers and surrounding residences. In the end it was decided that the survey would only go to properties within the watershed area.

Moved by Greg Watson, Seconded by Kim Baldwin.

The proposed draft questionnaire was reviewed with no major changes.

Presentation, David Swan: Mr. Swan gave a power point presentation on the proposed regulations. (Copy of the presentation was provided via email after the meeting and is attached.)

Next Meeting:

Next meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 19th at 10:00am.
Location to be confirmed. (Will be at the Library).

Meeting adjourned at 12:15pm.

Moved by: Doug Bastow

Minutes Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michelle Newell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michelle Newell