

FRENCH RIVER SOURCE WATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE

A meeting of the French River Source Water Protection Committee was held at the Tatamagouche Library on November 27, 2019 at 10:00 am.

Present: Councillor Mike Gregory, Chair
Mayor Christine Blair
Deputy Mayor Geoff Stewart
Perry Swan, Village Commission 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: Greg Watson, Citizen Rep

Approval of Agenda: The meeting was called to order at 10:08 am.
The agenda was approved. Moved by Doug Bastow, seconded by Kim Baldwin. All in favour.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the meeting of October 23, 2019 were approved.
Moved by Mayor Blair, seconded by Doug Bastow. All in favour.

Business Arising: The public meeting was held on November 19th and appeared successful with approximately 30 people in attendance.

An email containing several questions was forwarded to Greg Watson by David Swan. All agreed that this email should be added to the meeting agenda for discussion, as item 6B.

The questions were as follows:

- 1) There is still reference to watercourse rather than 1:50,000 map – see section 7 (1), I don't think this is intended, Right?
- 2) Many of the definitions in section 3 are not used in the regulation. These extraneous definitions should be removed to prevent confusion as to what the new regulations cover.
- 3) A Landfill is not defined. – we have composting piles for fertilizer and we chip large piles of branches – these regular activities appear to be contrary to section 5.
- 4) Does section 7 (3) include ditch clearing by Dept HWY, logging roads, new driveways. All easily exceed 0.4 hectare. Grubbing is an ongoing activity in all road ditches due to natural vegetation growth.
- 5) Section 8 – at the committee meeting 2019 09 18 the discussion was for New Pits only. This appears to have been missed in the draft. There are many small operating pits for personnel and commercial use in the watershed – established in the 1960s. We buy from these pits supporting local economics. e.g. Terry Wilson.

Letter to Energy and Mines:

Energy and Mines noted in their last response to the County that they have no specific date for the release of the RFP for the exploration rights, and they were in the process of hiring a contractor to cap the uncapped drill holes. They are having difficulty finding a contractor, as no companies responded to the public request for quotations. They are having direct discussions with local contractors now.

Summary of Public Meeting Held November 19th:

A summary of the public meeting was distributed with the Committee's meeting package. The meeting was well advertised, and Councillor Gregory placed flyers at the Home Hardware, Needs, Pharmacy, Foodland, Post Office, Shell station and the garage in Oliver.

The meeting was well attended and there was no opposition to the proposed regulations. M. Allen noted that our application for designation will need to show evidence of adequate consultation, and information showing that questions from the public were addressed. We will need to look at the number of attendees from outside of the watershed as well as inside. Information on how we advertised for our meetings will need to be provided.

Review of Draft Regulations:

Crawford reviewed the updated draft regulations with the Committee. Since the public meeting of November 19th, nothing has changed substantially except that some definitions have been removed as they no longer apply to the document. For example, the definition for "forestry" was removed as this activity is currently undergoing a provincial review and is no longer addressed in the draft regulations. The definition for "pesticides" was also removed as the document no longer contains any related regulations. This activity is already regulated by the Province. The definition of "release" was also removed as the term is no longer used in the document.

The definition of "watercourse" should be updated to include only what we present in the document, meaning the French River or any of its tributaries as shown on the 1:50,000 mapping.

A minor change in grammar was made under setbacks.

Crawford agreed to circulate the updated document via email to Committee members.

"The Committee recommends to Council that the draft regulations with the amendments as discussed be approved, and that a formal application for designation of the watershed be submitted to the Province."

Moved by Deputy Mayor Stewart, seconded by Doug Bastow. All in favour.

Email from D. Swan

The Committee discussed the questions from David Swan as follows:

- 1) The definition of watercourse will be made clear and is intended to include only tributaries shown on the 1:50,000 mapping.
- 2) Extraneous definitions have been removed.
- 3) Landfills are not meant to include composting piles. The definition of landfill will be further explored in the final document. M. Allen suggests that the word 'dump' should be removed. The intent is to include landfills, construction and demolition disposal sites and illegal dumping of waste.
- 4) The Committee didn't contemplate controlling ditching and grading activities with the proposed regulations, but there should be some discussions with Nova Scotia Transportation on this matter. The Province should be adhering to the principles in their own Handbook Sedimentation and Erosion Control.
- 5) The regulations do not contain any wording on the retroactivity of the clause on Pits and Quarries. The intent is that this will apply going forward, as is understood by the word 'commence'. This should be reviewed by legal. In any event, we are not prohibiting pits and quarries, only asking for notification.

Mr. Swan also asked how a watercourse is selected to appear on the mapping, however that would be a question for the Province, likely Department of Natural Resources.

**Public Education Initiatives
for 2020:**

There should be a focus on sedimentation, including how to report it and how to prevent it. Discussions with Nova Scotia Transportation on this matter would be beneficial, as their road grading and ditching activities no doubt contribute to sedimentation. We could post at the skidoo club or include the information in a mailout once the designation process is complete.

Greg Watson now sits on a provincial review committee for forestry, and he can provide guidance at the next meeting on how to educate in the area of forestry. David MacMillan of MacMillan Forest Industries may also have some ideas.

Next Meeting:

Next meeting will be held on April 15, 2020 at 10am at the Tatamagouche Library.

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 am.

Michelle Newell