

FRENCH RIVER SOURCE WATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE

A meeting of the French River Source Water Protection Committee was held via Zoom Webinars on November 23, 2021 at 10:00 am.

- Present:** Councillor Mike Gregory, Chair
Mayor Christine Blair
Kim Baldwin, Citizen Rep
Greg Watson, Citizen Rep
- Michelle Boudreau, Director of Public Works
Paul Smith, Acting Director of Community Development
- Absent/Regrets:** Deputy Mayor Geoff Stewart
Doug Bastow, North Shore River Restoration Group
Michael Allen, Nova Scotia Environment (Watershed Planner)
- Approval of Agenda:** An agenda was prepared and circulated for the Committee's review and approval. The following was added under Business Arising:
- 4.a) Videos of Watershed
- Moved by: Kim Baldwin
Seconded by: Mayor Blair
- "That the agenda be approved as amended."
- Motion carried.
- Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the meeting held on November 27, 2019 were circulated for the Committee's review and approval.
- Moved by: Mayor Blair
Seconded by: Kim Baldwin
- "That the Minutes from the meeting on November 27, 2019 be approved as presented."
- Motion carried.
- Business Arising:** None.
- Videos of Watershed:** Greg Watson shared videos of the Byers Brook, Johnson Brook and ditching along Warwick Mountain Road during the recent rain event. The videos showed very heavy flows with heavy sedimentation originating from some areas. The Byers Brook was very turbid and filled with silt due to clear cutting in the area while recent ditching and lack of vegetation contributed to muddy waters flowing from Warwick Mountain Road and feeding into the brook. Greg to save copies of videos on USBs and forward to the County office via councillor Gregory.

While the filters at the water treatment plant can handle the removal of sediment, they will require more frequent cleaning in these situations, which increases operating costs and wear and tear on the equipment.

Committee Terms of Reference:

The Terms of Reference was circulated for information. There is still one vacancy on the Committee: a representative from the Village. Councillor Gregory advised that he will contact Mark LeFresne to see if he would fill the position.

Application, Protected Watershed Designation:

Prior to the last meeting, Mike Allen advised that the Application was currently under review. No correspondence has been received to date. Michelle has sent numerous letters on status updates with no success. Mayor Blair suggested contacting the local MLA or Premier for information. As the local MLA is a former councillor, Mike Gregory will contact him for updates.

Public Education:

Siltation Control:

- Would be beneficial to discuss with NSPW (formerly TIR) as their road maintenance and ditching contributes to sedimentation in the watershed
- NSE has sedimentation and erosion control best practices in place. NSE typically only get involved if sedimentation is affecting aquatic life/entering a watercourse
- It will be challenging to enforce sedimentation control on private properties
- Michelle to draft a letter from the Chair to NSPW on their road maintenance processes and whether or not they implement any sedimentation and erosion control practices

Forestry Practices:

- Michelle contacted James Steenberg at Nova Scotia Lands and Forestry to discuss possible attendance at a future committee meeting. The intent would be to receive information on the Province's progress on the Leahey Report recommendations, and to provide guidance on forestry management within the watershed.
- Mr. Steenberg provided contact information for a number of individuals who are responsible for forestry management in various Halifax watersheds. Michelle to see if they are able to attend a future meeting to discuss experiences on best practices and public education
- Also face challenges with regulating forestry practices on private properties
- Province currently developing regulations on Coastal Erosion, and it is unknown who will be responsible for their implementation
- County can look at addressing watershed protection around development within its municipal planning strategies
- Paul to explore funding programs related to watershed protection and climate change

- Council has directed staff to engage a consultant to develop a forestry management plan which could include guidelines for private property

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 15, 2022 at 10am. Location to be determined.

Adjournment:

Moved by: Greg Watson
Seconded by: Mayor Blair

“That the meeting be adjourned at 10:57 am.”

Motion carried.

Crystal Deuville,
Recording Secretary