

VILLAGE OF NEW MINAS
TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Sept 19, 2006
2:00 p.m.

The regular monthly meeting of the Village of New Minas Transportation Advisory Committee was held on September 19, 2006 at 2:00 p.m. in the Civic Centre.

In Attendance

Chair Dean Hatt
Vice-Chair Dale Pineo
Village Commission Chair Dave Chaulk
Village Superintendent of Public Works Peter Pothier
NS Dept of Transportation and Public Works Area Manager,
Brian Ward

Also In Attendance

Village Commissioner Linda Lockhart
Village Commissioner Les Barrett
Village Engineer Doug Seamone
Gwyn Philips, Resident
Sandra Horley, Resident
David Etter, Resident
Adam Landry, Resident
Robert Farris, Resident
Pam Hill, Office of Hon. David Morse

Regrets:

Pat Saulnier, Committee member
Gordon Silver, Committee member

CALL TO ORDER – Chair Dean Hatt

Chair Hatt called the meeting to order. He thanked everyone for coming.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – Sept 19, 2006

It was moved by D. Pineo, seconded by D. Chaulk, that the Agenda for this meeting of September 19, 2006 be approved as presented. MOTION CARRIED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Regular Monthly Meeting, July 5, 2006

It was moved by D. Chaulk, seconded by D. Pineo that the minutes of the regular TAC meeting held on July 5, 2006 be approved as circulated. MOTION CARRIED

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(a) Transportation Study Update – Doug Seamone

D. Seamone stated that a draft Transportation Study had been distributed to the members, and basically shows the tabulation of traffic counts, accident rates, etc.. He stated it is hoped that a final report may be completed by the end of the month.

Chair Hatt stated that the report looks very well done and he looks forward to receiving the final report. He thanked Doug for his presentation today.

(b) Sidewalk Repairs – Bank of Nova Scotia location – Update P. Pothier

P. Pothier said he is pleased to report that the sidewalk beside the Bank of Nova Scotia on Commercial Street has been repaired.

NEW BUSINESS

(a) Items for Discussion with Mr. Brian Ward, DOTPW:

Chair Hatt thanked Mr. Brian Ward for attending the meeting today, and stated he has been contacted by residents of New Minas about some observations they have that would come under the authority of the Department of Transportation and Public Works.

- Petition – Alders Avenue Residents

Chair Hatt read the Petition (attached to original minutes) which was presented by Mr. Etter to the Village Commission at its regular meeting of September 11th, 2006, and referred to this Committee. He stated that the Commission is anxious to see a resolution to this issue.

- Flashing Lights – Staples Intersection – Chair Hatt

Chair Hatt stated that he has been asked to inquire as to whether DOTPW would have any provision for installing flashing green lights at the “Staples” intersection. This is an area where there seems to be a great deal of hazards and he feels the complaints are justified.

- Street Condition – Minasvale Subdivision, Highbury Road – Chair Hatt

Chair Hatt stated that the residents of Minasvale Subdivision and of Highbury Road have approached him with concerns about the very poor condition of the road surface. He stated that no repairs have occurred in Minasvale for 35 years, the streets are getting narrower because the asphalt is breaking up, and it is getting very dangerous for pedestrians. He stated that the water and sewer services were installed after the roads were construction, which could account for much of the poor condition.

- Four Way Stop – Crescent Avenue – Chair Hatt

Chair Hatt stated that suggestions have been made that DOTPW be requested to erect a four way stop on Crescent Avenue to slow down the traffic.

Mr. Brian Ward, Area Manager of Department of Transportation and Public Works addressed each of the items cited by Chair Hatt:

- Four Way Stop – Crescent Avenue – B. Ward stated that there have been recent counts in this area, and the erection of four way stops, which is a decision of a different department than his area office, must have equal volumes to justify this measure. He will request a continuance of this investigation.
- Flashing Lights – Staples Intersection - B. Ward stated that he is of the understanding that this item is covered in the Traffic Study currently being carried out by Consultants hired by the Village. Doug Seamone confirmed this. Br. Ward went on to state that current configurations of the traffic lights have been investigated by DOTPW involving new loops, video detection, etc., and these items will be considered in next year's budget.

D. Chaulk asked if DOTPW will be addressing the problems with the absence of left-turning traffic at some intersections. B. Ward stated that currently the lights detect where people are and are designed to change when there is no traffic, in order to permit lanes with waiting traffic to move. He stated that changing the lights to the left-turning arrow system is extremely expensive, but he will put forth the question to the decision-makers in Halifax.

- Street Condition – Minasvale Subdivision, Highbury Road - B. Ward stated his Department is aware of the road condition on Highbury Road, and it is hoped that money will be available in 2007 to work on this street. He said that he will investigate the condition in Minasvale and advise the Committee.
- Petition – Aalders Avenue Residents – B. Ward stated that as far as his office is concerned with the Aalders Avenue North Petition and concerns, they have been communicating with some of the residents, with the Village and with the RCMP about the concerns for some time now. He stated as far as the speeding traffic is concerned, DOTPW has no authority to control speeders except to install speed limits, which they have done. This area as a 50 km speed limit. The enforcement of this is up to the RCMP. He stated that DOTPW have conducted recent traffic counts throughout New Minas, and have readily shared the findings with the Village for the Transportation Study. However, he stated that today is the

first he was made aware that the type of traffic is also a concern. At this point, there is very little more that he is able to do.

Chair Hatt read a letter from Gordon Silver, member of this Committee (copy attached to original minutes). G. Silver stated that he could see the problem of excessive and speeding vehicular traffic being solved by the installation of a cul de sac at the intersection off Jones Road and Aalders Avenue North.

OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Cloverleaf Drive – Drainage Problem

Village Commissioner Linda Lockhart asked B. Ward if anything will be done to correct the drainage problem on her property and others in her area, caused by water running off Cloverleaf Drive. B. Ward stated that discussions have taken place over the past number of years, and at one time, the Commission had expressed an interest in cost-sharing putting curbing and piping on Cloverleaf. He stated that DOTPW will pipe and ditch next year, thereby bringing the area back to the original design of Cloverleaf, as approved by DOTPW Engineers, but have no money to curb the area. L. Lockhart stated that it is her understanding that this will not solve the problem. Doug Seamone stated that the asphalt is currently sloped the wrong way, as well. He said if this isn't corrected, then the problem of flooding on Milne and Marina will not be solved.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION PERIOD

Village Commissioner Les Barrett referred to the Petition that was “served” on the Transportation Advisory Committee today. He stated that the residents of Aalders Avenue North approached the TA Committee before with little results except some suggestions. He stated the petition has outlined considerable research of what the outcome should be. He stated that, although this is not a threat, there “could be litigation coming out of this” if the DOTPW is unwilling to curb the flow or type of traffic, and he stated that it should be noted that the Village of New Minas should stand behind an alternate route.

Mr. David Etter stated that he is amazed that “they just don't get it”, and that is obvious from Mr. Silver's letter. He stated the Bylaws of the Village are being broken ... he researched it himself. He said all the people want is for the road to be turned over to its original state. He said he is preparing a list of offenders to be presented to the Village, for the Village Commission to “observe”, with a copy going to the RCMP and David Morse's office.

B. Ward attempted to explain that DOTPW must follow certain procedures to make any major changes to any of their roads/streets. He said the concerns on Aalders Avenue

North have been reviewed more than once, and analyses are currently underway again. Once the results are completed, they will be forwarded.

Mr. Etter spoke very adamantly about the Village and DOTPW not being willing to do anything to help the residents have a safe street to live on, and left the meeting.

Gwyn Philips said he is sick and tired of hearing how many cars are being checked. Cars are not the problem, the problem is the street isn't wide enough. He said 48 people have signed a petition outlining the problem!

Chair Hatt thanked everyone for their comments, and stated all the comments would be taken into consideration.

Village Commissioner Linda Lockhart – told B. Ward that there is a huge hole in Perrier Drive that should be taken care of. B. Ward stated he would check it out.

Robert Farris – asked if there was ever a four-way stop considered on Crescent. B. Ward stated he doesn't know.

Village Commissioner Les Barrett – asked B. Ward when he anticipated the report outlining the analyses mentioned earlier would be ready. B. Ward stated he does not know; it is out of his control and is carried out by a different division, and his department is collecting data. He offered to inquire and let the Clerk Treasurer know.

Peter Pothier asked B. Ward if it would be possible to provide a Performance Bond for Breaking of Soil. B. Ward stated that he would look into it and discuss with Peter.

Chair Chaulk asked B. Ward what kind of priority will be placed on the Aalders Avenue North concerns. B. Ward stated that until the Traffic Study is complete, there is no way to determine what can be done. D. Chaulk asked if he knew when all the information will be gathered. B. Ward stated that he wasn't aware that the type of traffic was an issue until this petition was presented; it was presented to him that speed and volume were the only issues and those were the focus of the study.

Village Commissioner Les Barrett – asked if there is a possibility of placing a “no right turn” at the Aalders Avenue North intersection. B. Ward stated that this could be considered, and it would work for the prudent drivers, just like the 50 km speed limit does. He stated he will pass along this suggestion to the analyzers.

P. Pothier felt that this would place more traffic on Jones Road and create more of a dangerous situation for the children in this area.

Ms. Sandra Horley stated that a right turn would be very dangerous in her opinion. B. Ward stated that only one person in this district has the authority to make changes, and that person will be reviewing all the data available.

D. Chaulk asked if the additional counts can be done, now that they have been made aware that traffic types are also an issue? B. Ward stated he will make the request.

G. Philips asked if they have 48 people sign a Petition, and there are children's lives at risk, does it really matter how many surveys are completed.

D. Chaulk stated that people have to make it political. The Village does not have any jurisdiction to do anything. B. Ward stated that his department cannot do anything until that report comes back, it is hoped within the next month to month and a half. He will check on its status and report to the Clerk Treasurer.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion of D. Pineo, the meeting adjourned.

Dean Hatt, Chair

Terry Silver, Clerk Treasurer