

VILLAGE OF NEW MINAS
TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
And DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION
December 13, 2005
1:00 p.m.
Conference Room, Civic Centre (Downstairs)

A joint meeting of the Village of New Minas Transportation Advisory Committee and Department of Transportation and Public Works was held on Tuesday, December 13, 2005 at 1:00 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Civic Centre.

In Attendance: Chair Les Barrett
 Vice-Chair Pat Saulnier
 Village Commission Chair Dave Chaulk
 Village Commission Vice-Chair Linda Lockhart
 Committee Member Gordon Silver
 Kings South MLA, Hon. David Morse
 Village Engineer, Doug Seamone
 DOTPW Area Manager, Brian Ward
 DOTPW Regional Supervisor, Roger Larkin
 Superintendent of Public Works, Peter Pothier
 Clerk Treasurer, Terry Silver

CALL TO ORDER – Chair Les Barrett

Chair Barrett called the meeting to order. He welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Mr. Ward and Mr. Larkin for attending, stating that it is hoped that this will open the lines of communication between the Village and DOTPW, and it is hoped it will be the first of many meetings to come.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – December 13, 2005

It was moved by L. Lockhart, seconded by G. Silver, that the Agenda of this meeting be approved as presented. MOTION CARRIED

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Chair Barrett stated that most of the items on the Agenda are brought forward from a previous meeting with Mr. Ward and the Clerk Treasurer, Superintendent of Public Works and the Engineer in September. He stated that this week some correspondence has been received from Mr. Ward in answer to the questions posed at that meeting, and it is hoped all questions and concerns can be addressed.

1. Crosswalks and the Village's Relationship with Department of Transportation – Letter from Brian Ward

Discussion took place on the Village's legal and financial responsibility for crosswalk maintenance. R. Larkin stated that over the years, as the Village has developed, crosswalks have been installed. He stated that there is an unwritten agreement that if the Village requested to have a crosswalk installed, they would pay for the maintenance of those approved by DOTPW. The current charge is \$300 per crosswalk.

R. Larkin went on to say that his Department has made a decision that the Village will be not responsible to pay for crosswalks at "signalized locations" and school crosswalks, which have a crossing-guard, leaving the Village responsible to pay for 11 crosswalks. He stated if the Village wishes to stop paying for any of these 11 crosswalks, they must notify DOTPW of this, and these crosswalks will be removed.

T. Silver asked if there is any correspondence on file at DOTPW which would indicate when requests were made by the Village. R. Larkin stated that DOTPW files are archived/destroyed beyond seven years, and there would only be documentation available during that time period. T. Silver asked how DOTPW views their liability and responsibility if the crosswalks were not maintained properly should someone be injured. R. Larkin stated anyone can be named in a lawsuit.

P. Pothier advised that the Village is currently plowing, salting and sanding the crosswalks throughout the Village, including those which are not the Village's responsibility. He suggested that these should be DOTPW's responsibility. He asked if DOTPW would be reimbursing the Village for maintaining those crosswalks that are their responsibility.

Discussion ensued on the subject of the new crosswalks at the connector-road intersection. R. Larkin stated that DOTPW has to follow regulations as far as intersections, etc., for pedestrian traffic, and are obligated to install these. P. Pothier stated that DOTPW are not plowing the crosswalks in question, and the Village is paying to have this done, and feels that this cost should be reimbursed by DOTPW. R. Larkin advised he will check into this and advise. Mr. Larkin noted that the Village will be required to maintain the sidewalk.

2. Aalders Avenue Safety Concerns

Discussion took place about the concerns brought forward to the Village Commission and Transportation Advisory Committee by a resident on Aalders Avenue regarding excessive traffic, and the traffic speed on that Street. Results of traffic counts carried out by the Commission were cited, and the findings discussed. R. Larkin stated that as the Village continues to progress, the traffic

situation will also increase. He said that it will take a major by-pass route to relieve the traffic congestion on Commercial Street, and there were plans for future alternate routes.

Chair Barrett asked what message we can send along to the concerned citizen. B. Ward said to start with enforcement (speeders). P. Pothier stated that according to Citizen's On Patrol radar checks, speed is not an issue; the amount of traffic is. R. Larkin suggested that the Village might want to hire a consultant to carry out a Transportation Study, and suggested DOTPW should be contacted for assistance.

D. Morse stated that he has heard concerns from residents of Lockhart Drive that drivers are "traveling too fast".

R. Larkin said that it is important for this Committee and the Village Commission keep in close communication with the DOTPW. He said that this Committee is a good tool in this communication process. He stated that for the day-to-day issues, the staff will contact B. Ward, and everyone needs a clear understanding of the relationship. He stated that the constant contact is essential, but not to expect instant responses to a bunch of letters, because Brian will need time to research issues. T. Silver stated that she will continue to correspond the Committee's and the Commission's requests in writing, because that is her direction from the Committee and Commission. She stated she understands that their Department is short-staffed and it is difficult to keep up with the work, but when she is directed by her Commission or Committee to write to their department, and has to report at the next meeting that there is no response, it is not accepted very well. B. Ward stated that if we want a letter stating he has received a letter from us, he will do so. T. Silver stated that would at least give her something to report.

D. Morse commended the Village for taking the initiative to strike the Committee, and feels communication is essential. He made reference to the paving project on Commercial Street, and his recommendation that there be a third lane installed this year, even though it meant not extending east as far as originally planned. The Clerk Treasurer will advise Hon. Morse of future meetings.

Chair Barrett stated he would like DOTPW to consider meeting with the Committee at least three times per year. D. Chaulk suggested that the Committee evaluate the issues after each Committee meeting and if the members wish to include DOTPW in future meetings, just notify Mr. Ward.

3. Cloverleaf Drive Drainage problems

Engineer Doug Seamone presented drawings and a report which depicted solutions to the problems with water run-off from Highway 101 onto Cloverleaf Drive, which eventually cause major water damage to properties on Milne Avenue and Marina Drive (report and drawings attached to original minutes).

Discussion ensued. R. Larkin agreed to discuss this further with Doug Seamone and a report will be forthcoming to the Committee.

4. Jones Road Crosswalk Relocation

B. Ward explained that the Jones Road Crosswalk is being relocated to accommodate the changes in the renovations to the school. He stated that the location for the new crosswalk is not as originally requested, due to safety concerns.

5. Aalders Avenue Sidewalk Project

Discussion took place on the technical problems encountered with the Aalders Avenue Sidewalk Project. R. Larkin emphasized the need for proper DOTPW-approved plans for every project the Commission carries out.

6. Roads and Highway Rights of Way Condition

The Clerk Treasurer explained that concerns have been expressed for some time by the Commission that road conditions within the Village are poor, and they are also concerned that the pot-hole repairs are later every year.

B. Ward explained the process for his entire area. He said that the area supervisor is given a “pot” of money for all of Kings County. The 101 Series Highways receive top priority, then the trunks and other routes, as funds are available. R. Larkin explained that pot-hole repairs are very different from asphalt patching. He encouraged this Committee to provide priority lists to DOTPW for their information. Although they still have to use their discretion, it would be helpful for those people who live in New Minas to give them a “heads up” to maintain their priority list.

P. Saulnier asked if their Department updates this list periodically, thereby enabling them to reorganize their priorities. He asked if there would be an opportunity for DOTPW to notify the Village’s Transportation Committee of their list of priorities. B. Ward advised that they are constantly reviewing, planning and re-planning. He said that if the Committee would provide information on a continual basis, they could integrate this information in their planning process. R. Larkin stated that the priority list is a “moving target”, and it would be difficult for them to provide a list to anyone.

Peter Pothier suggested that Mr. Paul Maillet could come to a meeting in the spring to discuss road maintenance in the Village, and it was agreed this would be a good idea.

Winter Snow Removal Procedures

P. Pothier stated we had discussed the communications problem with regard to snow removal procedures at the September meeting. He said that during our first winter storm, the problems seem to still exist, and if the sidewalk snow removal contractor could be made aware when DOTPW winging takes place, it would prevent a lot of problems. R. Larkin stated that the key is communication, and it was agreed that communication could better accommodate the entire snow removal process.

7. Signage – Jones Road, Aalders Avenue (Low hanging Branches, Update)

T. Silver advised that this problem was discussed in September, and she has not received any complaints about low-hanging branches, so the problems have been resolved for this season.

8. Mowing Medians

P. Pothier stated that DOTPW regulate the installation of medians between sidewalks and streets (on DOTPW rights-of-way), but it is left up to the Village to maintain these medians. R. Larkin stated that this responsibility came about as a result of the Nova Scotia Service Exchange Agreement. T. Silver asked where she might find the information on this Agreement. Chair Barrett suggested the medians could be made of concrete; L. Lockhart suggested flowers could be planted. B. Ward stated that vegetation would have to be low-growth.

9. Damaged Signs in New Minas

T. Silver stated a letter was received last week from B. Ward stating that all signs except Milne Avenue have been repaired or replaced.

10. Sidewalk at Bank of Nova Scotia

P. Pothier explained that, as discussed at the meeting in September, approximately a year ago, DOTPW gave a permit to break soil near the Bank of Nova Scotia. The contractor also cut into the Village's sidewalk, without the Village's permission, and left a very poor job of concreting the sidewalk when they finished the job. B. Ward advised he is unable to determine who the contractor was for this project, and once he finds out, he will request the contractor to repair the sidewalk.

P. Pothier advised also that the sidewalk has been cut on Highland Avenue and the Village was not advised. R. Larkin confirmed that the Village should be

notified before the sidewalks are cut. B. Ward will determine the Contractor's name and advise that the sidewalk must be repaired.

11. Crosswalk Maintenance – Liability issue

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting.

12. Purchase of Paint for Village through DOT

P. Pothier asked if the Village would be able to purchase traffic paint with which to paint the sidewalk crossing, which are the responsibility of the Village. R. Larkin stated that this would not be possible.

P. Pothier asked if DOTPW would have a problem if he didn't paint several sidewalk crosswalks (non-DOTPW system). Chair Barrett stated that this was considered years ago and the Village's solicitor advised that for liability reasons, they must remain in place.

13. Notification of Lights not Working – Canadian Tire Intersection

Chair Barrett advised that the traffic lights in the intersection going in to Canadian Tire are not working properly. B. Ward stated he will attend to this.

R. Larkin thanked the Committee for the opportunity to meet with them. He reiterated his statements that there is a need for communication between the Committee/Commission and his Department.

Chair Barrett thanked R. Larkin and B. Ward for taking the time to meet with the Committee, and everyone looks forward to continued communication.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion of G. Silver, the meeting adjourned.

L. Barrett, Chair

T. Silver, Clerk Treasurer