

HIGHWAY 104 AT ANTIGONISH COMMUNITY LIAISON COMMITTEE

Meeting Notes (DRAFT) – Meeting #5 August 20, 2008

Attendees: John Bain
Alan Bond
Ken Donnelly
Frank Gallant
Roger Garby
Alisha Grant
Anne Marie MacKenzie
Heather Mayhew
Mary McCarron
Kyle McKenzie
Len Robertson
Kerry Prosper
Ken Proctor
Elizabeth Pugh
Brian Segal
Wes Surette

Regrets: Rose Julian

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting started at 11:00 a.m., with 16 participants. Ken Donnelly welcomed everyone and introductions were made. Ken reminded everyone that there were no meetings in June and July.

1. Review Minutes of Meeting 4

The notes for Meeting 4 were reviewed and approved. Several items arose:

- regarding liability, Ken Donnelly hopes to have insurance issue resolved with a week
- regarding roundabouts, Roger Garby reported that the schedule is not ready yet
- some things may not start this year but everything for next year is on schedule
- Mary McCarron asked if the recent announcement by the province of a study of completing subsequent sections of 104 through public-private partnerships will impact the timing of the Antigonish section; Roger Garby replied no, because although private design may bring the next phases on sooner than they would be otherwise, they will not catch up with this one

Following this discussion, the notes from the last meeting were approved.

Miscellaneous Items

Frank Gallant asked what the web site address was for the CLC. It is www.104antigonish.ca.

Highway 104 At Antigonish CLC Meeting #5 Notes, August 20, 2008

At this point Ken Donnelly asked for additions to agenda. None were made.

2. Update on Construction Schedule

Much of this topic was covered in the review of the last meeting's notes.

Mary McCarron offered compliments on the way the section between South River and Antigonish was recently done because it was done at night and did not interfere with much traffic.

3. Update on Financing

Ken Donnelly asked Roger Garby if there was an update on financing. Roger said the funds had not been transferred from the Government of Canada yet, but that this would not impact scheduled construction.

4. TCH Access

It was noted that there had been some concerns raised that, because of the prescribed minimums between driveways off of the existing TCH, one landowner might not be able to get access if adjacent property owners already had access. This is an issue that could be raised with Mike Croft at the next meeting.

Brian Segal reported that he has received feedback on the TCH plan from some people in the community. Some feel that using the TCH as a collector road may not be the best use once it is repurposed. He said he was looking forward to the traffic counts which are expected in September in the hope that they will help clarify this issue.

Anne Marie MacKenzie's said she has heard concerns about blocked access. The perception is that there was more leniency in other locations where this sort of road use change has occurred yet there appears to be more emphasis on safety than development here.

Brian Segal reiterated concerns over it not looking like Commercial Street in New Minas, but it could serve the same function with better aesthetics. Ken Donnelly said that Mike Croft has examples of where this sort of thing has been done better. Anne Marie MacKenzie asked for copies of those images to share with her group.

Alan Bond said that not much of council was present to review the access strategy at the meeting held for the two municipalities. They were happy overall with it; having some minor issues but none major.

Ken Proctor stated the Town will have comments in by the end of August. He said that most people are curious about what West Street/Trunk 7 will look like. They think the access plan is a good step forward but are also concerned about signage. He wanted to know if people will be able to find out what they need in order to offer informed opinions.

Highway 104 At Antigonish CLC Meeting #5 Notes, August 20, 2008

Roger Garby suggested looking at the entrance to Wal-mart, Atlantic Superstore, and Central Supplies for an example of how it may look.

Ken Donnelly asked everyone to have comments in by the end of August. The CLC will still look at other comments after that point.

5. Liability

Ken Donnelly reported that he had been playing telephone tag with an insurer re: liability insurance for the committee. John Bain agreed to review the policy when it was available.

6. September/October Agenda

a. Signage

Ken Donnelly explained that Brian Storey will have the signage program for the CLC for discussion, but it will not be ready in time for the September meeting.

Many committee members expressed interest in this. Len Robertson asked what this will look like. Elizabeth Pugh clarified that it will only be for the new road.

Len Robertson expressed concern over changes to existing signage.

Ken Donnelly asked for other signage comments to pass on to Brian.

Ken Proctor wants to know what restrictions will be on the new highway. Elizabeth Pugh said that no new signs will be allowed; existing ones may be grandfathered.

Ken Donnelly referred members to the signage guidelines in the CLC handbook.

Brian Segal asked about jurisdiction over the old highway and whether rules will change when its status changes. John made the point that provincial rules may override municipal sign by-law.

Elizabeth Pugh stated that municipal rules are sometimes used to override provincial rules. Other comments included the fact that these rules deal more with putting new signs up than taking old signs down, and who owns the land may also be a factor.

Mary McCarron asked if the province has legal rules concerning signage. Roger Garby replied yes, for 100 series highways.

Frank Gallant expressed concern that signage rules aren't being enforced, so the CLC shouldn't put much effort into this matter unless the rules will be enforced.

Roger Garby said that 'controlled access' status needs to be kept for the province to be able to remove signs. He said that the intent of signage rules is to accommodate directions to business as opposed to facilitate advertisements.

Highway 104 At Antigonish CLC Meeting #5 Notes, August 20, 2008

John Bain gave an example of a signage plan that was fully developed that everyone liked but TIR vetoed in the end; Ken Donnelly said that is an example of why we have a CLC and that we have an opportunity to work with the TIR signage people.

A tangential concern over the fact that nothing in Antigonish is in GPS databases and little is on Google Maps was raised, resulting in a discussion over how businesses get added to such databases. This may be more of an issue once the highway no longer goes through the town and highway signage is restricted.

Ken Donnelly closed this part of the discussion by noting that we will have lots of signage input for Brian Storrie by next meeting.

6. September/October Agenda

b. Traffic Counts

Ken Proctor asked how old the current traffic counts are. Brian Segal replied that they are from 2005. The concern was whether the rate of increase was sufficient to justify twinning.

Len Robertson expressed concern that the Melford development may not be incorporated into projections because the projections were done before the Melford development was proposed.

Other Items

Roger Garby updated the group on the status of land purchases. They are finalizing the right of way plan, which is to be registered with the Registry of Deeds. This needs to be done before property can be purchased. Three people are working on this full time. This is for Phase 1, but there were some Phase 2 properties already purchased where the whole property was in the corridor.

Roger stated that some issues like snowmobile trails and wetlands make this process more complicated.

Ken Proctor asked how they decide on moving houses. Roger Garby replied that if a house is in the way they purchase the whole property then tender for removal of the house. The homeowner can then buy it back and move it if he wishes.

7. Adjournment

Because the biggest issue at the moment is signage, Ken Donnelly reminded the group that the signage study won't be ready for the September meeting (tentatively, September 17), so maybe we should wait until October to meet again. It was pointed out that Brian Storrie is currently on vacation, so we don't know when in October the signage plan will be complete. Based on that, Ken Donnelly announced that he will contact everyone when the next meeting date is decided.

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m., followed by lunch and informal discussion.

Highway 104 At Antigonish CLC Meeting #5 Notes, August 20, 2008