

**Meeting:** Highway 104 at Antigonish CLC

**Date:** January 16, 2014

**Duration:** 11:00 AM – 1:10 PM

**Location:** Board Room, Antigonish County Building

**Chair:** Ken Donnelly, President, Beyond Attitude Consulting

**Note-taker:** Alison Walsh, Beyond Attitude Consulting

**In Attendance:**

Ken Proctor, TOA

Susan Ross, AHWA

Owen McCarron, County of Antigonish

Angus Gillis, NSTIR

Brian Storrie, NSTIR

Anne Marie MacKenzie, Antigonish Chamber of Commerce

Glen Horne, County of Antigonish

Jamie Chisholm, NSTIR

Ian MacCallum, NSTIR

Dwayne Cross, NSTIR

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Meeting commenced at 11:00 am

**Introductions and Agenda Overview**

- Opening remarks from Ken Donnelly, Chair

- Review of agenda for the meeting

Glen:

- Suggested item to add to proposed agenda: 104 - West St/Lochaber Road intersection

1. Introductions
2. Proposed road naming/renaming convention
3. Update on Phase 1 transition
4. Progress of construction on Phase 2.
5. Antigonish Landing update
6. Website update

7. Status of Ducks Unlimited berms
8. Variable message speed sign in Lower South River?
9. 80 kph speed zone east of Church Street
10. Additional Item: 104 - West St/ Lochaber Road intersection
11. Adjourn

- Introductions were made around the table.

### **Proposed road naming/renaming convention**

- Brian shared current maps of the highway expansion plans with the group, highlighting the realigned route

Anne Marie:

- When are they going to officially change the road names through NSTIR?

Brian:

- The road will be officially named 'Trunk 4'

Anne Marie:

- Highlighted the urgency of tourism operators with pending plans to release maps and tourist information

- Tourism operators need to know the road names in order to best communicate with visitors to the area
- May convocation (at STFX) is a pending issue – want to try and make signs as clear as possible to incoming visitors
- Indicated the Chamber of Commerce is ready to publish 2014 visitor information materials (such as maps), and needs to know what to call the road ASAP in order to avoid confusion

Jamie:

- How does the information on Google Maps get updated? What department is responsible?

Brian:

- The GIS section of NSTIR is taking care of updating road names on Google Maps

- There was a brief discussion pertaining to general road naming conventions currently in use for Nova Scotia roads; discussion led by Brian and Jamie

Ken D:

- Asked group to determine the next steps in the road naming process
- Asked group to consider timing for map publications and 911 requirements

Brian:

- Wasn't sure how 911 routes are updated, as it is handled elsewhere in the department
- Identified Nova Scotia Tourism as the ones updating map info for road names

Ken D:

- Anne Marie, if you had the information re: timelines for changes to take effect, would that be sufficient?

**ACTION ITEM:** Anne Marie to investigate timelines for NS Department of Tourism, Town of Antigonish re: map preparation and anticipated release

Ken P:

- Identified they have a whole series of changes to be made with the road name and signing scheme
- Highlighted some issues with sign spacing, light placement, and visibility

Anne Marie:

- What's happening with the old road signs, and when will they be changed over?
- What's the timeline for getting old road signs/torn signs all cleaned up? Will it be able to be done before convocation in May?
- When will a schematic for the signs be ready?

Group discussion: No definite timeline for signage installation, transitioning, or schematics was established.

**ACTION ITEM:** Anne Marie to set up a group meeting with TIR to discuss schematic and timelines to discuss road signs

### **Update on Phase 1 transition**

- Overview lead by Brian and Dwayne

Brian:

- Delay with overhead signs due to changes associated with Phase 2 design.
- Approval is needed before changes can be implemented
- In need of survey data before further progress can be made

Dwyane:

- They are working on making the survey data available

Anne Marie:

- Indicated they are currently working with the county and community to get a sign at the county boundary.

Brian:

- Highlighted some logistical and cost considerations when planning the timeline for establishing a sign

### **Progress of construction on Phase 2:**

Owen McCarron:

- Asked about the traffic light issue at Trunk 7

Dwayne:

- Discussed options for fixing traffic light issues
- Thought the most likely solution will be to 1) Install a brand new set of lights, or 2) Install a roundabout
- Estimated timeline: Working towards completion by the end of the calendar year to have plans ready to go
- There hasn't been an official discussion on the final decision yet re: lights or roundabout

Glen:

- Asked about what may happen at market streetlights, and what a potential timeline would be for completion

Dwayne:

- Removal of one of the left turn lanes will be a likely solution
- Adjusting of signal head positioning also a possibility
- Timeline for this project is spring 2014

**ACTION ITEM:** Dwayne confirmed it will take another 2-3 weeks to set out an analysis, and project expectations for establishing future work timelines.

Angus:

- Provided overview for bridges
- Slightly delayed due to issue w/ crane arrival, so they're running a bit behind schedule
- Taylor's road is on schedule and set to be complete shortly
- Final paving contract set to go out for completion during Fall 2016
- Believes overall schedule is running fairly well

Jamie:

- Agreed that overall construction is going well

Susan:

- Brought up concerns re: flooding concerns in work areas
- Concerns around runoff, rain, flooding

- Also, was wondering about the current monitoring procedures for impacts of equipment runoff on water quality

Jamie, Ian:

- Identified that there isn't any way the area is being monitored
- They monitor what they can and equipment is stored according to best practices and safety

Susan:

- Asked question re: silt fencing

- General discussion re: state of silt fencing; No one was quite sure of its state, but the feeling is that as much that can be done is being done

Ken D:

- Highlighted that it is something that's important, and someone should ask about the current state of the silt fencing

Susan:

- Asked about best practices around moving equipment if a flood event is anticipated

Jamie, Ian:

- Equipment is moved as it needs to be when a flood event is coming
- Established that equipment and materials are too expensive for anyone to keep in the flooding areas
- Also identified there weren't any specific recommendations from the environmental assessment re: flooding areas and storing equipment

### **Antigonish Landing update and Status of Ducks Unlimited berms**

Ian:

- Provided overview of the status of the project
- There may be an issue with berm height
- Culverts have been bought, and one has been installed already
- There was a hang up with culvert three: They found an old town stormwater pipe
- progress with the third culvert has come to a stop
- There may be another option to work around culvert three: Buying one that is wider but shallower
- Also indicated there have been some issues with an adjacent landowner who thinks his land might get flooded on account of the project

Owen McCarron:

- Thought it would be best to talk to the landowner to make sure the lines of communication are wide-open

- Encouraged Ian to copy the municipality when information is shared with the landowner

Ian:

- They contacted the landowner this fall, but will be contacting again in the future
- They are also not concerned about the potential flood impacts the project may have. The area has certainly flooded before; the question that remains is the frequency of the flood events from here on out

Glen:

- Raised concerns re: water level and future home development, and willingness to share information with landowners

Ian:

- Discussed estimates of flooding events considering water level and road height
- Working towards establishing a boundary line for the project before the road
- Trying to protect land for the people who own it, but can't build a seawall, etc.

Owen:

- Wanted to be sure Ian is prepared to build transparency of the process relating to this project

Ken P:

- Indicated walkway in the adjacent areas is subject to flooding
- Discussion re: flooding tendencies for community walkway

Anne Marie:

- Question re: where are the Ducks Unlimited contractors are based (eg. Local? Provincial? National?)

Ian:

- Unsure how Ducks Unlimited manages their contracts for building the project

Owen:

- In the past projects he was familiar with, Ducks Unlimited have brought a contractor in with specialized equipment for their projects, from Truro

Susan:

- Question about offsets project, potential for freshwater marshes to be qualified for the project

Ian:

- Unsure of the state of the progress because Bob is on an extended vacation
- Preference for the project to go to do tidal and salt marshes, which means other parts of NS other than Antigonish

- Looking for a project with a much larger culvert with much larger tidal flows than what's available here
- There are limitations associated with small areas – they are looking for larger areas
- Raised the issues re: knotweed; main objective for knotweed is for research

Susan:

- Wanted to know status re: proceeding to spray to control the knotweed; if research is continuing, as well as if and when it will be time to actually apply the results from the research

Ian:

- The issues re: knotweed is depending on information within letter/project that was with Bob

Susan:

- Raised concern re: town beginning spray programs for knotweed

~ Adjourn for lunch at 12:25

~ Session resumed at 12:40

## **Website update**

Ken D:

- Website is completely up to date with the exception of previous meeting's minutes
- Map has been added to website

## **Variable message speed sign in Lower South River?**

Dwayne:

- Current pilot project going on in the Cobequid Pass they will learn from and use to help develop future speed limit designations
- From last meeting: Fix the approach from 116. Goal is to try and help people realize how fast they're going, and try and slow them down
- Target in this area is speed and approach

Glen:

- Wondering about the options or plans for enforcement to be increased
- Group discussion about other examples of how other places have slowed down approaches, such as the approach to Halifax bridges. Topics included actual speed limits, increasing enforcement, and examining practicality of speed limits in given

areas. Group agrees good enforcement is an effective way to get people to slow down.

### **80 kph speed zone east of Church Street**

Dwayne:

- District supervisor did a radar study; went with a homogeneous 80 from the bridge back to the highway (instead of 70/90 as it was previously)

Glen:

- When the section opens up again, will a similar study be done again to assess the proper speed they should be going in that area. It is an area that's viewed as good for development.
- Highlighted how people are looking for a firm access strategy across the conduit

Dwayne:

- The access strategy right now assumes a 70kph post limit

Owen and Glen:

- Want to be sure they won't be getting any surprise speed limit changes from TIR, specifically having to do with potential impacts on future development

Dwayne

- Will have more information at the next meeting re: speed limit changes; has to do more research/investigation

### **Additional item: 104 -West St/Lochaber Road intersection**

Glen:

- Issues around planning on improving the sidewalk at the intersection: West St at 104, at the lights, a portion of the sidewalk is missing.

Ken P:

- Described concern with sidewalk being cutoff by Sterling Apples, is not convinced it's safe and accessible for everyone

Dwayne:

- These concerns will be incorporated into the next steps of the development

**ACTION ITEM:** Dwayne will come up with the strategy and have plans prepared and ready to share re: plans with this intersection in three weeks from now

### **Next Meeting**

- Next meeting will likely be April, but is open for rescheduling earlier if warranted

~ Meeting Adjourned around 1:15 PM