

PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Thursday August 21,2025
Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor William McCormick, Chair
Deputy Mayor Paul Saulnier
Councillor Shane Weir
Mayor Mike Bartlett, Vice Chair
Councillor Rick Foote

STAFF PRESENT: Tom Ossinger, CAO/Development Officer
Leslie Brinton, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Chris Millier, Town Planner 4 Site Group (Via Zoom)
Anya Chin, the 4 Site Group

REGRETS: Charles Haliburton, Citizen Representative
Ed Moore, Citizen Representative

- A. Call to order**
The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.
- B. Agenda**
B.1 Additions/Deletions
Deletions: Mayor façade program off this agenda and add it to September meeting
- B.2 Approval**
Motion:
Moved by Councillor Foote and seconded Deputy Mayor Saulnier by that the Agenda for August 21, 2025, be approved as amended.
Motion Carried.
- C. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**
C.1 July 22, 2025
Minutes be accepted as presented.
- D. Business Arising/Unfinished Business**
D.1 None.
- E. Correspondence**
E.1 None.

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F. New Business

F.1 Environmental Protection Policies/Wellfield Protection Maps

At the last meeting of the planning advisory Committee July 22, 2025, we left off reviewing policy section of Chris Miller, Town Planner 4 Site group, we pick up from that point in this meeting. There is a current plan in place that deals with Digby Wellfield and their containment. Map of the well field was presented on TV screen for all present to see. Majority of the well fields are located in the municipality. A map was also loaded of the well heads and area protection boundaries. The map showed the areas that contribute to the wells. The information presented was delineated by scientific study and has been calculated and geologically scientifically validated. Contamination is also factored in. It has been shown that any contamination would take considerable time to affect the well field. What that translates to is that distance factors in, with a low-level risk of contamination. 2/3 of the town fall in other area of the contribution area. South has no significance. Town is in tandem with municipality with regards to studies on the well fields. Both reports agree that we would meet these standards of protection. It was noted that there is no problem with integrating municipality report with ours if we so wished. The municipality has not amended their strategy and poses no impetus for the town to change their policy approach.

Question posed by Councillor Foote- Does the Industrial Park fall within the Wellfield protection area?

Answer: yes. Well field is under protection for a portion of the property. Intensive uses with any petroleum, storage of salt, extractive uses, activities that rely on those factors would be a significant risk. The case of Walkerton, Ontario was brought to the committee's attention as a cautionary tale in regards to those types of activities near or on the well field. Area C is a lower risk for development. Septic systems and wells are not on then list of identify risk, except at the well head.

Councillor Foote noted that we cannot shut down existing risks but going forward we can adopt new regulations to mitigate those existing risks. However, we offer programs on a variety of obligations water utility has with those risks. We are mandated to monitor the risks to the water shed. Salt sheds and Oil Storage have strict guidelines as to the usage of these properties. Current risks are well monitored and different uses that may contaminate the fields are regulated.

F.2 Coastal Protection

Provincial Regulations were not put into place for Coastal Protection however the Province has provided the Municipalities with guidelines on Coastal Protection. With rising sea levels, the provinces have developed technical standards to sea level rise. The province says we are 1.17-meter rise in mean sea level in 100 years. By default, NS is the model we need to use. There are several tools for us to use to help us make decisions about planning strategy. We should consider including wording from these "tools" on approaches to policy and land use provisions. Defining zoning going forward should be a priority with an adoption of their text to help lead to those inevitable changes in the water levels.

Questions:

Councillor Foote-is the coastal flood zone map public?

Answer: Yes, it has been available for public viewing for a year now.

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Councillor Weir-is that the highest tides shown on the map or does it reflect unusually high tides.

Answer: No, average mean tides. The storm surge estimate reflects the unusual events. ie: King tides, storms etc.

Chris Millier, Town Planner 4 Site Group- asked if the committee agreed to include putting in the 100-year projections into consideration of drafting new policy. That is including flooding risk projections to 100 years and to the drafting of an approval to integrate risk impact.

Direction: Yes, the council will go with Chris's recommendations to adding the projection and drafting a proposal to integrate risk management.

He also asked if there were any other considerations that the committee suggests that we add to the policies.

Responses:

Councillor McCormick- is there was any provision for evasive species of plant life and if not we should discuss at a future meeting if we need to come up with that verbiage.

Councillor Weir-concerning coastal issues and Coastal enterprises is: fishing, clamming etc. is there a way to help mitigate the coastline? We want to make sure that the public has access to use these areas for livelihood.

Answer: The province has good examples on the website to help set examples for policy to state clearly what we can do for that particular population.

F.3 Façade Program

This is being tabled to the next meeting

F.4 Commercial Engagement with Stakeholders

It was suggested that when the committee decides to have a meeting regarding this matter that it should use a round table approach.

Discussion on future parking, boundaries, and the future plans of Digby Pines and Resort would be of benefit. The Digby Pines and Resort may want to expand but we need clarity on what they actually are planning for the future. We would like to do an outreach to The Digby Pines and Resort, the Digby Wharf and to all that are affected by zoning and policies to this future discussion.

Next steps for the Committee will be to identify topics of discussion, mixed use, boundaries, traffic, parking etc. in the Commercial Districts. Identify any other questions for the Commercial Engagement piece.

G. Questions & Answers relating to the business discussed

Melanie McNaughton asked if the environmental protection policies will the public have opportunity to provide input?

Answer: Yes, this session will be advertised to the public

Tim Peck asked could land that is in the flood zone map be used as parks in the high-level marks. Environmental policies should have an environmental committee with scientific members in attendance. Public member also asked if Chris Millier, Town Planner 4 Site Group had heard about The Integrated Approach?

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Answer: The committee would be happy to have their input on any of these committees. Please ask them to write to us, we would meet with them or ask if they would like to offer their expertise to this matter.

H. Date of next meeting

Tuesday September 16, 2025, at 6:00 PM and October 23, 2025 at 6:00 PM

I. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned

Motion:

Moved by Deputy Mayor Saulnier and seconded by Mayor Bartlett that the meeting be adjourned at 8:00 PM

Motion Carried.

CHAIRPERSON


DEVELOPMENT OFFICER