

Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Notes of a Meeting of the Dangerous & Unsightly Property Committee

Held in Council Chamber, 10 Allée Champlain Drive, Cookville, NS

Wednesday, June 4, 2025 – 8:30 a.m.

Attendance

Approved July 30, 2025

Councillor Martin Bell, Chair
Mayor Elspeth McLean-Wile
Deputy Mayor Chasidy Veinotte
Councillor Wendy Oickle
Councillor Cathy Moore

Regrets

Councillor Edgar Burns

Staff

Jeff Merrill, Director of Planning & Development Services
Graham Hopkins, Inspection Services Manager
Amanda Esterbrooks, Building Official
Kyle Whynot, Building Official
Susan Berry, Corporate Services Supervisor
Zander Zwicker, Corporate Services Assistant
Angela Corkum, Inspection Services Coordinator

1. Call to Order

Councillor Martin Bell called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

2. Changes/Approval of Agenda

The following additions were requested:

- Add item 6.1 1615 Waterloo Road, Waterloo PID 60312378
- Add item 6.2 68 Cove Road, Conquerall Bank PID 60337169
- Add item 6.3 Dangerous & Unsightly Premises Process

Moved by Mayor Elspeth McLean-Wile, seconded by Councillor Oickle that the Agenda be approved as amended with the additions of items 6.1 1615 Waterloo Road, Waterloo PID 60312378, 6.2 68 Cove Road, Conquerall Bank PID 60337169 and 6.3 Dangerous & Unsightly Premises Process. Carried unanimously.

3. Approval of Notes – January 29, 2025

The Notes of the January 29, 2025 Dangerous & Unsightly Property Committee meeting were approved as circulated.

4. Business Arising from Notes - Nil

5. Staff Reports

5.1 Quote Recommendation: 447 Llewellyn Road, Middlewood PID 60302270

Amanda Esterbrooks, Building Official, gave an overview of the property and the process taken as per the Municipal Government Act (MGA) and Policy 007 Dangerous and Unsightly Property.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Veinotte, seconded by Councillor Moore that the lowest bid from Fine Cuts Landscaping be accepted for the clean up of the property located at 447 Llewellyn Road, Middlewood, PID 60302270 for \$6908.40 including HST. Carried unanimously.

5.2 Quote Recommendation: 59 Big Lots Road, Big Lots PID 60221512

Amanda Esterbrooks, Building Official, gave an overview of the property and the process taken as per the Municipal Government Act (MGA) and Policy 007 Dangerous and Unsightly Property.

Moved by Councillor Moore, seconded by Deputy Mayor Veinotte that the lowest bid from Fine Cuts Landscaping be accepted for the clean up of the property located at 59 Big Lots Road, Big Lots, PID 60221512 for \$1801.00 including HST. Carried unanimously.

5.3 Quote Recommendation: 586 Woodstock Road, Clearland PID 60226925

Kyle Whynot, Building Official, gave an overview of the property and the process taken as per the Municipal Government Act (MGA) and Policy 007 Dangerous and Unsightly Property.

Moved by Councillor Oickle, seconded by Deputy Mayor Veinotte that the lowest bid from Fine Cuts Landscaping be accepted for the demolition of the buildings and cleanup of the property located at 586 Woodstock Road, Clearland, PID 60226925 for \$17,174.00 including HST. Carried unanimously.

5.4 Policy 074 Unsightly Premises Clean Up Assistance - Policy Discussion

Graham Hopkins, Inspection Services Manager, presented questions that have risen with recent applications made under Policy 074 Unsightly Premises Clean Up Assistance.

Policy 049, Property Tax Rebate Policy, has three income thresholds; under \$30,750, \$30,751 - \$45,000 and \$45,001 - \$60,000. Policy 074 is unclear as to which income threshold the applicant needs to meet to be eligible for assistance.

The Committee came to a consensus that the applicant must be below the maximum income level as defined within Policy 049.

It was also questioned whether unsightly properties under the ownership of an estate would be eligible for the clean up assistance program. The Committee felt that this question should be directed to legal counsel for review.

Method for disbursement of funds

In addition, comments were posed regarding the method of disbursement for awarded funds. How are funds disbursed? Who handles the bill? Do we require a signed agreement with property owner? Do we pay the contractor and lien the balance in excess of \$1500 against the property?

The Committee came to the consensus that a signed agreement with the property owner would need to be acquired before any funds could be released, and that funds would be used to pay invoices billed by a contracted third party. Any invoices in excess of the available monetary assistance would be placed upon the property owner's account as a lien after being paid by the Municipality.

Exemptions for labour costs

Although the policy describes a requirement for the owner to provide labour, there were concerns that applicants who are physically incapable of performing the required labour themselves would not be able to cover the costs for third party assistance. The Committee agreed that if an applicant was unable to perform the labour directly, it would be acceptable for a contracted third party to execute the cleanup on their behalf and any assistance funds received could be used to pay for this service.

Following the discussion, the Committee felt that the policy required further review and that amendments should be made to reflect the clarifications made during the meeting.

Direction was given to staff to bring amendments forward to a future Policy and Strategy Committee meeting.

6. Added Items

6.1 1615 Waterloo Road, Waterloo PID 60312378

Mr. Hopkins presented an update on the active file for the property. It was noted that the Administrator for the file had issued a 30 day extension to the initial notice, as the owner had reportedly engaged a contractor to remove the derelict structure.

6.2 68 Cove Road, Conquerall Bank PID 60337169

Mr. Hopkins presented an update on the active file for the property. The original plan was to present a request for a demolition order. However, Mr. Hopkins felt that the structure did not

meet the criteria for demolition, and that moving forward with a demolition order could open the Municipality to potential liability.

The Committee gave direction to staff to engage a structural engineer to assess the structural integrity of the building, before moving forward with a demolition order.

6.3 Dangerous & Unsightly Premises Process

Discussion regarding the process for dangerous and unsightly premises was reviewed. The need to identify efficiencies and to allow staff to act on files without Committee and Council approval was discussed.

Move by Mayor, Elspeth Mc-Lean-Wile, seconded by Councillor Oickle-that the Committee recommend to Council a review of the Dangerous & Unsightly Property process to identify ways to improve efficiency; and further that the goal is to streamline operations by granting staff greater authority to act on files without requiring referral to the Dangerous and Unsightly Committee or to Council and that the review should focus on reducing resolution timelines and ensuring staff can take timely action. Carried unanimously.

7 Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:08am.