

Mayor's Corner May 2025

Land Use Regulations–Yes, We Are Listening!

By Elspeth McLean-Wile

I am the first to admit that we got the first draft of the Municipal-wide Planning Strategy wrong.

We have heard you loudly and clearly! You told us about your concerns with keeping chickens and livestock, operating a home-based business, maintaining farmland, and many other issues.

There has been lots of conversations about the municipalities work at drafting a district wide Municipal Planning Strategy. The initial draft was released in late March and on March 25 Council agreed to send the document back to the Planning staff for major revisions. Following this decision Council asked staff to set up a series of meeting with residents to help them understand why we are doing this and provide an opportunity to outline their concerns.

These meetings started in early April and will continue until the end of June. You will receive a postcard in May and June outlining those meeting dates.

During the summer staff will work on a new draft of the policies and by-law and in early fall this will be released to the public, followed by another round of meetings at the end of 2025. Again, we will consider the input and make any necessary adjustments in the plan.

This will be a long process; but we hope we can have a finalized document by late spring of 2026 for consideration by Council; we want to have the document reflect the most appropriate plan for our district, given we have not had district wide planning before.

One of the key reasons for undertaking this project is a requirement of the provincial government established through an act of the legislature in 2018. The areas of principal concern for the province are around drinking water, agricultural land, housing, floodplain risk, and infrastructure.

I believe the revised strategy must meet the minimum requirements of the provincial government. We have a large section of rural area and rural communities which do not require the same level of zoning and restrictions that more populated sections of the municipality may require, and the revised plan should reflect that situation.

We have many people raising poultry and animals for their own food or pleasure. This is one of the great attractions of living in a rural community and we want to preserve this in a way that recognizes the long history of a farming culture in Lunenburg County.

We also have a vibrant home-based business community and again we want to encourage that self sufficiency and independence that built our community.

Our community has grown significantly since 2020 and we want to ensure that we have development, both housing and commercial growth located in the right places.

We also want to protect our lakes, rivers and streams from runoff and contamination caused by development and human activity. This will require careful consideration and planning to avoid human impact on the ecosystems and water.

You have made it very clear how much you care for the history, traditions and places where you live in the District of Lunenburg. Please be assured that we will work through this together, we are listening, and we will craft a Municipal Planning Strategy that will work in this community—protecting the things we love and recognizing that we will continue to have growth and development.

To learn more, please visit engage.modl.ca/MODL2040.