

Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Minutes of a Special Meeting of Municipal Council

Held in Council Chamber, 10 Allée Champlain Drive, Cookville, N.S.

Thursday, June 25, 2026

Attendance

Mayor Elspeth McLean-Wile

Deputy Mayor Chasidy Veinotte, District 10

Councillor Morgen Reinhardt, District 1

Councillor Wendy Oickle, District 3

Councillor Pam Hubley, District 4

Councillor Cathy Moore, District 5

Councillor Alison Smith, District 6

Councillor Edgar Burns, District 7

Councillor Kacy DeLong, District 8

Regrets

Councillor Martin Bell, District 2

Absent

Councillor Ben Brooks, District 9

Staff

Tom MacEwan, Chief Administrative Officer

April Whynot-Lohnes, Municipal Clerk

Lisa Andrews, Executive Assistant

1. Call to Order

Mayor McLean-Wile called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. and began by acknowledging that the meeting was held in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

2. Approval of Agenda

Mayor McLean-Wile requested that Item 3.2 Expanded Public Input be removed from the agenda as it does not follow proper protocol.

Moved by Councillor Burns, seconded by Councillor Smith that the Agenda be approved as amended by removing Item 3.2 Expanded Public Input from the agenda. Carried unanimously.

3. Repeal & Replace Municipal Planning Strategy & Land Use By-law

The Mayor acknowledged residents' concerns regarding the proposed Municipal Planning Strategy, particularly around agricultural land designations and public awareness of the process. Given the feedback received through prior written submissions and the public hearing,

the Mayor recommended Council not adopt the plan as presented and instead direct staff to review the concerns and propose revisions before bringing the documents back to Council for first reading on July 14 followed by a public hearing and second reading on July 29.

3.1 Staff Presentation & Second Reading of Municipal Planning Strategy & Land Use By-law

Ella Gindi, Planner II with the Planning & Development Department provided a Planning Staff Update on the Municipal-Wide Land use Planning Project, which was based on the written submissions (attached with Minutes).

Highlights from the presentation:

- Proposed changes to provide an alternative agricultural land protection approach that would replace the rural agricultural potential zone with a rural agricultural overlay.
- Overlay would apply to active farmland identified through provincial mapping and Class 3 soil criteria.
- Approximately 1,170 properties and 1,578 hectares of active agricultural land would be affected.
- Overlay would permit private roads and flag lots, retain the maximum six-lot subdivision limit, retain the prohibition on cluster developments, and remove the minimum four-hectare parcel size requirement.
- Overlay would provide greater flexibility, focus protections on actively farmed land, and allow administrative adjustments based on qualified soil assessments without requiring rezoning.
- Proposed next steps would see staff return to Council on July 14 for the first reading, and a public hearing and second reading on July 29.

3.2 Council Deliberations

Discussion Highlights:

Housing Options (RVs & Tiny Homes)

- Staff clarified that tiny homes on wheels are considered RVs, while tiny homes on foundations are considered permanent dwellings.
- The proposed regulations permit both tiny homes and RV habitation as housing options.
- RVs may be occupied long-term, but a development permit is required after 180 days to ensure setback and environmental requirements are met.
- Development permits assesses compliance with property line and watercourse setbacks.
- Existing lawfully established RVs and structures are grandfathered, with grandfathering applying to the property rather than the property owner.
- Staff emphasized that the intent of the regulations is to support a variety of affordable and alternative housing options while ensuring safety standards are met.
- RVs must meet recognized manufacturing or equivalent safety standards.

- Council identified a need for clearer, plain-language communication regarding these provisions.

Rural Agricultural Overlay

- The overlay approach was viewed as a better balance between farmland protection and property owner flexibility.
- Questions were raised regarding the accuracy of provincial mapping and treatment of inactive farmland.
- Council discussed possible exemptions and options for landowners to challenge mapping designations.
- Councillors emphasized the importance of protecting agricultural land, food security, and rural community character.

Subdivision & Mapping

- Staff confirmed the proposed six-lot subdivision limit was based on the threshold previously used for cluster developments.
- The subdivision limit would apply only within the agricultural overlay area, not across the entire property.
- Staff advised Council could adjust the six-lot limit if desired.

Property Owner Concerns & Exemptions

- Council discussed how landowners could challenge agricultural designations through qualified soil assessments.
- Staff advised the overlay would streamline the process for removing restrictions where lands do not meet Class 3 soil requirements.
- Staff noted Council could consider policies addressing inactive farmland or exemption processes.

Moved by Councillor Burns, seconded by Councillor DeLong that Municipal Council conduct second reading and repeal the existing Municipal Planning Strategy (By-law 035) and the Municipal-Wide Land Use By-law (By-law 049), including all subsequent amendments thereto, and replace them with the new Municipal Planning Strategy and the Municipal-Wide Land Use By-law, both dated June 2, 2026, as presented. Opposed unanimously. Motion defeated.

2026-091 Moved by Deputy Mayor Veinotte, seconded by Councillor Hubley that Municipal Council direct staff to bring back revisions to the Municipal Planning Strategy and Municipal-Wide Land Use By-law (Draft 3) for Council's consideration at the July 14, 2026, Council meeting, reflecting the discussions regarding the agricultural potential zone as presented. Carried unanimously.

4. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

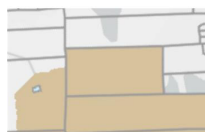
Planning Staff Update

Municipal-Wide Land Use Planning Project

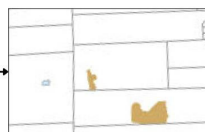


Proposed change to zoning framework

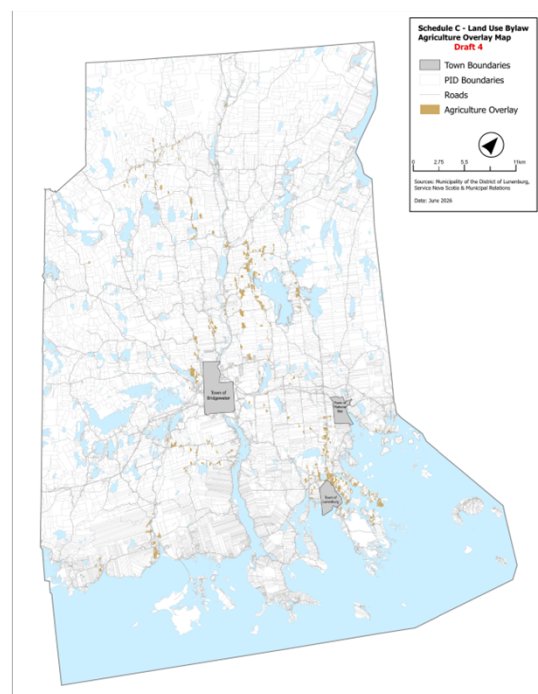
- Change from Rural Agriculture Potential Zone to **Rural Agricultural Overlay**
- Apply Overlay to **active** farmland with at least 60% Class 3 Soil
- Permit private roads and flag lots
- Retain limit on subdivision to 6 lots total
- Retain prohibition on cluster development
- Create a Schedule C



Draft 3 - Rural Agriculture Potential



Rural Agricultural Overlay



Proposed Next Steps

Staff work to edit documents

First Reading – July 14th

Public Information Session – TBD

Public Hearing – July 29th

Second Reading – July 29th

Motion

“That Municipal Council conduct second reading and repeal the existing Municipal Planning Strategy (By-law 035) and the Municipal Wide Land Use By-law (By-law 049), including all subsequent amendments thereto, and replace them with the new Municipal Planning Strategy and the Municipal-Wide Land use By-law, both dated June 2, 2026, as presented”.

Motion

“that Municipal Council direct staff to bring back revisions to the Municipal Planning Strategy and Municipal-Wide Land Use By-law (Draft 3) for Council’s consideration at the July 14, 2026, Council meeting, reflecting the discussion around the agricultural potential zone as presented”.

Thank you

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