

Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

Minutes of a Meeting of Municipal Council

Held in Council Chamber, 10 Allée Champlain Drive, Cookville, N.S.
Tuesday, July 14, 2026 – 6:00 p.m.

Attendance

Mayor Elspeth McLean-Wile
Deputy Mayor Chasidy Veinotte, District 10
Councillor Morgen Reinhardt, District 1
Councillor Martin Bell, District 2
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

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 6:00 p.m. and began by acknowledging that the meeting was held in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

2. Announcements/Acknowledgements/Recognition

Councillor Hubley recognized the residents of Chelsea for steps taken to protect the community from an armed man roaming the area.

Jeff Merrill, Director of Planning and Development Services, introduced and welcomed Emma MacDonald, the Municipality's new Planner I.

Mayor McLean-Wile congratulated the Planning staff for receiving the 2026 Canadian Award of Planning Excellence award, in recognition of their work on the Municipality's Coastal Protection Regulations.

3. Public Input - Nil

Elizabeth Crossland, representing the Aulenback Point Lot Owners' Association, expressed concerns regarding proposed measures to address ATV activity near Mush-a-mush Beach, including the installation of gates or rocks. She noted that the Association would appreciate being involved in discussions about potential solutions.

Hester Gibson, Upper Northfield, addressed Council regarding land use planning and expressed concerns that development on agricultural land permanently removed the ability to protect land for farming, and suggested that future land use decisions carefully consider long-term impacts.

4. Approval of Agenda

It was requested that the resignation of Councillor Ben Brooks be added to the agenda as Item 13.1.

Moved by Councillor Bell, seconded by Councillor Smith that the Agenda be approved as amended with the addition of Item 13.1 Resignation of Councillor Ben Brooks. Carried unanimously.

5. Approval of Minutes – Council June 23, 2026; Public Hearing and Council June 25, 2026

The Minutes of the June 23, 2026 Council meeting were approved as circulated.

The Minutes of the June 25, 2026 Public Hearing were approved as circulated.

The Minutes of the June 25, 2026 Council meeting were approved as circulated.

6. Business Arising from Minutes - Nil

7. Awarding of Tenders/RFPs

7.1 Award of Tender 2026-05-002 Multi-Side Building Demolition

Jamie Burgess, Senior Municipal Engineer, reviewed the report, "Award of Tender 2026-05-002 Multi-Site Building Demolition" (circulated with the agenda), providing details on the three properties that have been identified for demolition, and recommending Asbestos Abatement Limited as the successful bidder.

Discussions followed regarding:

- Demolition timelines for all three sites
- Cost efficiencies due to bundling multiple projects

2026-092 Moved by Deputy Mayor Veinotte, seconded by Councillor Bell that Municipal Council award Tender 2026-05-002 Multi-Site Building Demolition to Asbestos Abatement Limited for an estimated total cost of \$2,095,011.47, which includes contingency and net HST. Carried unanimously.

8. Presentations/Scheduled Times - Nil

9. Consideration of Correspondence - Nil

10. Staff Reports

10.1 Planning & Development

10.1.1 First reading – Municipal Wide Land Use Project

Jeff Merrill, Director of Planning & Development, Ella Gindi, Planner II, Rosemary Young, Planner 1, and Ezra Saunders, Planning Student, were in attendance.

Staff gave a presentation on Draft #4 of the Municipal Wide Land Use Project providing details on the introduction of the new Agricultural Protection Area and outlining the differences between Draft # 3 and Draft #4.

Council discussion regarding Draft 4:

- Staff clarified that Draft 4 limits the Agricultural Protection Area to active farmland on Class 3 soils, using the province's 2018 active farmland inventory alongside the required Canada Land Inventory mapping to better reflect actual farming conditions.
- It was clarified that active farmland includes a range of agricultural uses, and property owners may request to add land for protection or remove land if they can demonstrate it was inactive before the plan's adoption.
- Requests to add or remove land would be reviewed administratively by planning staff based on supporting documentation and the previous option to challenge soil classifications through technical soil studies was removed due to the lack of qualified specialists.
- It was confirmed that most property owners would not be affected unless they sought additional subdivision or requested changes to the Agricultural Protection Area designation.

2026-093 Moved by Councillor Oickle, seconded by Councillor Hubley that Municipal Council give notice of its intention to repeal the existing Municipal Planning Strategy (By-law 035) and Municipal Wide Land Use By-law (049), including all subsequent amendments thereto, and replace them with the proposed new Municipal Planning Strategy, and Municipal-Wide Land use By-law, presented as Appendix A and Appendix B of the July 14, 2026 planning report; and further, conduct First Reading of the proposed planning documents.

Discussion on the motion:

- Need to balance individual property rights with the long-term protection of agricultural land, recognizing that the planning framework would evolve over time and was unlikely to be perfect.
- Support Draft 4 is a more balanced and flexible approach that avoids unnecessary regulation while allowing landowners to request additions to the Agricultural Protection Area.

- Concern that Draft 4 significantly reduced the amount of protected agricultural land, questioned whether it would effectively limit fragmentation, and suggested additional public consultation was warranted.
- Council acknowledged that Draft 4 establishes a foundation for agricultural protection and expressed support for exploring additional tools and initiatives to encourage long-term farmland preservation.

The Motion on the floor was voted on and carried. Those Opposed: Councillors Reinhardt and Smith.

2026-094 Moved by Councillor Burns, seconded by Councillor Moore that Municipal Council set a date and time for a Public Hearing regarding the adoption of the new Municipal Planning Strategy and Municipal-wide Land use By-law on July 29, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. to be held in Council Chambers; and further direct Planning Staff to undertake a public information session prior to the Public Hearing to help inform residents about the proposed regulations and how they may apply to properties throughout the Municipality. Those Opposed: Councillors Reinhardt and Smith. Motion Carried.

11. Recommendations from Committees & Boards

11.1 Finance Committee

11.1.1 Amendments to Policy 043 Community Grants Program/Sponsorship

A recommendation from the Finance Committee, including a report titled “Approval of Amendments to Policy 043 Community Grants Program/Sponsorship Request” providing details on the addition of the Food Bank grant category to the Policy was circulated with the agenda

2026-095 Moved by Councillor Moore, seconded by Deputy Mayor Veinotte that Municipal Council accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee and approve the amendments to Policy 043 Community Grants Program/Sponsorship Request to include a Food Bank Grant category, as presented. Carried unanimously.

11.1.2 Approval of Pre-Construction Housing Grant

A recommendation from the Finance Committee, including a report titled “Pre-Construction Housing Grant” providing details on the project to support non-profit housing developers with help in advancing affordable housing projects, was circulated with the agenda

2026-096 Moved by Councillor Smith, seconded by Councillor DeLong that Municipal Council accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee and approve the introduction of a Pre-Construction Housing Grant for not-for-profit affordable housing developers and direct staff to draft a new policy for Council’s consideration. Carried unanimously.

11.1.3 Submission of Expression of Interest for Climate Ready Infrastructure Services Program

A recommendation from the Finance Committee, including a report titled “Scaling Up Non-Profit Energy Retrofits: A Net-Zero Approach to Revitalizing Community Halls” was circulated with the agenda.

2026-097 Moved by Councillor DeLong, seconded by Councillor Smith that Municipal Council accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee and direct staff to submit an Expression of Interest for the Climate Ready Infrastructure Service (CRIS) Program and proceed with identifying approximately 12 non-profit community halls in the District of Lunenburg that could benefit from energy retrofit opportunities. Carried unanimously.

11.2 Municipal Joint Services Board

11.2.1 Letter of Support re Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund

A recommendation from the Municipal Joint Services Board Committee, including a reported titled “Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund” was circulated with the agenda.

Tom MacEwan, CAO, explained that the letter of support was for an application to the Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund for the development of a reuse centre at the South Shore Waste Solutions site to divert reusable materials from disposal.

2026-098 Moved by Councillor DeLong, seconded by Councillor Burns that Municipal Council provide a Letter of Support for the Municipal Joint Services Board’s submission of an application for the Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund to offset a portion of the cost to set up a reuse centre at the South Shore Waste Solutions, for a total project cost of \$107,000. Carried unanimously.

11.2.2 Security of Municipal Property

A recommendation from the Municipal Joint Services Board Committee, including a reported titled “Security of Municipal Property” was circulated with the agenda.

Mr. MacEwan advised that the detailed analysis report was not included in the public agenda package, as it contained information suitable for an in-camera discussion.

He explained the need to improve cybersecurity protections for critical infrastructure systems and advised that a collaborative assessment was being pursued. Staff clarified that the assessment would review cybersecurity practices related to operational control systems and implement improvements.

Council discussed examples of cybersecurity incidents affecting infrastructure systems and acknowledged the importance of proactive measures. Members expressed support for a collaborative approach and recognized the value of working with partner municipalities and qualified cybersecurity specialists.

2026-099 Moved by Councillor Bell, seconded by Councillor Hubley that Municipal Council collaborate with the Town of Bridgewater to engage a qualified security expert to conduct SCADA security assessment of each partner's water/wastewater systems and obtain recommendations. Carried unanimously.

12. Mayor's/Deputy Mayor's/Councillors' Matters

12.1 MJSB Update

Councillor Burns provided a financial update on matters of the Municipal Joint Services Board as follows:

- reserves approximately \$3.7 million
- budget on track
- revenue and expenses higher than anticipated
- projected surplus of approximately \$510,000 expected
- unexpected repair costs incurred due to equipment breakdowns
- external auditor reviewing financial statements - report expected in August

Councillor Oickle provided the attached update on matters of the Municipal Joint Services Board.

12.2 Deputy Mayor's Update

Deputy Mayor Veinotte advised that she attended agenda briefing meetings and to cheque signing.

12.3 Mayor's Update

Mayor McLean-Wile's update is attached to the Minutes.

13. Added Items

13.1 Resignation of Councillor Burns

April Whynot-Lohnes, Municipal Clerk, reported that Councillor Ben Brooks submitted a letter of resignation from his role as Councillor on Municipal Council effective immediately. She advised that, in the interim, Deputy Mayor Veinotte would cover District 9 constituency inquiries.

Ms. Whynot-Lohnes explained that a recommendation for the following would come forward at the July 28, 2026 Council meeting:

- a tentative nomination date of September 15, 2026
- a tentative special election date of October 10, 2026

It was noted that there were funds in reserve to cover expenses associated with a by-election and a report with further details and estimated costs would come to Council.

14. In Camera

At 7:50 p.m., it was moved by Deputy Mayor Veinotte, seconded by Councillor Moore that Municipal Council go In Camera to discuss Item 14.1 Contract Negotiations under Section 22(2)(e) of the MGA. Carried.

Municipal Council In Camera in session.

At 7:54 p.m., Municipal Council came out of In Camera and returned to open session.

Municipal Council in session.

15. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Municipal-wide Land Use Planning

First Reading

Planning & Development Services
July 14, 2026



Agenda

- 1 Background on the project
- 2 What's changed
- 3 Next Steps

Background

Why is this project needed?

The Province required that **all lands must be zoned**, and that every municipality must have land use planning documents that address the **Statements of Provincial Interest**.

The statements are housing, infrastructure, flood risk, agricultural land, and drinking water.



What is being proposed?

Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS)

Sets a vision for the municipality through policies.



Land Use By-law (LUB)

Implements the vision by regulating land uses and development.



Zoning

Regulates land use by categorizing lands.



How will this affect residents & properties?

All properties will
be zoned

Zoning in existing
planned areas
remains largely
unchanged

Zoning rules can and
will be changed over
time as needed

How will this affect residents & properties?

- **Existing uses and buildings can continue to exist without any need to change.**

These are referred to as “Lawfully Existing Uses” in the documents.

- Future uses and buildings need to follow the new rules.



Where are we in the process?

- ✓ **Project Launch**
2020
- ✓ **Initial Engagement**
2020/2021
- ✓ **Draft #1 Released**
March 2025
- ✓ **Public Engagement**
April - June 2025
- ✓ **What We Heard Report**
Fall 2025
- ✓ **Draft #2**
Winter 2025-2026
- ✓ **Public Engagement on Draft #2**
Spring 2026
- ✓ **Draft #3**
Spring - Summer 2026
- ✓ **Public Engagement on Draft #3**
Summer 2026
- ✓ **Draft #4**
Summer 2026
- ★ **Approvals Process**
Summer 2026

- Council passed first reading of Draft #3 on June 9, 2026
- Following a public hearing on June 25, 2026, Council directed planning staff to revisit and revise Draft 3 of the Land Use Planning framework
- That brings us to today's Council meeting and consideration of First Reading

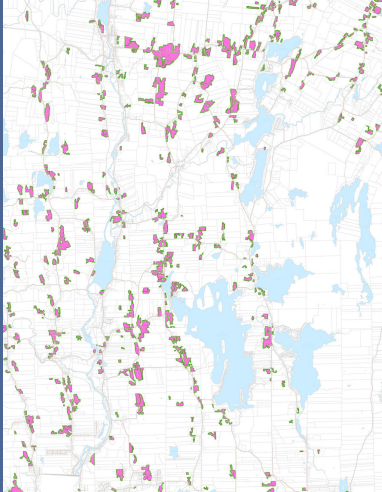
What's changed?

Agricultural Protection Area

- The Agricultural Protection Area replaces the Rural Agricultural Potential Zone, which protected properties larger than four hectares based on the presence of Class 3 soils.
- Instead, the Agricultural Protection Area protects existing **active** farmland containing at least 60% of Class 3 soils. This area only applies to the portion of the property that meets the criteria for protection.

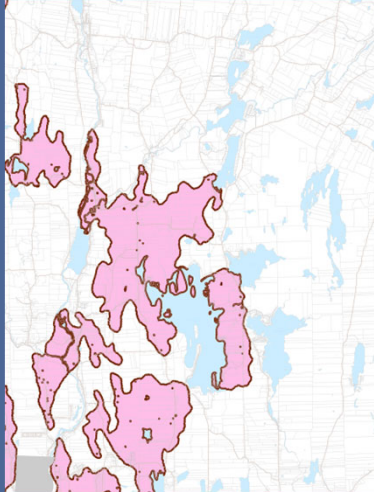


Agricultural Protection Area - Analysis



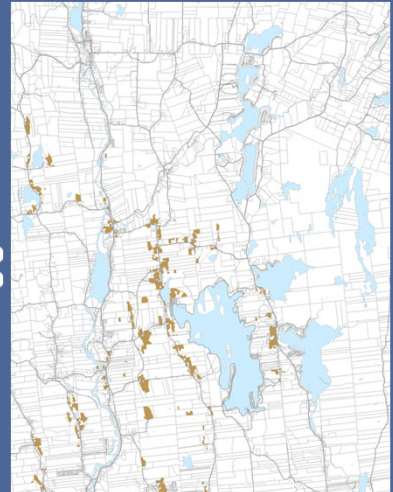
Active Farmland (2018)

+



Land Inventory Class 3 Soil

=



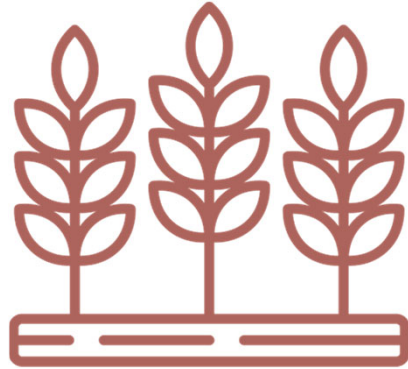
Agricultural Protection Area

Number of Polygons by Lot Size

Lot Size Category	Number of Polygons
Under 5 acres	656
5.1-10 acres	122
10-25 acres	91
25-50 acres	15
Over 50 acres	4

Agricultural Protection Area

- Limits subdivision within the Agricultural Protection Area to a maximum of six lots.
- Prohibits cluster developments in the Agricultural Protection Area.
- Regulates the removal of topsoil.
- Permits property owners to request removing their property from the Agricultural Protection Area by demonstrating their farm was inactive prior to the date of the by-law.
- Permits a property owner to request that their property be added to the Agricultural Protection Area.



Recreational Vehicles

Draft #4 clarifies that a recreational vehicle includes units manufactured to recognized recreational vehicle standards, **including** older models.



Next Steps

Next Steps



Motions

“that Municipal Council give notice of its intention to repeal the existing Municipal Planning Strategy (By-law 035) and Municipal Wide Land Use By-law (049), including all subsequent amendments thereto, and replace them with the proposed new Municipal Planning Strategy, and Municipal-Wide Land use By-law, presented as Appendix A and Appendix B of the July 14, 2026 planning report; and further, conduct First Reading of the proposed planning documents”.

“that Municipal Council set a date and time for a Public Hearing regarding the adoption of the new Municipal Planning Strategy and Municipal-Wide Land Use By-law on July 29, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, and further direct Planning Staff to undertake a public information session prior to the Public Hearing to help inform residents about the proposed regulations and how they may apply to properties throughout the Municipality”.

Thank you

MJSB (Municipal Joint Service Board) Update

Wednesday July 8, 2026

Regarding Chief Operating Officer (COO) position being vacant has necessitated the need to commence recruitment for a Chief Operating Officer Staff respectfully recommended and was approved by the board that:

- The Municipal Joint Services Board award the Executive Search Proposal for the
- Chief Operating Officer Position to KBRS and as alternative procurement; and further that the Board
- approve the unbudgeted expenditure of the same.
- That the Board accepts the MJSB Strategic Priorities, including a year-end report from
- 2025-26 and confirmation of the 2026-27 strategic priorities, and direct staff to return with quarterly updates.
- Presently the CAOs of MODL and TOB will be leading the MJSB services until a new COO is hired.

The existing dome at the waste site was installed in 2017. The current membrane of the structure has multiple holes and separation at some of the joints. The structure was inspected last year, and it was deemed that the best path forward would be to replace all the panels of the main cover. The Board approve the award of Tender 2026-002 Supply & Install Replacement Membrane to Treeline Project Management Ltd.

The MJSB extend the existing Receiving Facility Agreement with Circular Materials (CM) from the original end date of December 31, 2026 to the new end date of May 31, 2027 subject to legal review confirming there are no material issues.

The MJSB entered into a one-year contract with CM on December 1, 2025 to act as a receiving facility for CM obligated recyclable materials. South Shore Waste Solutions (SSWS) receives recyclable material from the three MJSB partners as well as Town of Lunenburg, Region of Queens Municipality, and Municipality of the District of Chester. The contract was intended to act as a bridge deal until the new Material Recovery Facility (MRF) is operational and long-term contracts can be finalized for the receiving facility. Circular Materials has requested an extension to the contract with a new end date of May 31, 2027.

The Board approve the renewal of the internet connectivity and data hosting services agreement with Eastlink for a three-year term, and authorize the COO to execute the agreement on behalf of the MJSB.

The Board directed staff to request resolutions from the individual MJSB partner municipal councils supporting the submission of an application for the Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund to offset a portion of the cost to set up a reuse centre at South Shore Waste Solutions.

The Board endorse the submission of a Divert Nova Scotia Municipal Adoption Fund application to offset a portion of the cost to set up a reuse centre at South Shore Waste Solutions, discussed this evening during our council meeting.

Report by:
Councillor Wendy Oickle

Mayor's Report July 14, 2026

It has been since early June when I presented a report so this may be more lengthy than normal and I will make every effort to consolidate the presentation into a timely piece.

I attended an Ignite Event which focussed on presenting information about the opportunities for tech and innovation within the region. Ignite provides support to entrepreneurs in several locations throughout Nova Scotia and are considering the opportunities here in the area to create a hub to support innovation.

Hebbville Village Commission met in early June, which saw the retirement of Commissioner Glen Hebb and the appointment of Mary Comeau as new commissioner and Vice Chairman. Eric Weagle is now serving as Chairman.

I had an interesting discussion with Glendon Ring and Gil Dares from Yarmouth. Glendon is the manager of the Yarmouth waste site. They began a ReUse Centre in 2025 with some capital funding received from Divert Nova Scotia. The purpose of the centre is to divert items from the landfill that could be repurposed or reused by residents. In the first year they diverted 35 tonnes of material from the landfill and already this year in just eight weeks of operation 12 tonnes. One employee is assigned the responsibility of pulling items that would be landfilled, cleaning them up and storing in Sea Cans. They now have three on site. The centre is open weekly from 9-2pm on Saturdays and operated by a local charity. Charity groups apply to operate the site and have earned between \$500 and \$1000 for one day. The bulk of the traffic comes between 9-10 am. A regular purge of items is carried out when periodically to insure the items are refreshed. The initial start up costs included \$26,000 for site preparation, \$6,000 for the storage units and the \$20,000 for wages. The agreements on the site are managed by a joint organization governed by the District of Argyle, the Town of Yarmouth and the Municipality of Yarmouth.

At a recent MJSB meeting staff brought forward a proposal to consider establishing a ReUse Centre at the South Shore Waste Solutions site in Whynott Settlement. This will come forward in the 2027-2028 budget.

I attended a meeting regarding the administration of the Provincial Police Service Agreement, RCMP Service delivery and public safety and policing topics. Not much to report as the formula details for our area and the associated programming changes was not made public. Another meeting will be held once ministerial announcement is made (likely mid July).

Regional Economic Partnership Strategic Planning Session with the consultants working on the project. This was a meeting of the Mayors with the consultants, the CAOs held a separate session later in the day. It was a productive discussion with a general agreement to focus on a project rather than a structure to accommodate economic development.

I, together with Mayor Mitchell, brought greetings to the Philippines Independence Day flag raising event at ShipYards Landing.

I attended the Harbour House Annual Meeting. Harbour House has moved to a new location within Bridgewater and are embarking on an ambitious project to offer transition housing for women and children to move out of the temporary emergency housing.

The Friends of Cherry Hill Beach are working on hosting the Dry Wall Canada Conference in 2027. We provided them with several ideas for programming and hosting in the neighbouring communities to accommodate the visitors and interested public that might attend their event.

I attended the Beyond BandAids session on advocacy at the Blockhouse Fire Hall. Councillor Delong presented information on the role of municipal council and there were presentations on meeting with the local MLA and organizing community events to advocate for change lead by Marion Moore and longtime community organizer.

I attended the annual meeting of the Lunenburg Waterfront Association to hear the presentation on the Lunenburg Waterfront Draft Strategic Plan. The long-term plan is ambitious and recommended wide ranging cooperation from the Town of Lunenburg and the District along with provincial MLAs and MP to secure the necessary funding to upgrade and repair the wharves to ensure Lunenburg can have a working waterfront that serves the needs of sailing vessels and the marine industry. Tourism was recognized as important however the year-round economic activity of the working waterfront is critical to offer the tourism industry the opportunity to showcase a working waterfront. Parking and tourist flow through the Town was recognized as an important part of the long-term planning and implementation. Governance of the organization that will oversee and champion the plan was also identified as important and needed to include municipal governments, business owners, marine industry representatives and all those with direct connection to the waterfront.

Bay to Bay Trail opening with the launch of a beer by Salt Box Brewery. Event were held at the Mahone Bay site and at ShipLight Brewery in Lunenburg to recognize the completion of the Bay to Bay repairs and upgrades.

Graduations – at Scholaire de la Rive-Sud and Park View Education Centre
Canada Day – attended events in Bridgewater, Pinehurst and the walked in the parade in New Germany with Councillor Delong.

Pride Parade was held in Bridgewater on July 5 and I walked with the MODL staff and Councillor Burns and Smith.

Celebrated Dayspring Electric 35th anniversary with Kendall and Pam Crouse for their business serving the electrical contracting needs of the community. These events just reconfirm the importance of small businesses in our local economy.

Riverport Coastal Appreciation Day was held at the Riverport Community Centre. The event was attended on a summer Sunday by about 50 people with displays by the Ecology Action Centre, Parks and Wilderness Canada Society, Kingsburg Conservancy Society and the Kelp Project in Mahone Bay. I spoke on our coastal protection initiatives including Cape Lahave Island and the Lahave River Project.

Our CAO and I met with Jessica Fancy, our MP and discussed our submission for federal assistance on the demolition of the Centre School. We also had an excellent discussion on approaching housing development from a regional perspective and agreed to a follow up meeting with some key federal government staff and ministerial assistants on hosting a meeting in the fall.