



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MR# 2019004

DATE: 31 January 2018

RE: Land Use Bylaw amendments that regulate cannabis-related uses receives second reading

AMHERST, Nova Scotia – Amendments to Amherst's Land Use Bylaw that regulate cannabis-related uses received second reading from Amherst town council during its Jan. 28 meeting.

The amendments define licensed production facilities and restricts their establishment to industrial zones. They also define the minimum setback licensed production facilities must have from residential properties, parks, daycares and religious institutions.

The amendments also define cannabis retail sales and cannabis lounges and prohibits their establishment – with the exception of those operated by the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation – in any zone.

Council gave first reading to the amendments on Nov. 16, 2018, after the Planning Advisory Committee had recommended their adoption. The town also held a public hearing on the proposed amendment on Dec. 17, 2018.

150 Victoria St. E. development agreement

Council approved the first reading of a development agreement that, if approved at second reading, will allow the property owner of 150 Victoria St. E. to convert the current 15-unit motel with one apartment unit to a 10-unit motel with six apartment units.

Approval of the development agreement was recommended by the town's Planning Advisory Committee, which held a public participation opportunity on the matter on Dec. 3.

Before the development agreement can go into effect, a public hearing on the proposed agreement must be held and council must also pass a second reading. The public hearing is scheduled for Feb. 20.



Public Participation and Notification Policy

Council approved an amendment to its public participation and notification policy that removes the requirement to conduct public participation sessions at a Planning Advisory Committee meeting and allows them to be scheduled independently.

The amendment ensures the Planning Advisory Committee members will have adequate time to consider what was said at the public participation session before voting on the matter. It will also eliminate the need to hold multiple committee meetings each month.

Mi'kmaw Territorial Acknowledgement

A Mi'kmaw territorial acknowledgement will be read before each council session as a result of council's approval of an amendment to its proceeding of council policy.

The acknowledgement will state: "We would like to begin by acknowledging the land on which we gather is the traditional unceded territory of the Mi'kmaw Peoples."

The councillors agreed reading the acknowledgement shows support for inclusion while recognizing our heritage and the Indigenous Peoples from the area.

Council remuneration

A decision on a proposed adjustment to the town's salary administration policy that would have resulted in an increase in council remuneration to replace the after-tax amount lost due to a recent change in the Income Tax Act has been deferred for at least a month.

Council decided on the deferment in order to give staff time to examine if an independent committee that would make the decisions on how councillors are paid could be established.

Several councillors, all of whom felt they should not be making decisions on how they are paid, wanted to know if other municipalities have established such committees and if they have, how they work. Councillors also wanted staff to compare the salaries they receive to the salaries paid to councillors in other Nova Scotia communities such as Truro and Bridgewater.

Staff is to have its report ready for council's February committee of the whole meeting.

Poverty reduction circle

The creation of an ad hoc poverty reduction circle, whose mandate is to provide advice and assistance in understanding and addressing poverty in Amherst, has been established by Amherst town council.



The poverty reduction circle is to engage a broad range of stakeholders and through this engagement develop a better understanding of the capacity and roles of those stakeholders in addressing poverty in the community. In addition, it will identify opportunities for short-term actions and held the town develop a poverty reduction action plan.

Council also appointed 10 people to the poverty reduction circle. They are: Deputy-Mayor Sheila Christie and Recreation Director Bill Schurman from the Town of Amherst, Sarah MacMaster, the executive director of Maggie's Place; volunteer Hee Yeon Son, Colleen Dowe, Community Health Board co-ordinator; Veronica Richards, St. Vince de Paul Society; Connie Fisher, academic chair of Nova Scotia Community College's health and human services; Dawn Ripley, NSHA health equity consultant, Janine DeWitt, NSHA health promoter with public health; and Allison Lair, YMCA community support co-ordinator.

The committee's first task is to develop a term of reference by March 31 for council's consideration and approval.

February meeting date

Council approved moving its February committee of the whole meeting to Feb. 19 because the Heritage Day holiday falls on Feb. 18, the normally scheduled date for the meeting.

Lease renewed

Council approved the renewal of a five-year lease with the owner of 10 Havelock St. that sees the town lease a portion of the park at 12 Havelock St. for the purpose of a walkway and ground sign, at a cost of \$106 per year.

-30-

Direct Inquiries to:
Tom McCoag
Corporate Communications Officer
902-694-6265
tmccoag@amherst.ca
Amherst.ca

