



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MR# 2019085**

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**RE: Council gives first reading to development agreement**

**AMHERST, Nova Scotia** – Amherst town council approved the first reading of a proposed development agreement for 2 Abbott St. during their Nov. 25, 2019, council session.

The proposed agreement will allow the property owner to locate a detached dwelling on the property.

Before the development agreement can come into effect, a public hearing on the matter must be held and council must give it a second reading. The public hearing is scheduled for Jan 20, 2020.

**First reading given to proposed sign regulation changes**

Council approved the first reading of amendments that will affect signage regulations contained the town's Land Use Bylaw.

The changes would prohibit elections signs from being posted on public lands or right-of-ways, would allow tourism-related signs ordered by a government body to be erected in all zones and increase the size of signs allowed in residential zones from two square metres to 6.5 square metres.

The amendments also state off-site signs are not permitted in residential zones.

Before the amendments can come into effect, a public hearing on the matter must be held and council must give it a second reading. The public hearing has been scheduled for Jan. 20, 2020.



## **Stadium Solar installation**

Council approved a contract with Thermo Dynamics Ltd. for the installation of a 75-kilowatt solar field on the roof of the Amherst Stadium as part of the provincial Solar For Community Buildings Program.

The \$256,491 contract, plus HST, will see solar panels installed on 33 per cent of the stadium roof. The installation will begin in March 2020 and the solar field is expected to be in operation by October, 2020.

Council also approved the spending of \$14,650 in associated costs, which included a structural engineering report to ensure the roof could handle the solar panels, fees to Nova Scotia Power to connect the panels to the power grid and consultant fees.

Under the Solar for Community Buildings Program, the town will sell the electricity generated by the solar panels to Nova Scotia Power over a 20-year period. The net profit to the town is projected to be about 27.3 per cent over that time.

Installing the solar panels helps the town meet one of its strategic goals, which is to become a greener community and a better steward of our environment.

## **Street Light Purchase**

Council approved the purchase of 20 new LED streetlights from LED Roadway Lighting at a cost of \$15,643 as part of a pilot project that will test new technology in the lights.

The newly developed lights will not only provide light, but will utilize radar technology to count vehicular and pedestrian traffic as well as vehicle type and speed.

The pilot project will see the town receive a one-year subscription to view and create reports on all the data generated. After the first year, there will be an optional ongoing subscription fee for the data.

In recommending the purchase of the lights, staff indicated they felt the data would be extremely useful for economic development purposes, such as business recruitment and the impact of festivals. The data could also aid police and public works services as well.

They also noted the 20 LED lights removed during the installation of the new lights will be put into storage and used as replacements for lights that malfunction.



## **Flag protocol**

Council approved amendments to the town's flag flying policy that will bring the town's policy in line with the Canadian governments flag flying protocol.

The current policy that when three flags are flown, the Canadian flag will be in the middle and the other flags would be placed in alphabetical order.

The amendments states that when three flags are flown, the Canadian flag will be in the middle, with the next highest government on the left and any subsequent flag on the right.

As an example, if the Canadian, Nova Scotian and Town of Amherst flags were flown, the Canadian flag would be in the middle, the Nova Scotian flag would fly on the left of the Canadian flag and the Town of Amherst flag would fly on its right.

## **Community Support Grant**

Council approved giving the Amherst Heritage Trust a \$1,485 community support grant, which will be used by the trust to fund a community event and book launch that will spotlight and promote Amherst's role in history and the town's unique homes.

## **Ice crusher purchase**

Council approved spending \$49,014 to purchase a sidewalk ice crusher and salt spreader.

In making the decision, council noted that Halifax and a number of other Maritime municipal units have improved the clearing of their sidewalks following the purchase of sidewalk ice crushers. They also noted staff have indicated the same thing could happen here.

The machine works by crushing the ice and adding salt to in one pass. A second pass by a sidewalk plow removes the crushed ice. Currently, the town just adds grit to the ice, but does not remove it.

Staff noted one ice crusher cannot cover all of the town's sidewalks within normal operating timelines. The purchase of the machine is a pilot project that will help the town determine how well it works. Should the machine prove its worth, an additional ice crusher may be acquired next year in order to allow for all sidewalks to have ice removed in a timely manner.



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