



Planning Advisory Committee Meeting
Agenda

Date: Tuesday, September 8, 2026
Time: 4:30 pm
Location: Council Chambers, Town Hall

Pages

1. Call to Order

1.1 Territorial Acknowledgement

"I would like to acknowledge that our gathering today is taking place in Mi'kma'ki (MEEG-MA-GEE), the traditional, unceded and ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaw people. I would also like to acknowledge that Nova Scotia has another unique people, the people of African descent whose legacy and contributions date back over 400 years predating confederation of this land. We are all treaty people."

2. Approval of Agenda and Acceptance of Minutes

2.1 Approval of the Agenda

2.2 Acceptance of the Minutes - June 1, 2026

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3. 29 Patterson Street

3.1 Staff Report

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3.2 Owner / Representative Questions/Comments to PAC

3.3 Complainant / Representative Questions/Comments to PAC

4. 51 York Street

4.1 Staff Report

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4.2	Owner / Representative Questions/Comments to PAC	
4.3	Complainant / Representative Questions/Comments to PAC	
5.	69 Lower LaPlanche Street	
5.1	Variance Report	59 - 59
6.	Municipal Planning Strategy / Land Use By-Law Amendments	60 - 60
7.	Adjournment	

**Town of Amherst
Planning Advisory Committee
Minutes**

Date: June 1, 2026
Time: 4:30 pm
Location: Council Chambers, Town Hall

Members Present Ronald Wilson, Citizen Representative, Chair
Paul Diamond, Citizen Representative, Vice Chair
Deputy Mayor Charlie Chambers
Councillor Terry McManaman
Councillor Dwayne Ripley

Members Regrets Jim Lamplugh, Citizen Representative

Staff Present Jason MacDonald, Chief Administrative Officer
Andrew Fisher Director, Planning & Economic Development
Torben Laux, Planner
Marc Buske, Building Official
Emily Wainwright, Dangerous/Unsightly Premises Administrator
Sean Payne, Marketing & Communications Officer
Natalie LeBlanc, Municipal Clerk
Cindy Brown, Administrative Assistant

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order.

1.1 Territorial Acknowledgement

The Chair gave the Territorial Acknowledgement.

2. Approval of Agenda and Acceptance of Minutes

2.1 Approval of the Agenda

Moved By: Councillor Ripley

Seconded By: Councillor McManaman

That the agenda of the Planning Advisory Committee be approved as circulated.

Motion Carried

2.2 Acceptance of the Minutes - April 7, 2026

The Chair called for any errors or omissions in the minutes. There being none, the minutes of the April 7, 2026, meeting of the Planning Advisory Committee were accepted as included in the agenda package.

3. 99 Rupert Street

3.1 Staff Report

Emily Wainwright reviewed her report included in the agenda package, describing an appeal by the property owner of the Administrator's order to engage a qualified pest control professional to carry out a thorough inspection and eradication of cockroaches and bed bugs in unit 15 of the apartment building at 99 Rupert Street.

The Administrator noted that the first complaint was received on April 10, 2026, for cockroaches and bedbugs in Unit 15. On April 14th an interior inspection was completed by the Administrator, Building Official and Fire Inspectors. Both live and dead pests were observed in the unit, which were identified to be cockroaches. Visual evidence of bedbugs could not be obtained at that time due to the nature of such infestations.

Following the inspection, an order was issued on May 1st under Section 10(3) of the Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies Bylaw, where Buildings shall be kept free of rodents, vermin, and insects at all times. Methods used for extermination such pests shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Pest Control Act of Nova Scotia. This was to be completed by May 17th with a follow-up inspection scheduled for May 18th.

On May 19th, the Municipal Clerk received correspondence from the owner advising that treatment of Unit 15 for cockroaches was completed on May 14th, along with the service report. However, the property owner confirmed that they wished to continue with the appeal stating in the May 26th email included in agenda package that the tenant should be responsible for the bed bug infestation.

The Administrator noted that there have been 3 additional complaints by separate units since May 5th regarding pest concerns. However, the complainants have not yet provided the required documentation as outlined in the Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies Bylaw.

The Administrator added that risks associated with this matter include potential health and safety impacts to the occupants of the unit and building. Failure to require remediation may allow an infestation to persist or worsen and increase the likelihood of pests spreading to adjacent units, and further advised that it appears from the property owner's May 26th email that the issue in question is not the presence of pests, but that a specific type of pest, bed bugs, are the tenant's responsibility, not the property owners. The subject Bylaw does not differentiate between types of insects but simply requires that building be kept free of insects and the methods used for extermination must be in accordance with the NS Pest Control Products Act. Following a strict interpretation of the Bylaw, it is the property owner's responsibility to comply with the Bylaw, rather than the tenant.

3.2 Owner / Representative Questions/Comments to PAC

The owner of the property was not present.

3.3 Complainant / Representative Questions/Comments to PAC

Amy Coady, a tenant of 99 Rupert Street presented to the committee photos and videos showing a cockroach and bed bug infestation. She said that her unit is still having issues despite her unit being treated recently, and that she recently had to be hospitalized due to the insect problem in her unit. She has spoken with other tenants of the building who are also experiencing an issue with cockroaches and bed bugs; however, the owner is denying that they can spread and migrate. She had to throw away her mattress and couch as well as groceries, store all her clothes in plastic bags and spray her other furniture in an attempt to treat her unit on her own but she has not been successful and believes the spray does not kill the eggs.

Ms. Coady's mother was also in attendance and indicated the first complaint of bed bugs was sent to the owner in March of 2024 via text, and that her daughter has gone door to door through out the building getting signatures confirming bed bugs in other units. She is also concerned that tenants moving from the building are taking the bed bugs with them which will only lead to further infestations at other locations.

Moved By: Councillor Ripley

Seconded By: Councillor McManaman

That the Planning Advisory Committee uphold the decision of the Administrator that the subject property is in violation of the Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies Bylaw, P-4, specifically Section 10(3) and deny the appeal.

Against (1): Deputy Mayor Chambers

Motion Carried

Moved By: Deputy Mayor Chambers

Seconded By: Councillor McManaman

That the Planning Advisory Committee direct the Administrator to order that the property owner engage a qualified pest control professional to carry out a thorough inspection and remediation of the entire building at 99 Rupert Street.

Motion Carried

4. 1 Albion Street

4.1 Staff Report

Andrew Fisher presented the application for a Development Agreement on the property located at 1 Albion Street (PID 25009432) to permit the construction of a 24-unit and 12-unit Apartment Building with the applicant's comments regarding the Planning Advisory Committee's concerns from the previous meeting.

Paul Diamond made a motion that the Planning Advisory Committee recommend that Council enter into the Development Agreement for 1 Albion Street as drafted; however, as there was no seconder the motion did not move forward.

Deputy Mayor Chambers asked if there are any policies not being met with this application. Andrew Fisher answered no.

Jason MacDonald commented that this application will still go to Council without a recommendation from the Planning Advisory Committee and if it is defeated the applicant can appeal to the Nova Scotia Utility Review Board (NSUARB), and that they will more than likely win the appeal, adding that the NSUARB look to see if the application follows policy which this one does, and that it will not look positive for the Town that the Planning Advisory Committee is not recommending this application without good reason.

Paul Diamond added that he believes the application is well within all relevant policies, and that new buildings that people can afford need to be built especially when old ones are being torn down.

Jason MacDonald said the Town is criticized for allowing market value apartment buildings and now that a proposal for affordable housing is put forward, the Committee is failing to act. He added that if the Planning Advisory Committee refuses to make a recommendation it could hurt the Town's reputation for attracting developers, as they will not know how their application will be handled. He further expressed that Council's strategic plan speaks explicitly about inclusivity and housing, and the recently adopted new Land Use Bylaw and Municipal Planning Strategy not only permits but encourages this type of development.

Councillor McManaman expressed that he has concerns about the lack of parking. The Chair replied that according to policy there are no parking requirements for this type of development in the downtown, adding that the applicant worked with Town staff since the last meeting to address this concern.

The Chair said that the Planning Advisory Committee's function is to review applications and see if they meet the Town's Land Use Bylaws and Municipal Planning Strategy policies, which this application does, therefore the Planning Advisory Committee should be supporting this.

Councillor Ripley said had this come to a vote he would have voted yes since this application meets policy; however, he did not second the motion because he did not like it.

4.2 Public Participation Opportunity Summary (Including written submissions from the public)

Information item only.

5. Adjournment

There being no further business, the Chair adjourned the meeting.

Natalie LeBlanc
Municipal Clerk

Ron Wilson
Chair

MEMO

TO: Planning Advisory Committee

FROM: Emily Wainwright, Dangerous and Unsightly Premises Administrator

DATE: September 8, 2026

RE: Demolition of 29 Patterson Street (PID 25025909)

Process

The purpose of this meeting is for the Committee to receive and consider staff reports and information respecting the subject property and to provide the property owner and complainant with an opportunity to address the Committee.

As the property owner has been advised of this meeting, the Committee may choose to make a recommendation at this time. Alternatively, should the Committee determine that additional time is required to consider the information presented, it may defer its recommendation to a subsequent meeting.

<u>Registered Owner</u>	Cindy McLeod
<u>Property</u>	29 Patterson Street (PID 25025909) Amherst, Nova Scotia
<u>Building Type</u>	Detached, Single-Family Dwelling
<u>Zoning</u>	Residential



Background

The building at 29 Patterson Street was last occupied in 2017 and has remained vacant since. The property was purchased at tax sale in 2019, sold in 2023, and sold again with the current owner taking possession in August 2026.

In March 2024 staff were in the area and noticed that the front door of the building was open and the owner was notified. Staff were then again notified in June 2024 that the building was not secured and that an individual had broken in and was staying inside. The building was then secured by the owner.

An interior inspection occurred on November 6, 2024, where it was evident that the structural integrity of the building was compromised. It was noted that a portion of the floor joists of the main floor had begun to partially collapse, and it was only safe for staff to walk along the exterior walls. Access to the basement or second floor were not made due to unsafe conditions.

History – Dangerous and Unsightly

2026

August 31	Follow-up inspection.
August 4	Discussed intentions with new owner.
July 30	Issued notice of September PAC – Recommendation of Demolition.
July 29	Building Permit Expired
	Follow-up Inspection.
	No progress by owner.

2025

August 6	Building Permit issued.
May 1	Cancellation of PAC.
	Issued Order to apply for a building permit, with all required documents within 90 days.
April 28	Call from owner stating the building is for sale and that they may be interested in fixing the building.
April 17	Informed owner that building was not secure.
April 16	Issued Notice of PAC – Recommendation for Demolition.
	Building not secure.

2024

November 11	Interior Inspection completed.
October 23	Issued Notice to enter building for an interior inspection.
August 13	Left owner a voicemail requesting a date to complete an interior inspection.
July 2	Owner contacted TOA, said she would call back to schedule an inspection.
June 26	Issued letter for an interior inspection.

June 26 Follow-up inspection, property secured.
June 4 Administrator noted that the building was not secured during a nearby inspection.
Immediate Order to Secure issued.
Spoke with relative of owner.

2019
December Property sold at tax sale.

2018
October Last water consumption period.

Inspection – November 6, 2024

- The exterior of the building is vinyl siding.
- The second-floor rear portion of the building is not sided.
- The building appears to be vacant.
- The building is secure.
- The roof is asphalt but not weather-tight, and obvious holes in the roof.
- There are still power lines running to the building but power appears to be disconnected.
- The building appears to be in a deteriorated state and unmaintained for quite some time.
- There are signs of rot along the fascia.
- There are signs of structural fatigue, visible by the partial collapse of the main floor.
- Shrubs and bushes on the property appear to not be maintained.
- Due to floors being unstable, access to the second floor was not accomplished.
- There is a large hole near the back entrance that appears to lead to the basement.
- There is evidence of rodents.
- Due to floors being unstable, access to the basement was not accomplished.
- It was undetermined if there is a functional heating system.
- The foundation appears to be in fair condition.
- The accessory building is in a serious state of disrepair and in an extremely deteriorated state.
- Water has been shut off since 2018; a sewer account remains – confirmed by the Revenue Officer.
- The property previously sold at tax sale in 2019.

Relevant Legislation and Violations

Relevant Legislation	Section	Violation	Deficiency
Municipal Government Act	3(r)	<i>“dangerous or unsightly” means partly demolished, decayed, deteriorated or in a state of disrepair so as to be dangerous, unsightly or unhealthy, and includes property containing (iv) that is in a ruinous or dilapidated condition,</i>	Relevant definitions under the Municipal Government Act.

		(vi) that is in such a state of non-repair as to be no longer suitable for human habitation or business purposes, (vii) that is an allurements to children who may play there to their danger, (viii) constituting a hazard to the health or safety of the public, (x) that is a fire hazard to itself or to surrounding lands or buildings, (xii) that is in a poor state of hygiene or cleanliness;	
Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4	6(1)	Fire alarm and detection systems shall be maintained in an operational condition at all times	There is a lack of fire alarm and detection system.
Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4	7(1)	Every part of a building shall be maintained in a structurally sound condition so as to be capable of sustaining safely its own weight and any load to which it may normally be subjected.	The main-floor floor joists are structurally compromised and has shown partial collapse.
Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4	8(1)	Every floor, ceiling, both sides of every interior wall and the interior side of every exterior wall in a building shall be maintained free from dampness.	Ceilings and 1 exterior wall is showing signs of water damage.
Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4	9(1)	Roofs shall be kept weather tight and free from leaks.	It appears that the roof is in poor condition and not weather-tight. Water is entering into many parts of the building.
Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4	10(3)	Buildings shall be kept free of rodents, vermin and insects at all times. Methods used for exterminating such pests shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Pest Control Products (Nova Scotia) Act.	Evidence of rodents was found on the main-floor.
Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4	11(1)	Windows, exterior doors, skylights, and basement or cellar hatchways shall be maintained in good repair, weather tight and reasonably draft free.	Many windows are boarded up.
Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4	12(1)	Every dwelling or dwelling unit shall have a safe, continuous and unobstructed passage from the interior of the dwelling to exterior grade level. Buildings using a fire	Access to the bedrooms is not safely accessible. Stairs are severely sloping towards the middle of the building.

		<i>escape as a secondary means of egress shall have the escape in good condition, free from obstructions and easily reached through a window or door operable from inside without requiring keys or specialized knowledge.</i>	
<i>Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4</i>	<i>13(1)</i>	<i>Interior and exterior stairs, porches, balconies and landings shall be maintained in good repair so as to be free of holes, cracks, and other defects which may constitute accident hazards.</i>	<i>Interior stairs are not safe and severely sloping towards the middle of the building.</i>
<i>Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4</i>	<i>15(1)</i>	<i>Every chimney, smoke-pipe, flue and vent shall be installed and maintained in good repair so as to prevent smoke, fumes or gases from entering the building and so as to prevent the heating of adjacent combustible material or structural members to unsafe temperatures.</i>	<i>The chimney is in poor condition.</i>
<i>Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4</i>	<i>15(3)</i>	<i>All connections between liquid or gaseous fuel burning equipment in a dwelling and the source of liquid or gaseous fuel, shall be maintained in good repair, and shall meet the requirements of all applicable standards.</i>	<i>Unable to verify if the main heating system was present and operational as there was no access to the basement.</i>
<i>Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4</i>	<i>16(1)</i>	<i>Every building shall be provided with suitable heating facilities for maintaining an indoor ambient temperature of 22 degrees Celsius throughout all occupied areas.</i>	<i>Unable to verify if the main heating system was present and operational as there was no access to the basement.</i>
<i>Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4</i>	<i>17(2)</i>	<i>All plumbing, including drains, water supply pipes, toilets and other plumbing fixtures shall be maintained in good working condition free of leaks and defects and all water pipes and connections thereto shall be protected from freezing.</i>	<i>There is no water connection to the building. The last consumption period was October 2018.</i>

Conclusion

The building exhibits extensive interior and exterior deficiencies, including a collapsing floor joist, significant water damage, a deteriorated and leaking roof, and a dilapidated accessory building. Staff have determined that the premises is severely deteriorated and unsafe, presenting a significant risk to the health and safety of persons entering the property.

The current owner took possession in August 2026 and intends to demolish both structures. A follow-up inspection occurred on August 31, 2026, confirmed that some exterior work had commenced, including disconnection of the power and removal of some siding from two sides of the building. The owner had advised that the interior will be gutted by the end of October, with demolition to follow. While a demolition permit application has not yet been received, the owner is aware of the requirement and has indicated that an application will be submitted.

Given the extent of deterioration, structural concerns, and the overall condition of the premises, staff are of the opinion that the building is dangerous and would require substantial repairs to be habitable. The owner agrees that demolition is required and has begun taking the steps toward completing the process. Historically, recommendations for Orders for Demolition have provided a 90-day timeline from the date of the meeting in which the Order was issued, provided there is no imminent danger present. Following consultation with the property owner, staff are recommending a 180-day deadline for completion of the demolition, as the owner intends to undertake the demolition using non-mechanical methods. The owner has indicated that 180 days provides a reasonable timeframe to complete the necessary work.

Options

- 1) That the Planning Advisory Committee Order the demolition of the building and accessory building, and any holes backfilled, located at 29 Patterson Street (PID 25025909) within one hundred and eighty days (180) days of the date of this meeting, with all work to be completed by the property owner. Failure by the property owner to complete the required work may result in the Town of Amherst undertaking the demolition and disposal of contents to an appropriate solid waste facility or impound yard, with all costs incurred to be charged to the property owner's tax account.
- 2) That the Planning Advisory Committee direct staff retain a qualified third-party contractor or professional engineer to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the building's condition. This will include detailed recommendations and cost estimates required to ensure the structure can be properly secured and safe to be accessed by first responders; and further, that the findings of this assessment be reported back to the PAC, with all associated costs to be charged to the property owner's tax account.
- 3) That the Planning Advisory Committee direct staff to continue monitoring the subject property and to report back to the Committee on any new or emerging issues as they arise.

At this time, staff are recommending Option 1

Attachments

- 1) *20241106 29 Patterson Street Pictures*
- 2) *20260831 29 Patterson Street Pictures*

29 Patterson Street

PID 25025909

November 6, 2024

















Significant bowing in floor



Significant bowing
in floor







Significant bowing
in floor







Collapse of floor system.



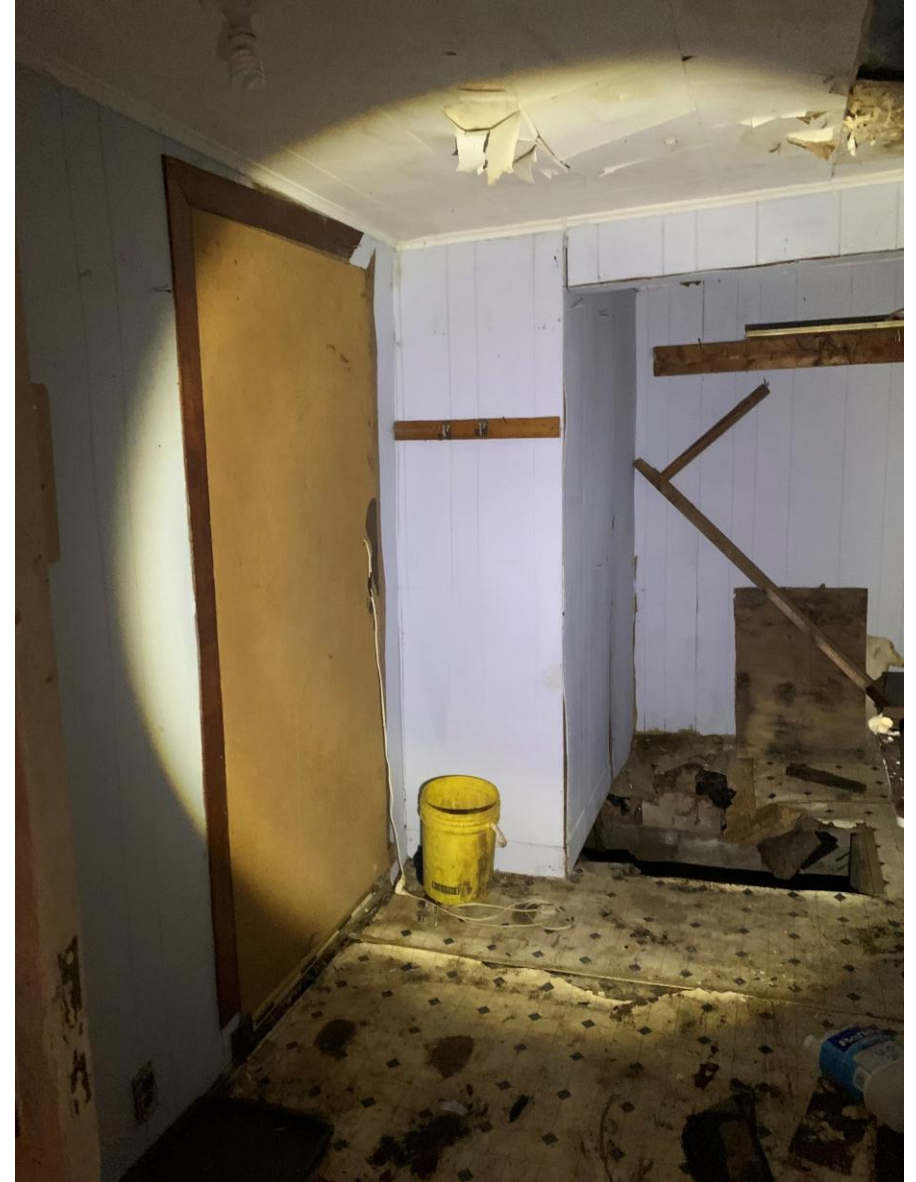






Hole in floor of back
portion of building













Stairs to second floor are leaning inwards

29 Patterson Street

August 31, 2026







MEMO

TO: Planning Advisory Committee

FROM: Emily Wainwright, Dangerous and Unsightly Premises Administrator

DATE: September 8, 2026

RE: Demolition - 51 York Street (PID 25003096)

Process

The purpose of this meeting is for the Committee to receive and consider staff reports and information respecting the subject property, and to provide the property owner and complainant with an opportunity to address the Committee.

As the property owner has been advised of this meeting, the Committee may choose to make a recommendation at this time. Alternatively, should the Committee determine that additional time is required to consider the information presented, it may defer its recommendation to a subsequent meeting.

Registered Owner Eric and Beverly MacKenzie

Property 51 York Street (PID 25003096)
Amherst, Nova Scotia

Building Type Detached, Single-Family Dwelling

Zoning Residential



A complaint was received in March 2026 regarding garbage throughout the property and food being disposed of out of a second-story window. The initial inspection found extensive deterioration of the building in general, including a collapsed rear basement wall. The Building Official II was then requested to ensure immediate safety for anyone entering the building or property. It was determined that a request for an interior inspection was necessary. As it was unclear if the building was occupied, 5 days' notice was given to the owner for this inspection.

On April 14, 2026, the Dangerous and Unsightly Premises Administrator entered the premises along with an officer from the Amherst Police Department and the owner. The building at the time was occupied by one individual.

Due to the conditions of the building, an Order to Vacate was issued on April 16, 2026. Prior to the Order to Vacate being issued, alternative housing options were researched. These options and contacts were given to the owner.

A second Order was issued on April 16, 2026, requiring the owner to schedule a meeting with the Building Official II and the Dangerous and Unsightly Premises Administrator by May 31, 2026, to discuss the owner's intentions for the building, including plans and timelines for bringing it into compliance with the Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies Bylaw (P-4). The Order noted that failure to do so may result in the Planning Advisory Committee considering the building for demolition.

History – Dangerous and Unsightly

2026

July 29	Remaining work completed by TOA contractor.
July 24	Follow-up inspection, hired contractor to complete the remainder of the work and informed owner.
June 18	Follow-up inspection, reached out to owner if final items will be removed.
June 1	Owner confirmed they mowed and have moved and bagged more garbage for transport.
May 29	Follow-up inspection, continued progress – Order extended. Warning Issued regarding long grass.
May 19	Follow-up inspection, progress being made – Order extended.
April 16	Issued Order to Vacate. Issued Order – re: schedule meeting with TOA.
April 15	Contacted owner to inform of decision to issued Order to Vacate
April 14	Entered building with APD and Owner. Alternative housing options contacted.
April 9	Issued Notice to Enter. Issued Order – re: garbage.
April 8	Initial site visit. Building Official II called to site for inspection.
March 31	Complaint received.

Inspection – April 14, 2026

- The exterior of the building is painted wood cladding.
- The roof is asphalt.
- There is power to the building and is operational.
- There is water consumption.
- Several windows are broken and/or in an extremely deteriorated state.
- The rear exterior wall in the basement has collapsed inward into the basement.
- The interior is extremely difficult to navigate due to the accumulation of items.
- Access to the kitchen necessities (fridge, stove, sink) is extremely difficult.
- The handrail leading to the second floor is missing.
- There is no access to the bathroom.
- There is significant water damage to all ceilings, and many exterior and interior walls.
- There is a small heater heating the main bedroom, which is a confined space due to an accumulation of items.
- There is evidence of food being cooked in the main bedroom (baking sheets and a toaster oven are present and appear to be in working condition).
- The basement is concrete and gravel/mud and is relatively dry.
- The water heater is located in the basement.
- There are no operational smoke detectors.
- There is only one partially accessible entrance/exit in the building; unsafe means of egress.
- The chimney is in poor condition and appears to be separating from the building.

Relevant Legislation and Violations

Relevant Legislation	Section	Violation	Deficiency
<i>Municipal Government Act</i>	3(r)	<i>“dangerous or unsightly” means partly demolished, decayed, deteriorated or in a state of disrepair so as to be dangerous, unsightly or unhealthy, and includes property containing (ia) an accumulation or collection of materials or refuse that is stockpiled, hidden or stored away and is dangerous, unsightly, unhealthy or offensive to a person, or (iv) that is in a ruinous or dilapidated condition,</i>	Relevant definitions under the Municipal Government Act.

		(vi) that is in such a state of non-repair as to be no longer suitable for human habitation or business purposes, (vii) that is an allurements to children who may play there to their danger, (viii) constituting a hazard to the health or safety of the public, (x) that is a fire hazard to itself or to surrounding lands or buildings, (xii) that is in a poor state of hygiene or cleanliness;	
Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4	6(1)	Fire alarm and detection systems shall be maintained in an operational condition at all times	There is a lack of fire alarm and detection system.
Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4	7(1)	Every part of a building shall be maintained in a structurally sound condition so as to be capable of sustaining safely its own weight and any load to which it may normally be subjected.	A portion of the rear foundation is structurally compromised and has shown partial collapse.
Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4	8(1)	Every floor, ceiling, both sides of every interior wall and the interior side of every exterior wall in a building shall be maintained free from dampness.	Several ceilings and walls show signs of extreme water damage.
Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4	9(1)	Roofs shall be kept weather tight and free from leaks.	The roof is in poor condition and not weather-tight. Water is entering into many parts of the building.
Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4	10(2)	All foundation supports forming part of a building shall be maintained in good repair so as to prevent settlement of the building.	A portion of the rear foundation is structurally compromised and has shown partial collapse.
Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4	10(3)	Buildings shall be kept free of rodents, vermin and insects at all times. Methods used for exterminating such pests shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Pest Control Products (Nova Scotia) Act.	Evidence of rodents was found throughout the basement.
Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4	11(1)	Windows, exterior doors, skylights, and basement or cellar hatchways shall be maintained in good repair, weather tight and reasonably draft free.	Windows and frames on both the 1 st and 2 nd floor are in poor condition.

Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4	12(1)	Every dwelling or dwelling unit shall have a safe, continuous and unobstructed passage from the interior of the dwelling to exterior grade level. Buildings using a fire escape as a secondary means of egress shall have the escape in good condition, free from obstructions and easily reached through a window or door operable from inside without requiring keys or specialized knowledge.	There is not a safe, continuous and unobstructed passage. There is an extreme accumulation of items.
Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4	13(1)	Interior and exterior stairs, porches, balconies and landings shall be maintained in good repair so as to be free of holes, cracks, and other defects which may constitute accident hazards.	Interior stairs leading to the 2 nd floor are missing a hand/guard rail.
Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4	15(1)	Every chimney, smoke-pipe, flue and vent shall be installed and maintained in good repair so as to prevent smoke, fumes or gases from entering the building and so as to prevent the heating of adjacent combustible material or structural members to unsafe temperatures.	The chimney is in poor condition and separating from the building.
Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4	15(3)	All connections between liquid or gaseous fuel burning equipment in a dwelling and the source of liquid or gaseous fuel, shall be maintained in good repair, and shall meet the requirements of all applicable standards.	Unable to verify if main heating system is properly working due to accumulation of items.
Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4	16(1)	Every building shall be provided with suitable heating facilities for maintaining an indoor ambient temperature of 22 degrees Celsius throughout all occupied areas.	Unable to verify if main heating system is properly working due to accumulation of items.
Minimum Standards for Residential Occupancies, P-4	17(2)	All plumbing, including drains, water supply pipes, toilets and other plumbing fixtures shall be maintained in good working condition free of leaks and defects and all water pipes and connections thereto shall be protected from freezing.	Unable to verify if toilet is functional due to not being able to access the bathroom. There was no water consumption between January 2026 and date of inspection despite a new meter in the building.

Conclusion

It is staff's opinion that the building is severely deteriorated, unsafe, and presents a significant risk to the health and safety of any person entering or occupying it. Deficiencies include a collapsed portion of the rear basement wall, significant water damage, deteriorated and broken windows, inadequate means of egress, an inaccessible bathroom, and a lack of operational smoke detectors. A substantial accumulation of materials and belongings further restricts movement and access to essential facilities. A heating appliance and evidence of cooking in a confined bedroom add further fire and life-safety risks. Given these conditions, staff are of the opinion that the building is dangerous and would require an unfeasible number of repairs to be made habitable.

Options

- 1) That the Planning Advisory Committee Order the demolition of the building located at 51 York Street (PID 25003096) within sixty (60) days of the date of this meeting, with all work to be completed by the property owner. Failure by the property owner to complete the required work will result in the Town of Amherst undertaking the demolition and disposal of contents to an appropriate solid waste facility or impound yard, with all costs incurred to be charged to the property owner's tax account.
- 2) That the Planning Advisory Committee direct staff retain a qualified third-party contractor or professional engineer to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the building's condition. This will include detailed recommendations and cost estimates required to ensure the structure can be properly secured and safe to be accessed by first responders; and further, that the findings of this assessment be reported back to the PAC, with all associated costs to be charged to the property owner's tax account.
- 3) That the Planning Advisory Committee direct staff to continue monitoring the subject property and to report back to the Committee on any new or emerging issues as they arise.

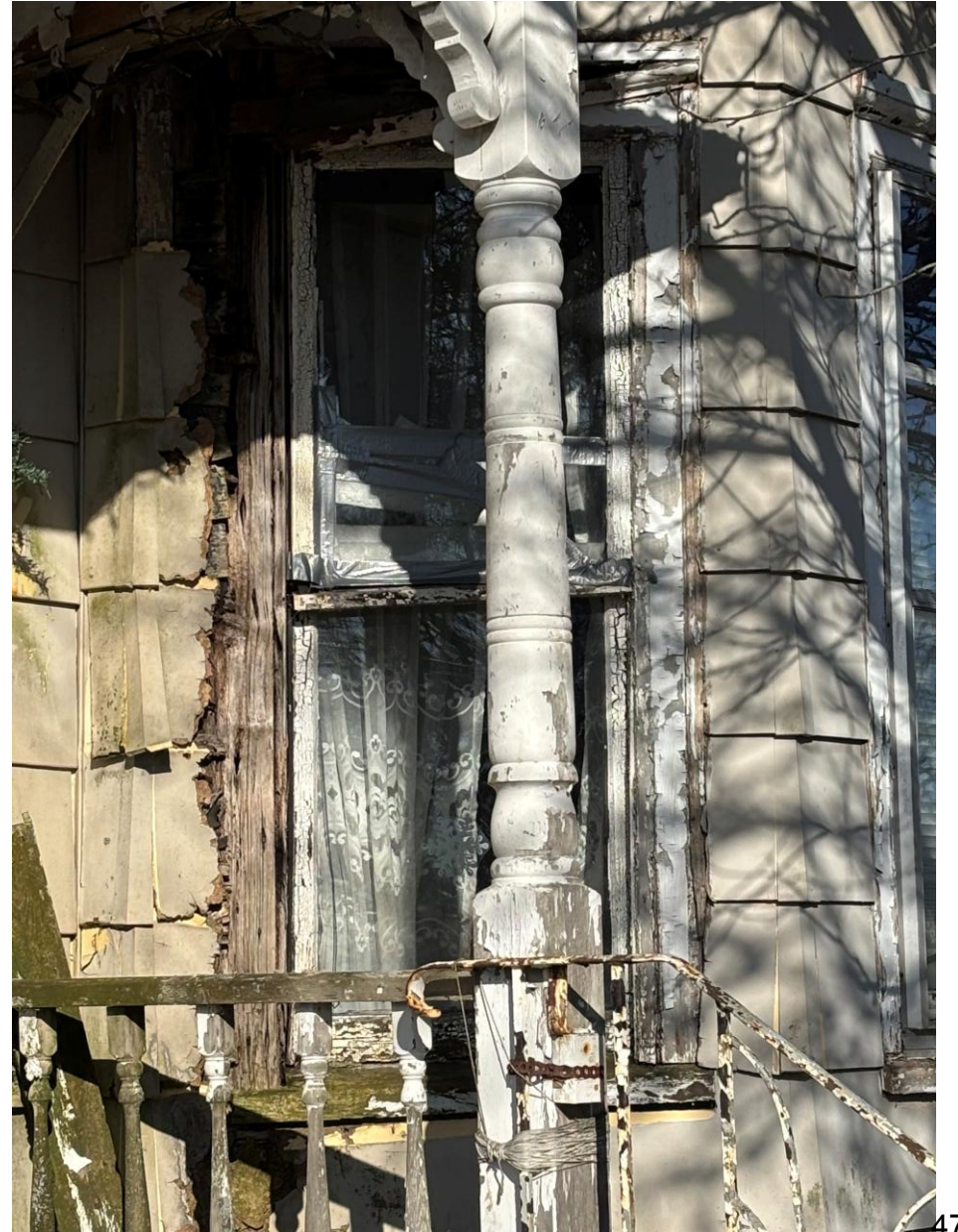
At this time, staff are recommending **Option 1**.

Attachment

- 1) *20260416 51 York Street Pictures*

51 York Street

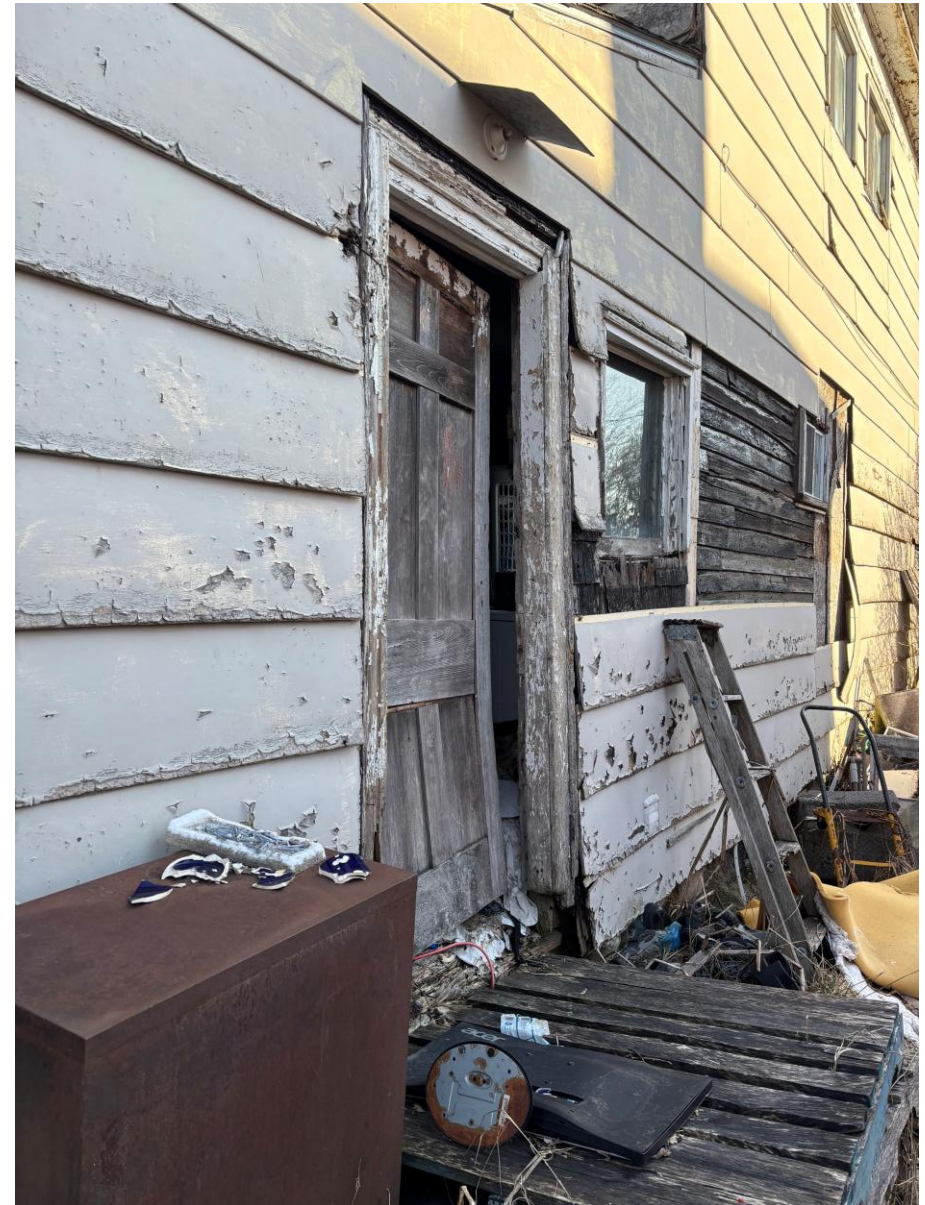


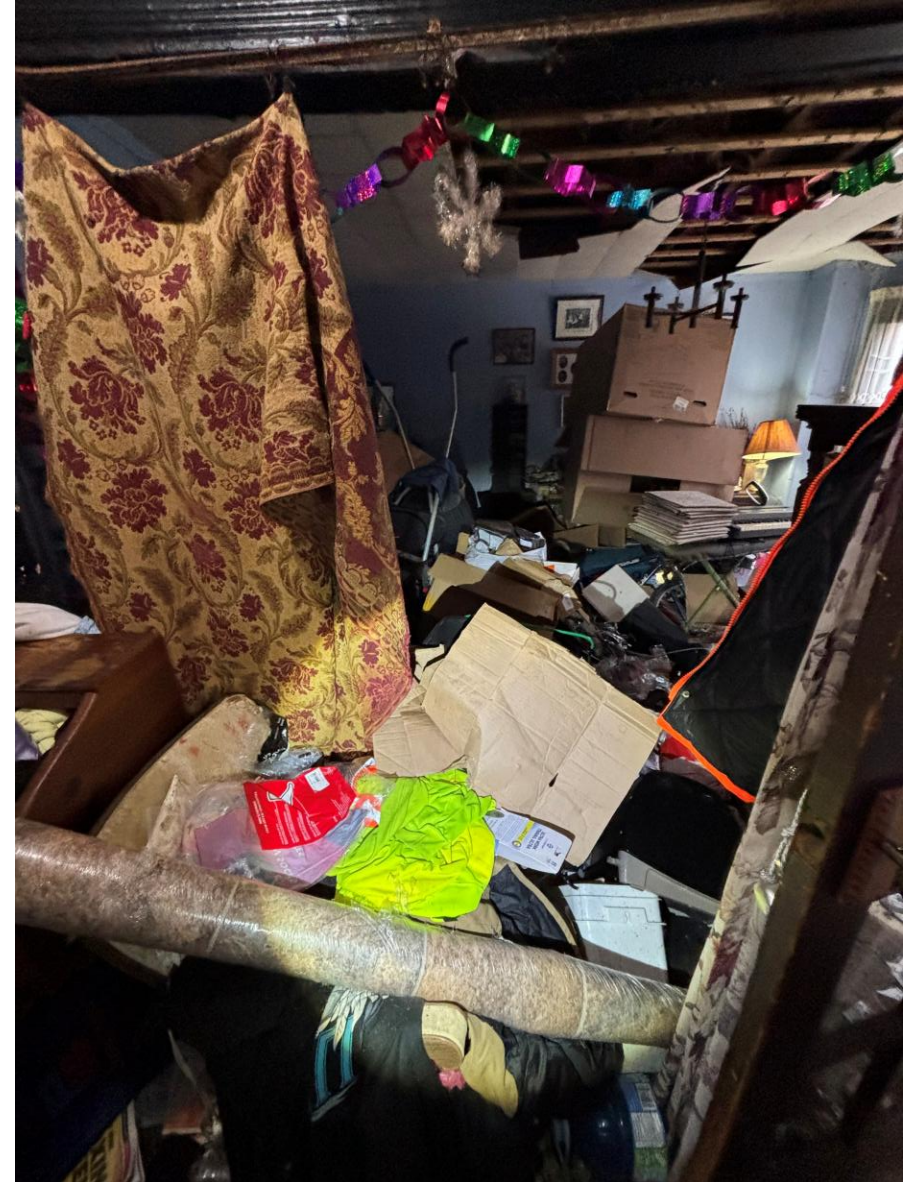


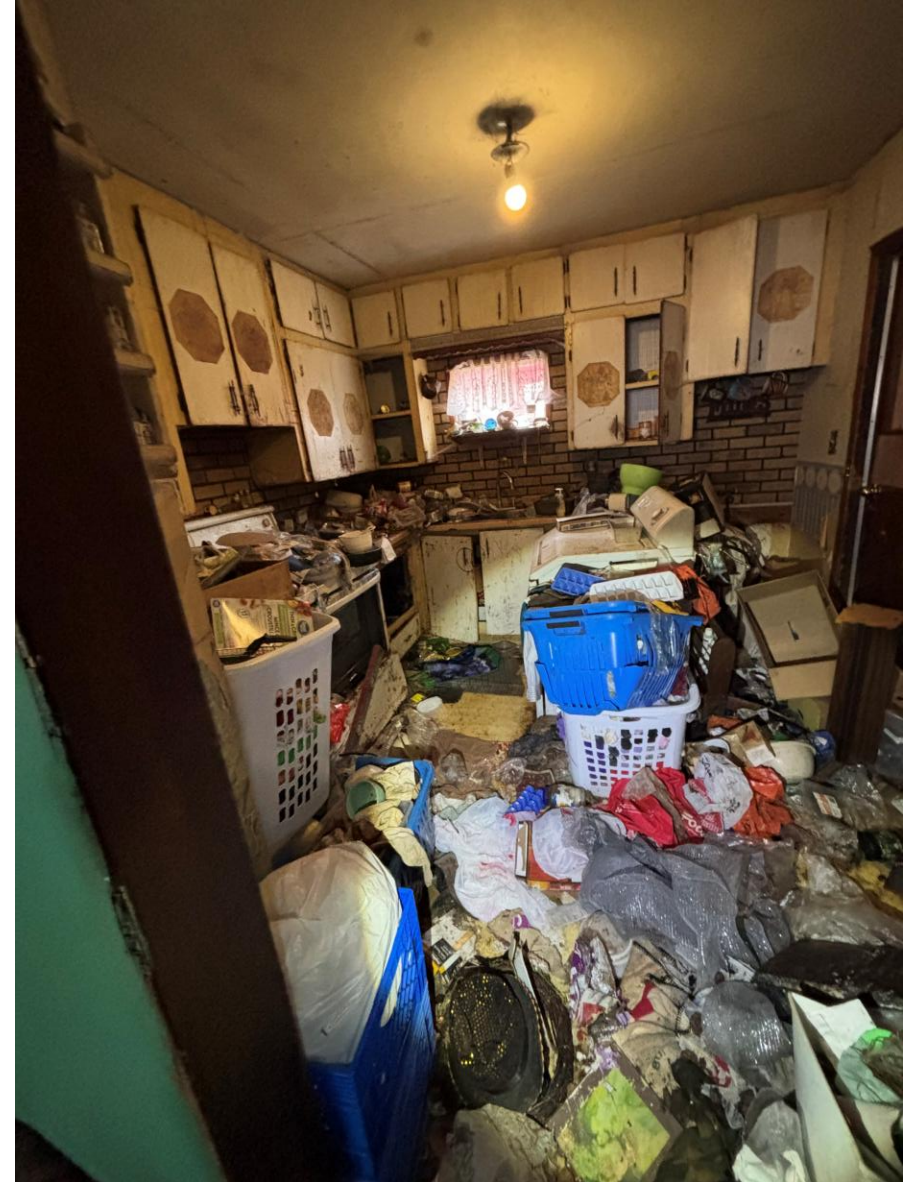




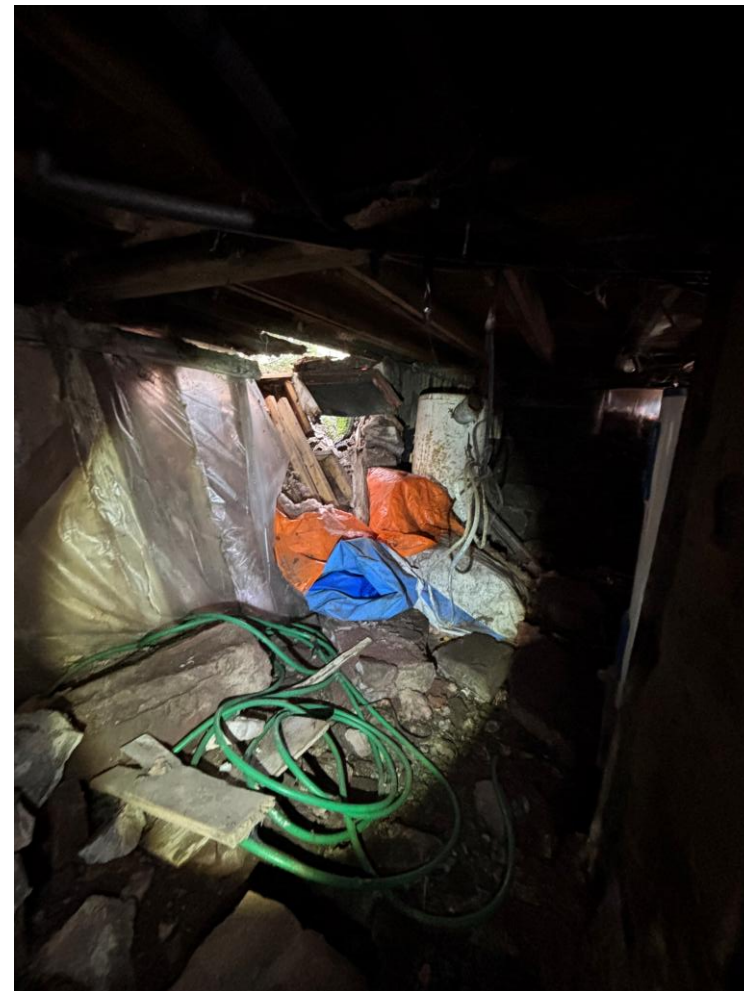


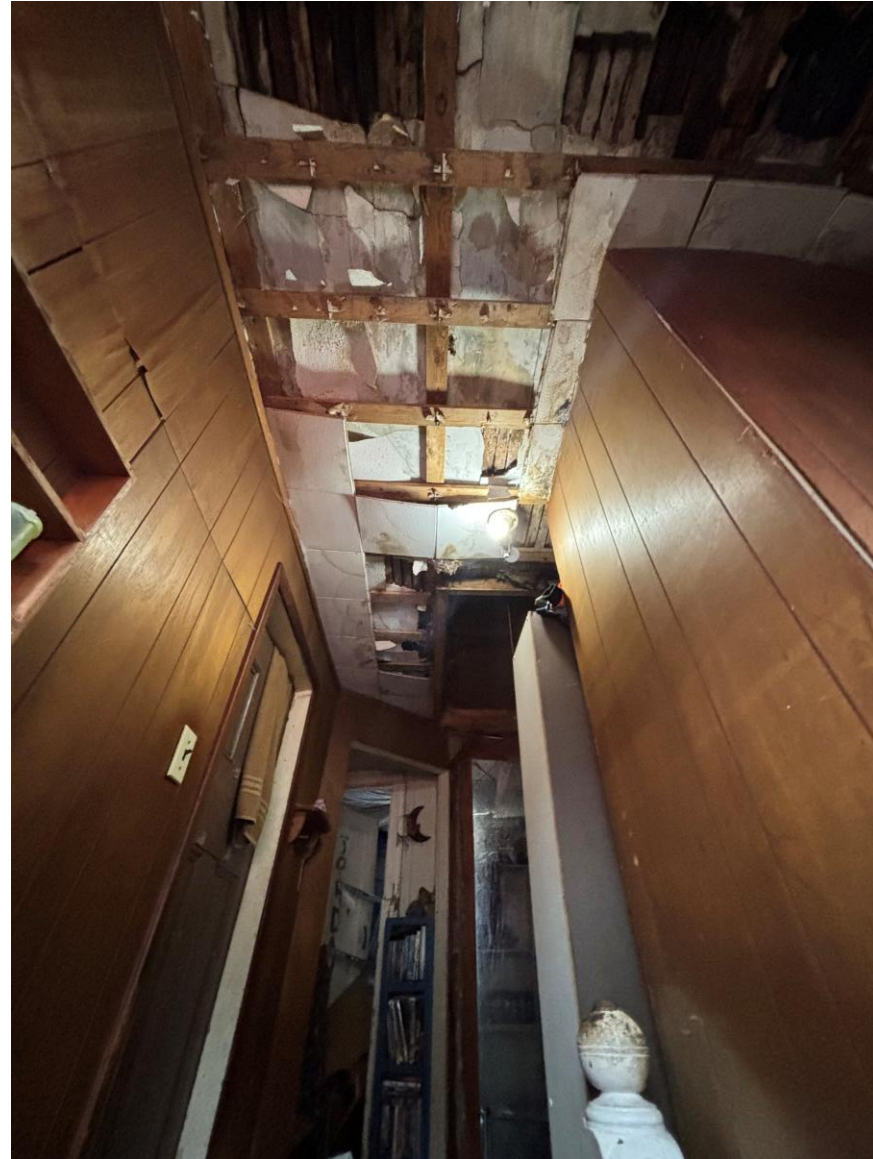
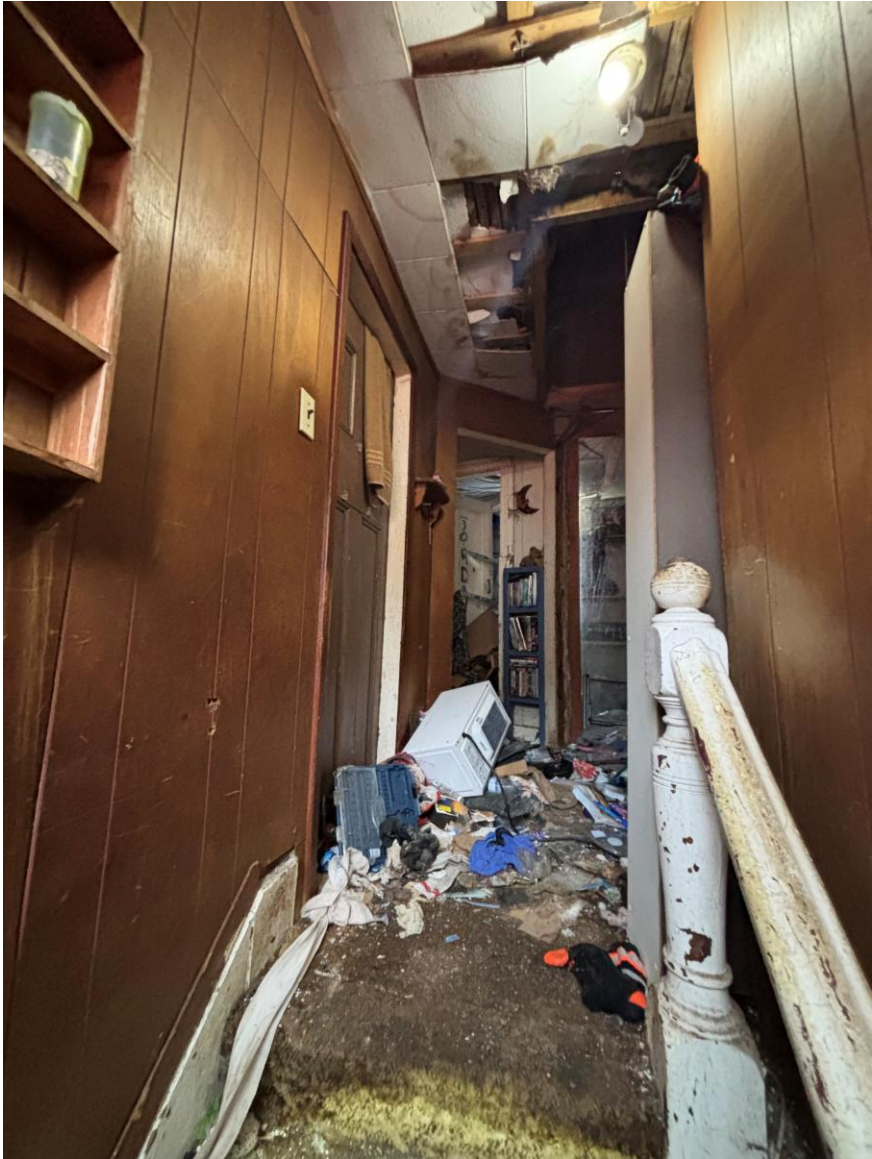


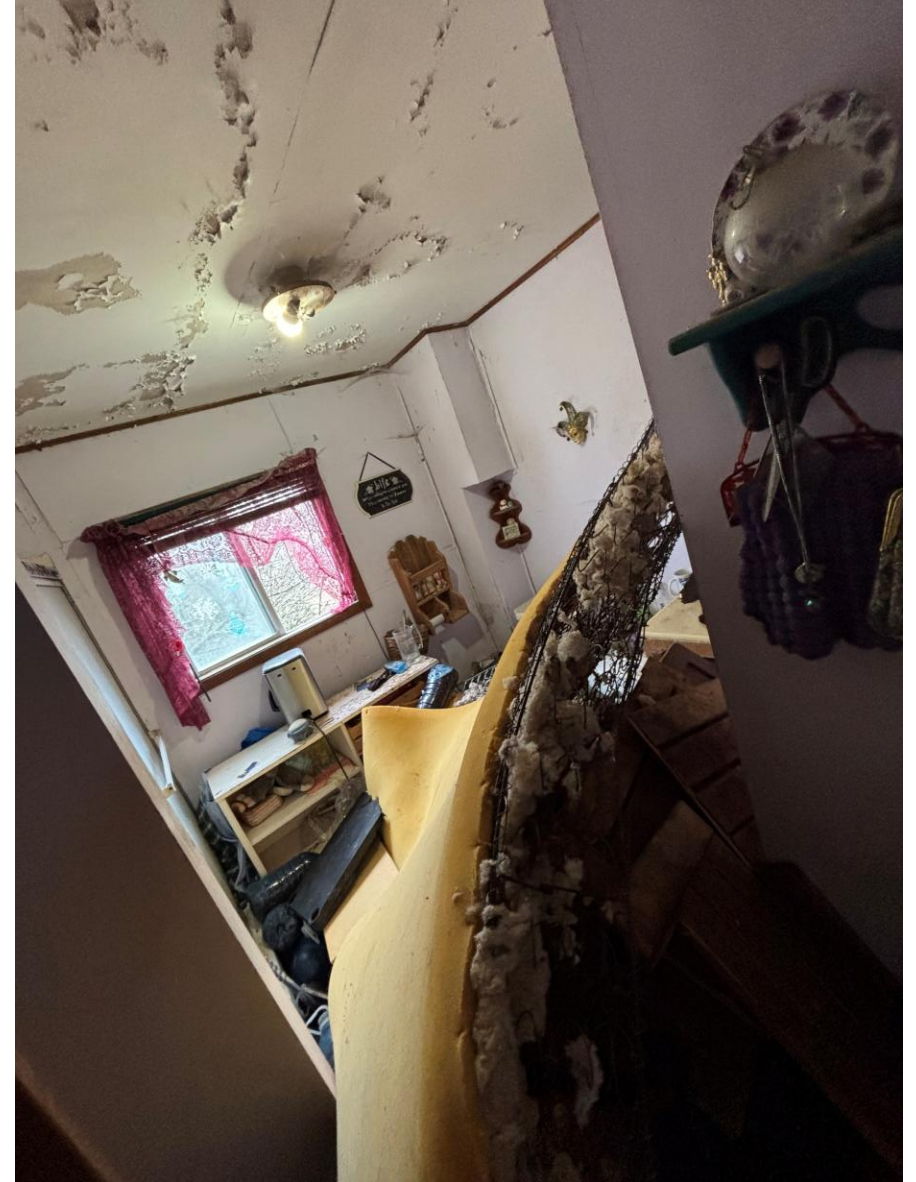




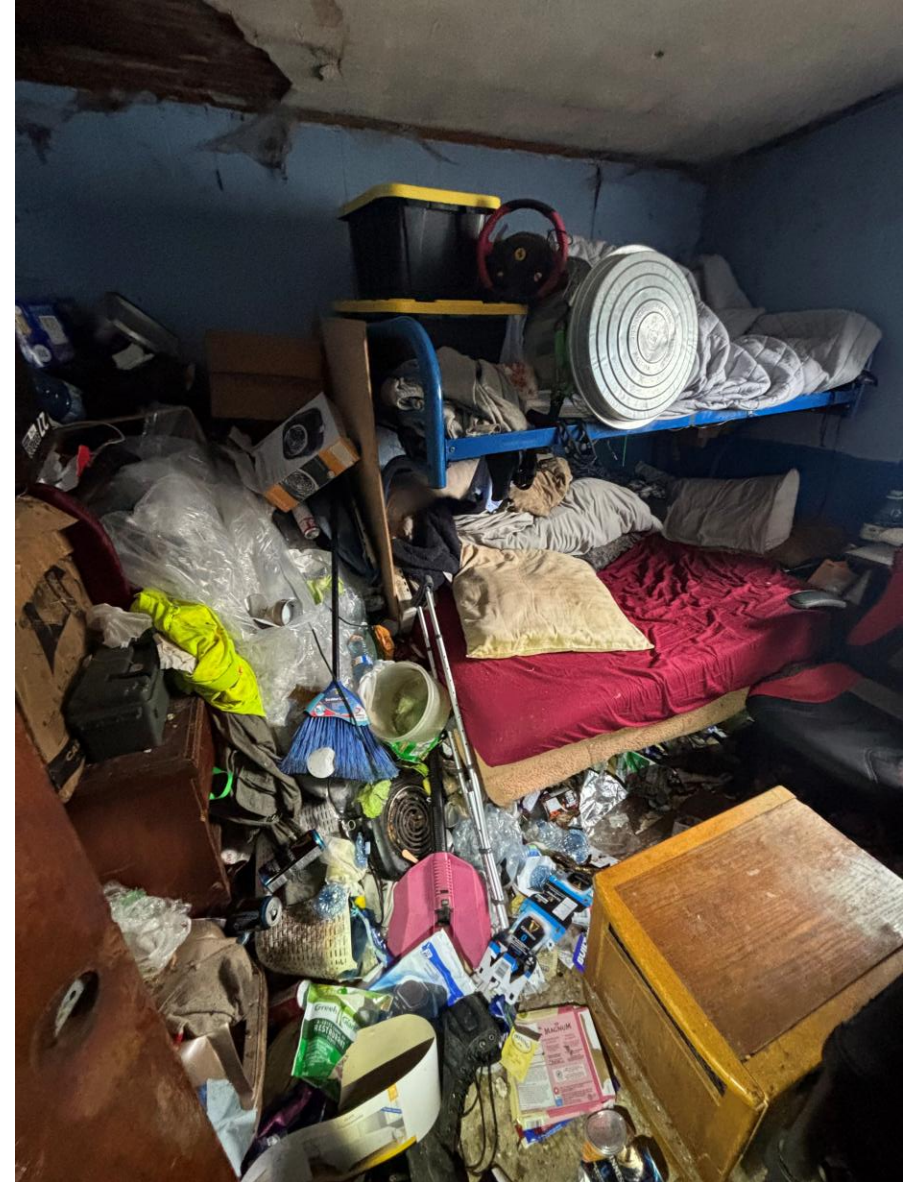
Rear basement wall has collapsed.

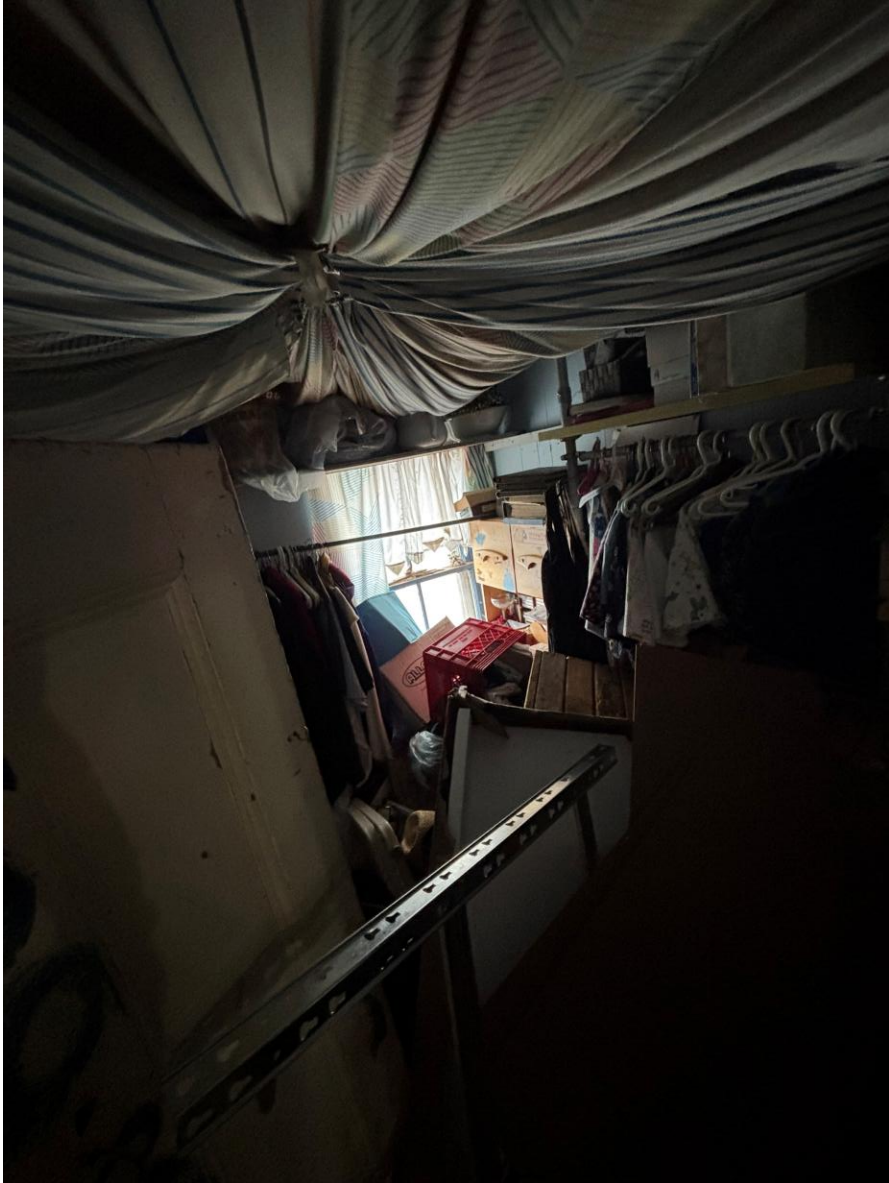






Occupied bedroom with heating and cooking appliances.





MEMO

TO: Planning Advisory Committee

FROM: Andrew Fisher, Director of Planning & Economic Development

DATE: September 8, 2026

RE: **Variance Report – 69 Lower Laplanche Street**

On August 11, 2026, staff issued a 7.5% minimum lot area variance for 69 Lower Laplanche Street to permit the construction of a 9-unit apartment building. This variance was appealed to council and a hearing is scheduled for September 17th at 4:30 p.m.

Additional details of the proposed development and the appeal process will be provided at the meeting.

MEMO

TO: Planning Advisory Committee

FROM: Andrew Fisher, Director of Planning & Economic Development

DATE: September 8, 2026

RE: **Planning Document Amendments – Shelters and Wet Facilities**

Council recently passed a motion with the following direction:

That staff be directed to prepare a report for the September meeting of the Planning Advisory Committee that defines ‘wet sites’ and where/what is permitted, further define where overnight shelters are permitted in the Town of Amherst, hold a public participation opportunity and then make a recommendation to Council.

In the context of addictions, a “wet site”, commonly known as a wet house or wet shelter, is a residential facility for individuals with chronic substance use disorders, typically an alcohol use disorder, where residents are permitted to consume alcohol on the premises. (rehabs.com) Given that alcohol is legal, an alcohol wet site is not specifically regulated by senior levels of government.

Supervised consumption sites (often called “safe injection sites” or “overdose prevention sites”) involve the consumption of illicit controlled substances. These sites require a section 56.1 exemption from the federal Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA). Currently, there are two such facilities operating in Nova Scotia – ReFix in Halifax and Peer Six in Sydney. The CDSA exemption does not legalize illicit drug use but provides a specific legal protection for activities covered by the exemption at the authorized site. In practical terms, individuals can bring their own drugs to a supervised consumption facility with trained staff that can prevent overdoses and provide other supports.

Overnight or emergency shelters provide temporary overnight accommodations and other basic needs such as food, showers, laundry and other supports for those experiencing homelessness.

Under the current MPS and LUB, the above noted facilities are not defined, but depending on the particulars of the use, shelters would be permitted in the Downtown Commercial, Highway Commercial, and institutional zones. Given that controlled substances are illegal, staff are of the opinion that a development permit could not be issued for a supervised consumption site.

A Public Participation Session is scheduled for October 5th where staff will present potential definitions of the above noted uses, with potential MPS and LUB amendments that specify where such uses are permitted and under what conditions.

It is important to note that this issue is not about moving the existing shelter. As an existing use, amendments to the planning documents do not impact the shelter’s current operation.