

**Town of Amherst  
Planning Advisory Committee  
Minutes**

**Date:** April 7, 2025  
**Time:** 4:30 pm  
**Location:** Council Chambers, Town Hall

**Members Present** Ronald Wilson, Citizen Representative, Chair  
Jim Lamplugh, Citizen Representative, Vice Chair  
Councillor Terry McManaman  
Paul Diamond, Citizen Representative

**Members Absent** Councillor Charlie Chambers  
Councillor Dwayne Ripley

**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, Corporate Communications Officer  
Natalie LeBlanc, Municipal Clerk  
Cindy Brown, Administrative Assistant

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**1. Call to Order**

The Chair called the meeting to order.

**1.1 Territorial Acknowledgement**

The Chair gave the Territorial Acknowledgement.

**2. Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

The Clerk asked for nominations for the position of Chair. Jim Lamplugh nominated Ron Wilson. The Clerk called for any further nominations, there being none, Ron Wilson accepted the position of Chair. The Clerk then asked for nominations for the position of Vice Chair. Ron Wilson nominated Jim Lamplugh. The Clerk called for any further nominations, there being none, Jim Lamplugh accepted the position of Vice Chair.

**3. Approval of Agenda and Acceptance of Minutes**

**3.1 Approval of the Agenda**

**Moved By: Jim Lamplugh**

**Seconded By: Councillor McManaman**

**That the agenda be approved as circulated.**

**Motion Carried**

**3.2 Acceptance of the Minutes - March 3, 2025**

The Chair called for any errors or omissions in the minutes. There being none, the minutes of the March 3, 2025 meeting of the Planning Advisory Committee were accepted as included in the agenda package.

**3.3 Acceptance of the Minutes - March 25, 2025**

The Chair called for any errors or omissions in the minutes. There being none, the minutes of the March 25, 2025 meeting of the Planning Advisory Committee were accepted as included in the agenda package.

**4. 112 West Victoria Street Development Agreement Application**

**4.1 Staff Report**

Torben Laux presented the application for a Development Agreement on the property located at 112 West Victoria Street (PID 25000605), to permit the construction of two 16-unit buildings and three 8-unit buildings.

**Moved By: Jim Lamplugh**

**Seconded By: Councillor McManaman**

**That the Planning Advisory Committee recommend that Council enter into the Development Agreement for 112 Victoria Street West Development as drafted.**

**Motion Carried**

**4.2 Public Participation Opportunity Summary (with letters of concern)**

Information item only.

**5. 100 Russell Street Development Agreement Application**

**5.1 Staff Report**

Torben Laux presented the application for a Development Agreement on the property located at 100 Russell Street (PID 25031139) to permit the construction of 6, 42-unit apartment buildings, 38 Stacked Townhouses, and 14 Stacked Bungalows.

Mr. Lamplugh asked about the 10 acres to be left as green space as proposed, and what this would look like. Mr. Fisher replied that staff need more details from the developer regarding this.

Councillor McManaman asked for confirmation that development was not planned to start until 2028, which Mr. Fisher confirmed.

Mr. Wilson asked about access to and from the street indicating he feels this needs further discussion around flow of traffic and how each phase of the proposal would affect traffic access and egress to and from the site. Mr. Wilson also asked about water, sanitary and storm infrastructure and who would be responsible for the increase of usage anticipated due to this proposal, the Town or the developer? He added he believes the stormwater flows into the proposed site and would like confirmation that the Town's infrastructure can handle the stormwater and sanitary capacity that would be increased due to this development. He further expressed his concern with the neighboring properties along Russell Street, and asked if the developer could redesign the layout of the proposal to increase rear yard setbacks so there would be less impact on the current Russell Street residents.

**Moved By: Councillor McManaman**

**Seconded By: Paul Diamond**

**That the Planning Advisory Committee defer a recommendation to allow additional time for further staff review and identify any additional information and /or changes to the proposal that may be requested.**

**Motion Carried**

**5.2 Public Participation Opportunity Summary**

Information item only.

**6. Municipal Planning Strategy / Land Use Bylaw**

**Moved By: Councillor McManaman**

**Seconded By: Jim Lamplugh**

**That the Planning Advisory Committee recommend that Council adopt the draft Municipal Planning Strategy and corresponding Land Use Bylaw as drafted.**

**Motion Carried**

**7. 27 Station Street (Amherst Train Station) - Heritage Property**

Jason MacDonald left the meeting at this time.

Mr. Fisher reviewed his memo included in the agenda package indicating that drawings have been submitted to staff for an exterior staircase to be added to the north-facing side of the Railway Station at 77 Station Street to permit public access to the upper level. The train station is privately owned but is a municipally registered property. Under the Nova Scotia Heritage Property Act, an alteration considered substantial must be reviewed by the Heritage Advisory Committee who make a recommendation to Council.

Councillor McManaman asked what the proposed use for the upper level is? Mr. Fisher replied he is not sure.

Mr. Lamplugh asked if the upper level could be accessed from the inside of the building. Mr. Fisher replied there is a stairwell inside of the building however it is not conveniently located for public use. Mr. Lamplugh asked if the exterior staircase would be required as a fire exit if the upper level was to be used by the public, Mr. Fisher replied yes. He also wanted to know the what the upper level would be used for, would it be a meeting room and how important is it to the owner to have use of the upper level. Mr. Fisher replied that the use of the upper level is outside of the Committee's mandate, and that the question before the HAC is if the stairway as proposed significantly detracts from the heritage value of the building. Mr. Lamplugh feels the staircase as proposed aesthetically diminishes the look of the building. He wants more insight into what the upper level will be used for, and is concerned with what the long-term effects of adding these stairs could have.

Mr. Wilson asked if the staircase could be brought in closer to the building. The Building Official replied that is a code issue and that a landing is required and it cannot be straight stairs. He further indicated that the second staircase is required to not limit the number of people permitted on the upper level.

Mr. Lamplugh asked if the staircase could be erected at the back of the building. Mr. Fisher replied no as the railway controls space between the railway and the building.

Councillor McManaman feels the staircase is an improvement that would assist with the usage of the building, he would not want to see the building be torn down due to it not being used.

Mr. Diamond asked if it is a requirement that the staircase be solid as proposed. The Building Official replied that the new building code recently adopted on April 1<sup>st</sup> requires risers to be covered.

**Moved By: Jim Lamplugh**

**That the Planning Advisory Committee recommend the Council not approve the proposed staircase to be added to the north end of the Train Station.**

There being no seconder for the motion, the motion was lost.

**Moved By: Councillor McManaman**

**Seconded By: Paul Diamond**

**Defer a recommendation and request changes or additional information, including what the upper level will be used for.**

Against (4): Ronald Wilson, Jim Lamplugh, Councillor McManaman, and Paul Diamond

**Motion Defeated**

**Moved By: Paul Diamond**

**Seconded By: Jim Lamplugh**

**That the Planning Advisory Committee recommend the Council approve the proposed staircase to be added to the north end of the Train Station.**

Against (1): Jim Lamplugh

**Motion Carried**

**8. Dangerous and Unsightly Premises Demolition Verbal Update**

Emily Wainwright gave a verbal update on two properties that have been approved by the Committee for demolition. The first one being 77 Station Street noting that she has been in contact with CN and VIA Rail and has received their information required to form part of the Request for Proposals for demolition. She added that once the Request for Proposals has been awarded there is a minimum four month waiting period for CN to review the site and execution plans and give their approval to begin work. She will continue to update the Committee as more information becomes available. Ms. Wainwright also updated the Committee on 19 Spring Street advising that there has been no further action to date.

**9. Adjournment**

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

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Natalie LeBlanc  
Municipal Clerk

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Ron Wilson  
Chair