

Town of Clarendville Municipal Plan Review Public Consultation Sessions, March 23, 2009

Aim of the Public Consultation Sessions

The public consultation sessions were designed to provide information to residents on the municipal planning process, identify important land use issues and concerns, and solicit input on an overall vision for land use and development to guide the preparation of the new municipal plan and development regulations.

The afternoon Open House was organized as an informal drop-in session during which residents could meet one-on-one with the project consultants and Town officials. There was no particular agenda for the Open House other than to provide an opportunity for individuals to learn about the process and raise issues or concerns that they had. Input ranged from observations on what overall direction and thrust the new plan should take to personal concerns about how the new plan will affect individual properties. The Open House was attended by approximately 20 people.

The evening Public Forum was organized more formally and designed to solicit residents' views on an overall vision for land use and development in Clarendville. The agenda was designed to generate discussion on land use needs and objectives related to economic development, residential development, environmental protection, recreation and open space, heritage protection and development, community attractiveness, municipal infrastructure, and adaptation to climate change. The Public Forum was attended by approximately 35 people.

The following is a summary of input received from participants in the two sessions.

Open House - 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM

Objections were raised about how new residential subdivisions are being developed. The consultants heard that not enough effort is being made to maintain trees and other aspects of the natural landscape. Deep excavations are scarring hillside landscapes and resulting in excessive runoff and erosion onto lower ground and into watercourses. For example, eroded debris from the development south of Lori Ann Place has blocked Barbour Brook and the runoff is scouring the banks of the brook.

One person said that the maximum road grade of 10% is forcing developers to excavate slopes. He thought steeper roads would be preferable to the creation of gravel pits in the sides of hills.

Concerns were raised about the site development on Bare Mountain east of Shoal Harbour Drive. This site has been denuded of trees and is being excavated for gravel. This has undermined the aesthetics of the area and the quality of the Bare Mountain hiking trail, and increased runoff and drainage problems

Council must tighten controls on site development in order to reduce the loss of trees, control gravel excavation, and prevent more "scars" on the landscape.

The Dark Hole Brook Rotary Trail has been degraded by the site work for a proposed development off the Trans Canada Highway. Denuded of all trees and topsoil, the site is now just a muddy field.

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Concern was expressed that if the new bypass in Shoal Harbour is connected to Palmer's Lane, it will have an undesirable traffic impact on Palmer's Lane. This person would prefer that Palmer's Lane not be connected to the bypass.

Several individuals raised personal questions and concerns about how the municipal plan would affect their individual properties.

Public Forum – 7:00 PM to 9:30 PM

The public forum was opened by Deputy Mayor Lisa Browne, who observed that the Municipal Plan is a continuation of the recently adopted Clareville Strategic Plan with a focus on land use policies and regulations.

The following comments were in response to questions posed by the consultants.

What is your vision for future land use and development in Clareville?

The overwhelming response to this general question was that Clareville should become a greener and more walkable community. Land development should emphasize higher aesthetic and environmental standards, incorporate more green space, provide space for trails and sidewalks, and protect environmentally sensitive areas such as streams and steep hillsides.

The need for a more definable town centre was emphasized, which would allow for a mix of business outlets, government services, and cultural and recreational facilities. Participants lamented the fact that the original business district overlooking Smith Sound declined with the spread of strip development throughout the town. Several people promoted making the waterfront a stronger focal point for future development.

Clareville has been designated as one of only two Age-Friendly towns in the province. The new municipal plan should reflect the vision of an age-friendly community. Some key physical features of an age-friendly community include:

Green spaces and outdoor seating are sufficient in number and well maintained.
Pedestrian passageways are well-maintained, free of obstructions, reserved for pedestrians, wide enough for wheelchairs, and have drop curbs to road level.
Outdoor safety is promoted by good street lighting and community education.
Commercial and community services are close together and are accessible.
Buildings and public spaces are well designed for accessibility and have ramps, railings, non-slip floors, and sufficient seating and toilets.
Roads are well maintained, have good lighting, and are free of obstructions that block drivers' vision.
Parking and drop-off areas are safe, sufficient in number, and conveniently located. Sufficient parking spaces are provided for people with special needs.
Sufficient affordable housing is available in areas that are safe and close to services and the rest of the community.
Housing for seniors has interior spaces and level surfaces that allow freedom of movement

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Venues for events and social activities are conveniently located, accessible, and well-lit.
Community emergency planning takes into account the vulnerabilities and capacities of older people.

What are Clarendville’s land use needs and location priorities to accommodate economic development?

Larger industrial uses should be segregated from general commercial development. The site west of the Trans Canada Highway should be the focus for larger-scale industrial development.

The waterfront should be revitalized for recreational and commercial developments.

The Manitoba Drive commercial district does little to attract visitors to stay in Clarendville. Highway travelers may stop to shop, eat, or do some business but our commercial areas do not sell the town as a place to spend some time. More attractive entrances would help leave a better first impression.

Would like to see a new town centre develop. We used to have one but now everything is spread out. Focal points for more concentrated development should include historical areas such as shipyard and town hall areas.

The Town should limit the development of big box stores.

A new Provincial courthouse could be made a good anchor or focal point to foster surrounding development.

What are Clarendville’s major residential needs and development issues? What is your vision for future residential growth?

Residential subdivision developments should preserve some adjoining green space. Residents want green space but developers try to develop every square inch.

Residential development regulations should incorporate standards for maintaining natural trees and landscapes. More controls are needed to prevent excessive tree removal, gravel extraction, and landfilling of sites.

The Plan should allow for the integration of different types of housing in residential subdivisions. Enabling persons with different abilities, ages, resources, needs, and preferences to live in integrated subdivisions with mixed housing types and services helps provide the basis for a diversified and vibrant community. Proactive land use policies and zoning would help accommodate community needs for affordable housing, smaller homes on smaller lots, multiple-unit housing, etc.

Trails and easements between streets should be incorporated into subdivisions to accommodate access for motorized vehicles to trails outside town. Others argued that more trails are needed but their use by motorized vehicles should be limited.

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What/where are Clareville's most environmentally sensitive areas? What is your vision for future use and management of these areas?

We need to preserve more and larger areas of green space. There should be a proactive green plan to designate natural areas to be preserved and provide for the interconnection of streets with trails and right-of-way easements.

A protected reserve corridor should be designated along the coastal shoreline for environmental protection and public access to the waterfront.

Preserving the natural ecosystem of the Shoal Harbour River estuary should take priority over other considerations. The proposed landfilling on the north side of the Shoal Harbour Causeway should not be permitted.

Wider environmental protection buffers should be enforced along watercourses.

Save what is left along Dark Hole Brook. Do not allow any more clearcutting in this area.

"Moonscape" developments such as those on Bare Mountain and along Balbo Drive should not be permitted.

The Bare Mountain development east of Shoal Harbour Drive should not extend beyond its current footprint.

Environmentally sensitive areas should be adequately protected from development, including areas of steep slope, areas around bodies of water (including the area around the Shoal Harbour Causeway), wetlands, and the public water supply area.

What are Clareville's greatest needs for recreation and open space development and protection?

Old swimming holes should be resurrected and a good snow sliding hill developed.

Revitalize the waterfront area for recreational use. Trails should be developed along the shoreline.

Community wellness should be a higher priority. Land development must accommodate residents' needs for physical activity. Trails, sidewalks, swimming holes, etc.

Interconnect streets with walking and bike trails and right-of-way easements.

The seniors social centre needs a new location with more parking spaces. The existing site is hard to access.

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The T’Railway has become a racetrack for snowmobiles and ATV’s. Motorized trail use is not compatible within the town. A new corridor should be created for motorized vehicles.

One person asked why there are no recreational trails in Shoal Harbour. It was pointed out that Shoal Harbour does have trails. These include the T’Railway running parallel to Shoal Harbour River and the former Bonavista Branch rail line.

The town needs a dog park.

Trails and recreational facilities should be designed and maintained to facilitate accessibility for seniors and disabled persons.

The network of trails and low impact recreational sites should be protected, and enhanced. Subdivision plans should make provision for trail systems that link with schools, recreation sites, and other residential areas of the town.

What are Clareville’s needs for heritage protection and development?

The Heritage Committee is in the process of identifying buildings and sites for heritage designation.

The old CNR railway station and property is the preferred site for a new community museum.

Is the town physically attractive? What are your suggestions for maintaining and improving its aesthetic appearance?

Clareville is a pretty town but it is vulnerable to unsightly land development.

The viewsapes offered by forested heights of land should be preserved.

Existing green spaces within built-up areas should be protected, for example, the hill behind the Town Hall. New development should preserve areas of green space.

The Clareville Stadium is an eyesore. What’s going to happen to it when the Civic Centre opens?

The marine area in the vicinity of the marina and old Handy Andy store should be improved.

Council’s properties should be neater. The Town should lead by example, but is one of the worst offenders.

The Irving site where the oil tanks were removed should be protected as green space.

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Protect Bare Mountain. Development should go no further than the existing footprint. The ecosystem is being destroyed.

Protect Shoal Harbour valley. Keep the existing green space.

The large patchwork sign at Clareville's eastern entrance leaves a poor impression on visitors. Proper signage and landscaping at the town's gateways will help to create a more pleasant community that people like to visit and live in.

What are the greatest needs for improving and expanding municipal services and infrastructure?

We need more and wider sidewalks, more crosswalks, and good marking of existing crosswalks.

The sewer outfalls are a problem. They should be extended further from shore.

What is going to happen with storm drainage from new developments in Shoal Harbour? It should not be allowed to drain into the Shoal Harbour River estuary.

The new water treatment plant has been a terrific improvement for drinking water quality.