

Municipality of Cumberland Celebrates African History Month



Municipality of Cumberland Mayor Murray Scott is joined by Dawn Ferris and Colleen Dowe from the Cumberland African Nova Scotian Association is holding the African Nova Scotian flag during a ceremony at the Upper Nappan Service Centre on Thursday, Feb. 1, 2024. (Darrell Cole – Municipality of Cumberland photo)

The Municipality of Cumberland is celebrating the contribution of African Nova Scotians to the community.

Mayor Murray Scott joined with representatives of the Cumberland African Nova Scotian Association on Thursday, Feb. 1, 2024, to launch African Heritage Month in Nova Scotia with a flag-raising and proclamation signing at the Upper Nappan Service Centre.

“On behalf of the municipality I’m proud to be able to sign this proclamation and raise the flag in recognition of February as African Heritage Month in Nova Scotia and within the Municipality of Cumberland,” Mayor Scott said. “It’s so important to recognize the contributions of those of African descent in our municipality, our province and country. It’s important we celebrate the successes the African community has had through the years and to work together to ensure we continue to move

forward together.”

The mayor said it’s important to work tirelessly to ensure that the voices of African Nova Scotians are heard, their rights respected and their contributions celebrated not just during this month, but every day of the year.

African Heritage Month includes both commemoration of the past struggles and tragedies that have faced the African Nova Scotian community and celebration of African Nova Scotians’ unique and enduring contributions to the province to this day.

It’s a reminder of the remarkable journey of the province’s 52 historic African Nova Scotian communities and the various journeys of people of African descent who now call Nova Scotia home – journeys defined by resilience, wisdom and hope.

The first African Nova Scotians arrived in what is Cumberland County today nearly 300 years ago with the influx

of approximately 1,750 people of African descent. They resided in the Fort Lawrence area and were recorded as enslaved persons involved in building of Beaubassin.

Another group of persons of African descent arrived in 1758 with New England planters, both as enslaved persons and freemen.

In 1783, a listing compiled in New York (from the Book of Negroes) included the British ships that landed at Fort Cumberland, Parrsboro and other Cumberland County forts. Many of these people would remain in the area.

The largest Black population in the county was in Amherst followed by Springhill, Parrsboro, Oxford, Tidnish and Joggins with some of the earliest surnames in 1827 including Boles/Bowles, Cook, Dixon, Gay, Halfkenny, Howe, Jones, Martin, Milligan, Newton and Rogers.

Tammy Gero, representing CANSA-Nova Scotia Works, said it’s important to recognize that African Nova Scotians are a people whose histories, legacies and contributions have enriched part of Mi’kma’ki known as Nova Scotia for more than 400 years.

“African Heritage Month is the time that we recognize the history of those who were involuntary enslaved and brought to this county, along with celebrating the culture of people of African descent,” Gero said. “This year’s theme is focused on our smiles, our joys, and our resilience throughout history.”

“The Sankofa bird a symbol very important to African culture. The statement ‘learning from the past to build the future’ has not only been proven right through history but has also been a key factor in creating success within our communities of African descent.”



The valiant efforts to create a dyke to protect the building saw it overcome and the lowest end. Lawrence R Nicoll photo.

Development and Planning Department

Report For February 2024

The following report was presented to Cumberland council at its meeting on March 20th.

Planning and Subdivision: Staff are currently processing several on-going planning applications; we received two new applications in February, both are rezonings. One in Pugwash and one in Parrsboro.

Our new planner Kira Norgren started on February 6, 2024 and has quickly been immersing herself in our planning and subdivision processes.

The Higgins Mountain Wind Farm Development Agreement passed second reading by Council on January 31st at a special meeting. The Notice of approval was placed in the regional paper as per the MGA on February 14th. The appeal period expired on February 28th with no appeals filed. Staff will now work to complete the documentation and the Municipality will execute the Development Agreement.

The rezoning for the Boak Group at 3331 Hwy 2 is now complete. The approval of this rezoning was advertised in the paper on February 7th, 2024, and the 14-day appeal period as per the MGA expired on February 21st. No appeals were filed and the site now has the IR (Rural Industrial) zoning.

The rezoning for the Robertson Avenue lands in Springhill, owned by MCC held the required Public Hearing scheduled on February 21st with newspaper ads placed in as per the MGA. This application was to rezone the property from Park Open Space (P) to Multi-Residential (RMul) to allow for housing development with increased density. The hearing was held without any written submissions or presenters.

Council then approved Second Reading on February 28th. The Notice of Approval for this rezoning will be placed in the paper on March 13th which will start the required 14-day appeal period.

The Development Agreement (DA) application for Sunrise Landing, a multi-residential development by the Sunset Corporation in Pugwash went to Public Hearing also on February 21st with newspaper ads placed in advance as per the MGA. This project is required to have a DA in place as the project proposal exceeds the maximum of 16 units permitted under the zone through site plan agreement.

The hearing was held without any written submissions received. The representative for the applicant was the only presenter and provided an overview of the project and aligned the community benefits of same.

Council, then approved Second Reading on February 28th. The Notice of Approval for this rezoning will be placed in the paper on March 13th which starts the required 14-day appeal period.

Subdivision activity remains steady with 14 new applications received in February versus only 5 in

January. As reported previously, larger subdivisions with multiple lots are becoming more common. Some graphic stats are including in this report for both planning and Subdivision.

Permitting and Inspection: Permit volumes picked up in February with 54 permits processed compared to 25 in the previous year. At the end of February, we had a YTD total of 78 permits up from 69 in 2023. This is tracking the YOY growth of 13%. Metric that shows data on permit volume as well as housing starts by month comparing YOY are included in this report.

Staff members have continued Fire Inspector training this month, which includes the home study component. The two junior Officials have also been involved in additional training leading to their certification as Level 1 Building Officials. Our Building Official team has been managing the subdivision process and supporting the

process day to day. They will help train our new planner and assist with the transition of this work.

Climate Change/ Special Projects/Economic Development/GIS: Xplore is working on updated coverage maps that can be more widely shared with Council and residents. Some staffing changes have occurred at Xplore, and a new VP has been assigned to the project to help advance project completion. MCC Director has provided direction on some key areas of the project schedule and milestones that we want better addressed under the project work plan.

Geothermal project work remains ongoing. A 1-year contract extension document for the research project with the province is near complete. This will extend the project into Spring of 2025. This group has also been involved in the review and discussion in respect to the Community Greenhouse Proj-

ect with NSCC reps.

Staff are reviewing the recently released guidelines on Coastal Protection from the Province and will bring a briefing to the Council for discussion in the near future.

Under the Low Carbon Communities (LCC) program the two projects are advancing. The new Climate and Energy action plan had RFP posted on January 8th and it closed February 5th, 2024. This contract work will commence in Early March once the successful proponent is confirmed. The second project, the joint project with Town of Truro to study the potential for Utility Scale Solar Energy is advancing.

Staff are aligning the final contract with AREA to conduct this study. The work with AREA will align us to be able to apply for future green energy power purchase agreements. There was recently announced a new round of applications being accepted by the Province for these types of projects.



The tides were even higher on March 11, Spencer’s Island waterfront took a real hit, the beach road and the bypass were all flooded. Hopefully the RV site did not receive too much damage. Lawrence R Nicoll photos.

SHIP’S COMPANY THEATRE

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YEARS

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