

# Rees' Pieces

## Laying cards on the table

The favourite buzz word is "Affordable Housing", and rightly so. Nova Scotia is facing a disaster with an increasing number unable to afford to put a roof over their head. Many are robbing Peter to pay Paul, so they can be warm and dry. They are not taking the required dosage of medicine; sometimes not getting their prescriptions filled; going hungry, suffering from malnutrition; increasing balance on their credit cards, or choosing whatever is needed to be warm.

Even if you are not a card player, you are aware there is an appropriate time to "lay your cards on the table". For a variety of positive reasons for Colchester now is the time. As a location, Colchester could be the leader in developing "Affordable Housing" projects. Let me provide some suggestions:

- It is not the sole responsibility of county council, or councils and leaders from Stewiacke, Tatamagouche, Truro and Millbrook;
- Citizens and business groups – everyone in the municipality, must come together to develop a solution;
- In the beginning, everyone must "think outside the box", be creative and start a new process;
- Ownership could / should be a combination – through a Co-op, or some other equity investment tool, which permits all groups to have a vested interest.

Through consultation the County should be the pact leader to get it started but must not be the controlling entity, but must be an investor.

Look at it this way. Imagine a legal structure, an umbrella corporation (Ownership available only to those living or having business in Colchester / Truro / Stewiacke / Tatamagouche and Millbrook. This umbrella company (mega-Corp) would be responsible to develop the plan, acquire lands, oversee construction, manage leases to property occupants, and successfully manage the housing projects for a number of years.

Investors would be a combination of Community Economic Development Funds (CEDIF) – available only to individuals; Colchester business groups; individual businesses, municipal governments could become a shareholder / equity investor by supplying services, such as land, municipal services, water, sewer, etc.

The foregoing was about what and who, now I'll expand on why:

Colchester has the geographical location that is within an hour of approximately one million people, and on another matter is ideal location for business expansion or re-location.

A surge in new businesses, would require housing for employees;

Debert has an airport in a fog-free location, but the airport needs expansion, equipment upgrades and major investment;

Almost two years ago, former councillor, Bill Masters commented the county has significant land holdings as part of the Debert Business Park, which would be ideal and easy to develop for residential;

With CoVid-19 many have chosen Nova Scotia as a new place of residence, primarily because of housing costs, but also Nova Scotia has been a leader with the lowest per capita rate of pandemic infections, deaths and the way Covid was handled.

Plenty of land is available in the other municipalities within the County, and at costs far below national averages.

You can think of many other reasons why Colchester is probably the best location in Eastern Canada if not country-wide.

The suggested increase in housing does not need to be limited to "affordability". If lands are opened up for residential construction, they should be a mixture of regular detached housing, multiple unit buildings and as much "affordable housing" as government subsidies are obtainable.

Yes, it would be an organizational nightmare to get started, but other property developers and construction companies would not be excluded. They could become equity partners, and then bid on various parcels of construction.

If private developers can make a profit from inclusion of affordable housing, a mammoth Colchester-owned umbrella entity should be able to do the same. In fact with proper planning the entire project(s) could be the first "net-zero" emission large scale rural-based project in Canada.

Who in Colchester is interested in forming a nucleus group to get things started? Contact me with our idea. It would take upward of two years for organization development.

Would a minimum goal of 1,500 residential units be achievable within five years of shovels in the ground?

Time will tell.

Maurice

# Letters to the editor

*This is an open forum for your opinions and comments.*

MAIL TO: The Shoreline Journal, P.O. Box 41, Bass River, NS, B0M 1B0  
(902) 647-2968; Fax: 902-647-2194 Email: maurice@theshorelinejournal.com

### Good Morning!

*(This letter arrived the same day the October issue was printed. The message is very important and so strong, we felt it is worthy publication even though Remembrance Day has passed.)*

Given that Remembrance Week/Day is just around the corner, I was hoping you could print the following letter to your readers. When this letter was published last year, it yielded three veterans from Nova Scotia who will receive markers courtesy of the Last Post Fund. We're routinely locating unmarked graves here in the Province but having the general public pointing them out to me certainly accelerates the process.

### Dear Sir,

As we approach Remembrance Week/Day, I am hoping that perhaps your readership can assist me with a solemn task related to veterans. I am the Coordinator of the Last Post Fund's Unmarked Grave Program here in NS. We are a non-profit organization with a mission "to ensure that no Veteran is denied a dignified funeral and burial, as well as a military gravestone, due to insufficient funds at time of death." In many circumstances, when a veteran passed away either they, or their family, did not have the financial means to purchase a marker. As a result, I rely on Nova Scotians across the Province to provide me with leads to follow up,

which I do so with fervour. Across Canada this year, the Last Post Fund is currently on track to provide approximately 1000 headstones to veterans laying in unmarked graves! Our criteria to provide a marker is relatively straightforward: The UMG Program is available to eligible Veterans whose grave has not had a permanent headstone or foot marker for five years or more, and who have not previously received funeral and burial funding from the Last Post Fund or Veterans Affairs Canada. I will also point out that a veteran to us is someone who served, regardless of the era and how long they served! If a grave of a veteran has been marked with a temporary

### Dear Editor,

As we approach Remembrance Day, I'd like to pay tribute to the veteran members of The War Amps.

The War Amps was started by amputee veterans returning from the First World War to help each other adapt to their new reality as amputees. They then welcomed amputee veterans following the Second World War, sharing all that they had learned.

These founding members

then established the Key Tag Service, which is still going strong today, to fund the Association's many vital programs including The War Amps Child Amputee (CHAMP) Program.

I was born a partial left hand amputee and grew up in CHAMP which provided me with financial assistance for prosthetic devices and offered emotional support. These veterans have left a lasting impact on generations of amputees as they taught us that we should

be proud of our amputation and to know that it will not stop us from achieving our goals.

Everyday, but particularly on Remembrance Day, Canadian amputees like me honour these veterans who not only served their country but returned home to make life better for all amputees.

### Graham Spero

*Graduate member of The War Amps Child Amputee (CHAMP) Program*

## Lomond is District 10 Councillor

By Maurice Rees

Victoria Lomond is councillor-elect to become the new councillor for Colchester District 10 in a special by-election to replace long serving councillor, Tom Taggart, who resigned the seat when he was elected to become the MLA for Colchester North. Taggart was first elected to council in 2008.

Lomond garnered 444 votes to edge out Rebecca Taylor's 334 votes in the November 6th special by-election. She is expected to be sworn in at November meeting of council.

Lomond obtained her BA in Arts with an English major from Saint Mary's and when on to get her Early Childhood Education degree. She currently works as a program instructor in the New To You section of the Colchester Community Workshop on Arthur Street. She has volunteered in her home community of Londonderry in various capacities, with the past seven years as president of the Londonderry Community Council. Lomond resides in Londonderry, as a professional, hard working wife and mother of two children.

It is expected Lomond will continue the tradition started by Tom Taggart of authoring a monthly article / column to inform the residents of District 10 about events in their area and how council's actions will affect District 10. The column will appear on Page 5 of the Shoreline Journal.

Rebecca Taylor came to the municipal council election campaign with a variety of skills having worked primarily with provincial and municipal government department that create employment and build tourism. Most recently she was employed with the Town of Amherst as business development officer and developed a physician recruitment program, which brought five doc-

tors to the area in the first year. She has also volunteered in various capacities - teaching outdoor skills to area girl guides; WCCS School Advisory council; Along the Shore Health Board; West Colchester Community Development Association (WCCDA). Previously, she was also a member of the Truro Downtown Partnership, while operating Pearl & Daisy Natural Soap Company which she founded and operated for nine years. In the 2017 provincial election she was a candidate for the Progressive Conservatives for Colchester North and came within 440 +/- votes of toppling long service MLA, Karen Casey.

*Also see Victoria Lomond's council report on page 5 and numerical results on page 6.*

## Pumphrey Charged with Robberies

*Continued from page 1*

the gas station on foot. Truro Police responded immediately and located the man. He was arrested without incident and was transported to the Truro Police station.

He has been charged with

Robbery (2 counts), Possession of Property Obtained by Crime and Breach of Probation. Pumphrey was remanded into custody and appeared in Truro Provincial Court on November 8 for a bail hearing.

marker (IE: wooden cross), we will also consider replacing it with something more permanent. If any of your readers are aware of an unmarked veteran's grave, regardless of location, I would love to hear from them. I can be reached at steve.stamant@lastpostfund.ca

Sincerely,

Steve St-Amant  
VP - Nova Scotia Chapter - Last Post Fund  
274 Boutiliers Point Road  
Boutiliers Point, NS  
B3Z 1V1

## The Shoreline Journal

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(Esplanade)  
Rath Eastlink Comm Centre  
Colchester East Hants Health Centre - Coffee Shop

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Each classroom at the following schools will receive a copy of the Shoreline Journal:  
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Great Village Elementary; Debert Elementary; Chignanois Elementary; Central Colchester Junior High School; Parrsboro Elementary and Parrsboro Regional High School.

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Maurice Rees, Publisher,  
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maurice@theshorelinejournal.com

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